

Draft Environmental Assessment
Prattsville Temporary Housing Site
Town of Prattsville, Greene County, New York
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FEMA

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
Amsl	Above mean sea level
CFR	Code of Federal Regulation
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
HEI	Hazard Evaluations, Inc.
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NYS	New York State
NYSBC	New York State Building Code
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
NYSHPO	New York State Historic Preservation Office
NYSOEM	New York State Office of Emergency Management
SPDES	State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
Town	Town of Prattsville
USDA-NRCS	United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Prattsville in Greene County, New York experienced storm damages from heavy rains that occurred during severe storms and flooding from August 26 – September 5, 2011. The storm incident period was declared a major disaster by President Obama on August 31, 2011 and federal public assistance was made available to affected communities and certain non-profit organizations per FEMA 4020-DR-NY and in accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), 42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq., as amended. During the incident period the severe storms caused the overflow of the banks of the Schoharie Creek flooding large portions of the Town of Prattsville, Greene County, New York, resulting in numerous homes and businesses being destroyed, and thus displacing a large number of individuals and families.

The Town of Prattsville, hereinafter referred to as the Applicant, has requested federal funding and assistance from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to install twenty (20) temporary housing units within a 2.85-acre site that is part of a larger 9.20 acre parcel, which encompasses an existing mobile home park, known as “Moore’s Mobile Home Park” (MHP). The MHP is owned and operated by Stephen Baker. The project is located east of NYS Route 23, and off Pine Street, in the Town of Prattsville, Greene County, New York. The temporary housing units will tie into existing water, sewer, and electrical currently serving the existing mobile home park. See Appendix A for a location map of the site.

FEMA is required as a federal agency to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of its proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action, in order to make an informed decision in defining a proposed project for implementation that incorporates to the extent practicable measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate adverse impacts to the human environment. The environmental analysis is conducted in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and its implementing regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 and FEMA’s regulations at 44 CFR Part 10. This Environmental Assessment (EA) serves as documentation of FEMA’s analysis of the potential environmental impacts of the proposed construction of the temporary housing units, including analysis of project alternatives, and identification of impact minimization measures. The document serves as written communication of the environmental evaluation for public and interested party comment. Public involvement is a component of NEPA to inform an agency’s determination of whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

FEMA and the Corps are working with partners at the local and state levels and with other Federal agencies to coordinate the response to the devastating effects of Hurricane Irene that resulted in severe flooding in the Town of Prattsville, Greene County, New York. The purpose of the Individual and Households Program is to expeditiously provide temporary housing assistance for individuals and households who are displaced from their primary residences or whose primary residence is rendered uninhabitable as a result of damage caused by a major disaster. The need for the project is to minimize the amount of time displaced individuals and families spend at alternative locations, and thus limit further economic and personal hardships for affected residents, disrupt school attendance and the school system, and further strain the Town’s social and economic infrastructure.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

3.1 Proposed Action

The proposed action would provide temporary housing to displaced individuals and families within the affected community. The twenty (20) temporary housing units would be installed adjacent to an existing mobile home park, known as “Moore’s Mobile Home Park”. The proposed site is an a 2.85-acre area that is part of a larger

9.20 acre parcel, located east of NYS Route 23, and off Pine Street, in the Town of Prattsville, Greene County, New York. The site is located within the Town of Prattsville (See Appendix A: Figures A1-A5 Site Location Maps).

Each of the twenty (20) temporary housing units will be installed on pier supports, located on gravel pads. Access to the site would require construction of a new road that will extend from the western portion of Pine Street, extending east through the new housing site, and reconnecting to the eastern end of Pine Street. Water and sanitary sewer lines will be installed below ground to each unit, and electric will be installed with overhead lines. Stormwater runoff would be managed through grading of the site, allowing for all excess stormwater that does not naturally filter through the impervious surfaces of the site, to drain offsite to the south. (See Appendix A: Figure A6 Prattsville Draft Site Plan).

