

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
DIVISION OF LAND USE PLANNING

ADOPTED AMENDMENT TO THE OCEAN COUNTY WATER QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT PLAN

Public Notice

**Take notice** that on **MAY 9 2011** pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Water Quality Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 58:11A-1 et seq., and the Statewide Water Quality Management Planning rules (N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.4), an amendment to the Ocean County Water Quality Management (WQM) Plan was adopted by the Department. This amendment was submitted on behalf of the U.S. Army Fort Dix-Department of Public Works (Fort Dix). The project involves the construction of a subsurface sewage disposal system to serve the Fort Dix Forward Operations Base (FOB) in Manchester Township, Ocean County. The project site (including septic system disposal area) of 8.64 acres is located on a 43.88 acre portion of Block 117, Lot 1 which is 3,606 acres in its entirety. The subsurface sewage disposal system site, which has been cleared, is located within the vicinity of the FOB, slightly north of Route 70, west of Pinehurst Road and is within the designated New Jersey Pinelands area. The site is currently designated as Individual Subsurface Sewage Disposal System Area of 2,000 Gallons per Day (gpd) or Less in the adopted Ocean County Central Planning Area Wastewater Management Plan (WMP).

The current FOB was constructed in 2005 specifically to train soldiers for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. The FOB is modeled after a typical base in Iraq and is designed as a training facility for troops mobilizing for overseas deployment. In support of FOB operations, it was determined that a subsurface sewage disposal system would be required. The system is proposed to handle sanitary flow from the FOB shower facility and from the medical building. The projected wastewater flow calculated in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:9A is 96,625 gpd. This is based on a demand from

2,500 troops per day for the latrines and sinks, and 1,250 troops per day for the shower facilities.

The FOB is located in the New Jersey Pinelands area, and was subject to review by the New Jersey Pinelands Commission under application number 1988-0998.024. Due to the schedule required to meet Fort Dix's mission and other national defense requirements, Fort Dix determined that the permitting process for the proposed project that would be required under the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) would not support the FOB's critical mission criteria. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:50-4.52(d)1 and 2, Fort Dix notified the Pinelands Commission that the permitting provisions of the CMP were incompatible with the installation's mission, safety or other national defense requirements, requiring a national defense exemption waiver from compliance with the provisions of the CMP. This request was received by the Pinelands Commission on April 30, 2009 and, pursuant to the CMP, the permitting requirement was deemed waived.

This proposed amendment has been reviewed in accordance with Executive Order 109 (2000) and N.J.A.C. 7:15-5.18.

The Department's review determined that the entire site is designated as Rank 4 threatened and endangered species habitat as identified by the Department's Landscape Project. The Division of Fish and Wildlife's Endangered and Nongame Species Program has developed the Landscape Project, which identifies State and Federal listed Endangered and Threatened Species habitat. An Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the FOB and proposed subsurface sewage disposal system sites. That survey evaluated these areas for Barred Owl and Northern Pine Snake habitat. The EA determined that, while the adjacent forest area could serve as foraging areas for the Barred Owl, no nests have been observed near the proposed project site (Fort Dix Natural Resources personnel conducted a Barred Owl survey in 2008). Due to the fact that the

proposed subsurface sewage disposal system site has already been cleared in accordance with recommendations from the US Fish and Wildlife Service as to avoid conflict with migratory birds and that Barred Owls nest in areas away from development, the EA determined that the site is not conducive to the presence of Barred Owl habitat. Department personnel reviewed the submitted EA and verified agreement with its conclusions.

The EA additionally evaluated the area for Northern Pine Snake habitat and determined that the proposed project site is considered suitable habitat for the Northern Pine Snake. In light of the presence of this habitat, Fort Dix will implement measures for the monitoring and protection of this species following guidelines from the Pinelands Commission. These guidelines include the development of a Snake Management Plan, construction of a snake fence, and oversight of a qualified herpetologist during the construction phases of the proposed project. While the Landscape Project identified the presence of Timber Rattlesnake, the Department determined that the proposed project would not adversely impact its habitat.

Pursuant to the New Jersey Water Quality Management Planning Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:15-3.7, the Department is to ensure that amendments are consistent with the intent and programs of the Pinelands Protection Act, N.J.S.A. 13-18A-1 et seq. The Department has reviewed the habitat evaluation portion of the EA prepared for Fort Dix and has found the EA to be consistent with the Pinelands Protection Act and the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan. The Department accepts the applicant's compliance with the Pineland's Commission's guidelines for monitoring and protection of the Northern Pine Snake. Future clearing activities could have adverse impacts on Barred Owls. Therefore the proposed amendment does not authorize any further clearing of the site.

The Department's review determined that there are no streams or stream buffers on-site.

The proposed project's water supply would be a public water system (system) comprised of two on-site wells withdrawing from an unconfined aquifer, the Kirkwood-Cohansey Formation. A Construct-Only permit (WCP090001, PWSID NJ1518366) has been issued by the Department's Division of Water Supply. A major modification to Fort Dix's existing water allocation permit (WAP5303) from the Department's Bureau of Water Allocation will be required for the operation of these wells.

This amendment proposal was noticed in the New Jersey Register on February 7, 2011 at 43 N.J.R. 320(b) and no comments were received during the comment period.

This amendment represents only one part of the permit process and other issues may need to be addressed prior to final permit issuance. Additional issues which may need to be addressed may include, but are not limited to, the following: compliance with stormwater regulations, antidegradation; effluent limitations; water quality analysis, exact locations and designs of future treatment works (pump stations, interceptors, sewers, outfalls, wastewater treatment plants); and development in wetlands, flood prone areas, designated Wild and Scenic River areas, or other environmentally sensitive areas which are subject to regulation under Federal or State statutes or rules.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas Micai, Director  
Division of Land Use Planning  
Department of Environmental Protection

5/9/11  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date