

COMBINED PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

July 24, 2024

New Jersey Department of Community Affairs
101 South Broad Street
PO Box 800
Trenton, NJ 08625-0800

This Notice is related to Federal assistance provided in response to the Presidentially-declared disaster, Hurricane Ida. This notice shall satisfy two separate but related procedural requirements for activities to be undertaken by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA).
REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or about August 9, 2024, the DCA will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of Federal funds under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program pursuant to the Disaster Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2022 for major disasters occurring in 2020 and 2021 (Public Law 117-43), approved on September 30, 2021 (the Appropriations Act) for the Blue Acres program. DCA expects to fund the project using approximately \$16,000,000 of CDBG-DR funds across 12 counties. \$14,400,000 will be allocated across seven HUD-Identified *most impacted and distressed* (MID) counties: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, and Union, and \$1,600,000 will be allocated across five Grantee-Identified MID counties: Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, and Warren.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Hurricane Ida Tier 1 Environmental Assessments

Project Title: New Jersey Blue Acres Tiered Environmental Reviews for Tropical Storm Ida

Location: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Passaic, Somerset, Union, Gloucester, Hunterdon, Mercer, Morris, and Warren Counties in New Jersey

The total estimated project cost is \$16,000,000

The projects would entail the acquisition of residential properties within a floodway, floodplain, or other disaster risk reduction area to reduce the risk from future flooding. Acquired properties would be cleared of all existing structures and related improvements and the land would be restored as wetlands and/or floodplains to serve a defined open space and climate-resilience purpose.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The DCA has determined that this project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the National

Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the DCA, Division of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation, 101 South Broad Street, Trenton, NJ 08625-0800. The record is available for review and may be examined or copied weekdays 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. or can be viewed online at <https://www.nj.gov/dca/ddrm/resources/environmental.shtml>.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on this project may submit written comments to Samuel Viavattine, Deputy Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, 101 South Broad Street, PO Box 800, Trenton, NJ 08625-0800 or online at DRM.EHPComments@dca.nj.gov and to Tennille Smith Parker, DRSI, Division Director, HUD, 451 Seventh Street SW, Washington, D.C. 20410. All comments received by August 8, 2024, or fifteen (15) days from the actual date of publication, whichever is later, will be considered by DCA. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

DCA certifies to HUD that Samuel Viavattine, in his capacity as Certifying Official consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act and related laws and authorities and allows DCA to use CDBG-DR funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

HUD will accept objections to its release of funds and DCA's certification for a period of fifteen (15) days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of DCA; (b) DCA has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient has committed funds or incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency, acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504, has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58.76) and shall be addressed to Tennille Smith Parker, DRSI, Division Director, HUD, 451 Seventh Street SW, Washington, D.C. 20410. Potential objectors should contact HUD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Samuel Viavattine, Deputy Commissioner

New Jersey Department of Community Affairs