

## **Early Notice and Public Review of Proposed Activities in a Wetland**

To: All interested Agencies FEMA; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; National Park Service; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); NOAA Fisheries Service; New Jersey Department of Agriculture; New Jersey Historic Preservation Office; New Jersey Department of Community Affairs; and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Land Use Regulation, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has determined the following proposed actions under the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) Program (CDBG-DR) (CDBG-DR B-13-DS-34-0001) are located adjacent to a wetland. DCA will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the actions in the wetland and the potential impacts on the wetland from the proposed actions, as required by Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C "Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands". A review of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection - HUD Environmental Review Tool indicates wetlands are present on or adjacent to both project sites. A qualified Wetland Biologist has conducted site visits to verify the presence of and characteristics of any wetlands onsite. The proposed activities include the Reconstruction and Elevation of existing structures located at:

### **191 Knoll Crest Avenue, Brick Township, NJ 08723 (Ocean County)- RRE0020409**

The driveway and the house are on packed gravel/sand fill that is approximately one foot higher in elevation than the surrounding property. The backyard is maintained lawn. Hydrology is present; the ground surface was moist and stained leaves were present on the ground. Common reed is on the north side outside the property fence and the adjacent lower area behind the backyard fence on the south side is dominated by a 40 swath of upland trees and shrubs. Immediately south of this tree line is Palustrine Emergent (PEM) vegetation which is dominated by herbaceous species including common reed (*Phragmites australis* - FACW) Groundsel-tree (*Bacchais halimifolia* - FACW), rose mallow (*Hibiscus mosheutos* – OBL) and salt-marsh fleabane (*Pluchea pupurescens*). Hydric vegetation is present within the part of the property that juts out to the south, from near the road to the property line. The remaining portion of the natural surrounding marsh area had a deep root mass indicative of tidal marshes. Hydric soils are present within the same location as the hydrophytic vegetation.

### **320 E. Edgewater Avenue, Pleasantville NJ 08232 (Atlantic County)- RRE0008087R**

The property is dominated by palustrine emergent (PEM) wetland with a small corner of NWI designated palustrine scrub-shrub (PSS) wetland. It is further identified as a tidal high marsh community. Lakes Bay tributary is a tidal creek located just north of the property and allows for tidal inundation twice daily. Hydric vegetation and soils are present. The front and back yard are dominated by tidal marsh vegetation, dominant herbaceous vegetation salt hay (*Spartina patens*, FACW). Additional herbaceous species observed on the property include common reed (*Phragmites australis* – FACW), marsh fleabane (*Pluchea pupurescens*, FACW) and some maintained lawn grass species adjacent to the road. Shrub species include the tidal marsh shrub

*Iva frutescens*, FACW, located between the backyard at the shed, elevation drops between 6” and 12”, as well as the Grousel-tree (*Baccharis halimifolia* – FAC). The property is approximately 6 -10 inches higher in elevation than the surrounding tidal marsh area due to fill, however, meadow mat is still the dominant O layer within 12 inches.

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 mitigate 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 New Jersey Department of Community Affairs at the following address on or before October 25, 2014: New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, 101 South Broad Street, PO Box 800, Trenton, NJ 08625-0800, Attention: Stacy Bonnaffons, Assistant Commissioner, Sandy Recovery Division. A full description of the project may also be reviewed from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at 101 South Broad Street, PO Box 800, Trenton, NJ 08625-0800. Comments may also be submitted via email at <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/sandyassistance.html>.

Bob Martin, Commissioner, NJDEP

**Date issued: 10/10/14**