

Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a Wetland

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) on behalf of the Responsible Entity, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has determined that the following proposed action under the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program – New Jersey Rehabilitation, Reconstruction, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) Program and HUD Grant Number B-13-DS-34-0001 is located in a wetland, and NJDEP will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the wetland and the potential impacts on the wetland from the proposed action, as required by Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at HUD 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

On October 29 2012, Superstorm Sandy made landfall over the New Jersey coast. The storm surge inundated and severely affected the State's shoreline from Cape May to Raritan Bay, along the Hudson River, and on the estuaries connecting to Raritan Bay and Newark Bay. Other overland flooding, wind damage and an ensuing snowstorm further damaged these communities as well as other communities throughout New Jersey. DCA is proposing to use CDBG-DR funds to assist homeowners in achieving safe and code-code compliant housing that meets minimum property standards through the rehabilitation, reconstruction, elevation and mitigation of properties that have been impacted by the storm.

DCA is proposing to reconstruct one single-family residential property, whose parcel is partially located in a wetland. Reconstruction is to assist owners of homes that were so severely damaged as a result of the storm that repair is not feasible or would not be cost effective. When applicable, the completed reconstructed home will be built to the 2009 Residential International Code and will meet the energy efficiency guidelines of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s Energy STAR program.

The reconstruction of this one property would impact approximately 0.32 acres of herbaceous wetlands, according to the NJDEP HUD Environmental Review Tool, which incorporates data from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetlands Inventory. Wetlands provide natural flood and erosion control, fish and wildlife habitat, as well as aesthetic value – all of which may be adversely affected by the proposed activity. The proposed activity, identified as RRE0006823, is located at the address 382 Dock Road in Eagleswood Township, Ocean County, New Jersey.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the wetland, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigation impacts. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by DCA on or before September 13, 2014. Submit written comments to Stacy Bonnaffons, Assistant Commissioner, Sandy Recovery Division, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, 101 South Broad Street, PO Box 800, Trenton, NJ 08625-0800 during the hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM or online at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/sandyrecovery/review/>. Further information can be found on the DCA website: www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/sandyrecovery/review/.

Bob Martin, Commissioner, NJDEP

Date: August 29, 2014