The proposed action would include the construction of an L-shaped road connecting to Pine Street in two locations at the east and northwest sides of the site for ingress and egress. The 2-way road, measuring approximately 20-feet in width and 1,000-feet long, would pass through the center of the site allowing residents access to individual trailer sites and parking consisting of gravel pads. The road and pads would be constructed of gravel over geotextile fabric..

3.2 No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, FEMA would not fund the Proposed Action. This would result in a large number of individuals and families remaining displaced at alternative locations.

3.3 Alternatives Screened from Further Consideration

An area adjacent to an existing sewer treatment plant, in the vicinity of 102 County Route 7 was reviewed as an alternative site location. However, due to the costs associated with building out an entirely new site, this site was determined to not to be a feasible alternative. In contrast to the proposed action, that is an expansion of an existing mobile home park, with the necessary utilities in close proximity.

This alternative is not carried forward into the environmental evaluation of this environmental assessment; however, it demonstrates the planning process and initial steps taken to make an informed decision for implementation of the site alternative to achieve project purpose and need.

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENTS AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

4.1 General Site Description

The proposed site is a 2.85-acre area that is part of a larger 9.20 acre parcel. The site currently consists of an open field, bordered to the north and east by an existing mobile home park. The southern property boundary is a row of mixed hardwoods, with an open field beyond off-site. An open, previously disturbed area is located to the west, adjacent to existing homes and businesses along NYS Route 23. The immediate surrounding area consists of residential buildings, with various commercial buildings located along NYS Route 23 to the west.

A Summary of the potential environmental impacts of the No Action Alternative and Proposed Action are attached as Table 1. (See Appendix A: Figure A7 Site Photograph)

Table 1 Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts of Project Alternatives

Resource	No Action Alternative	Proposed Action
Geology, Soils, & Seismicity	No impact.	No significant impact.
Land Use	No impact.	No significant impact. Adverse impact to 2.85-acres of prime or protected farmland to be converted to temporary housing site.
Air Quality	No impact.	No significant impact. Minor, temporary impact associated with dust and particulate matter during construction.
Water Quality	No impact.	No significant impact.
Wetlands	No impact.	No impact.
Floodplain Management	No impact.	No significant impact. Flood risk will be minimized. Impacts to natural functions will be minor.
Fish & Wildlife Habitat	No impact.	No significant impact.
Cultural Resources	No impact.	No Historic Properties Affected. No significant impact to Archeological Areas.
Visual Resources	No impact.	No significant impact.
Socioeconomics	Negative impact due to continued displacement of individuals and families.	Positive impact in providing temporary housing to displaced individuals and families.
Environmental Justice	No impact.	No impact.
Public Health & Safety	No Impact.	No significant impact.
Utilities	No impact.	No significant impact.
Traffic	No impact.	No significant impact. Minor increase from ingress and egress to access site.
Noise	No impact.	Minor, temporary noise disturbance during construction. Noise associated with operation

Physical Resources

4.2 Geology, Soils & Seismicity

4.2.1 Existing Condition

Greene County contains bedrock formations- that are part of the Allegheny Plateau physiographic province. The bedrock underlying the vicinity of the project area is compromised of a variety of flat-lying layers of sedimentary rocks consisting of red, green, and gray mudstones with subordinate red to gray, very fine- to fine-gained sandstones. Mudstones range from fissile and relatively nonbioturbated to blocky and intensely

bioturbated with desiccation cracks throughout representing flood-basin deposits. Sandstone sets are sharp-based, cm- to dm-thick sheets and lenses, cross-bedded or planar bedded flood deposits. The major sandstone bodies are interpreted as fluvial channel deposits. The project area lies within the Catskill Mountains. The Catskills are not technically mountains at all, but an eroded, topographically dissected plateau that has been carved by stream erosion into sharp-crested divides. Typical landscapes within this region consist of relatively steep valley walls, wide ridge tops and flat-bottomed hills between drainages that are the result of the continued erosion of these rocks, both by streams and in the recent past by glaciers.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) identifies the soils at the proposed site to be primarily Tunkhannock gravelly loam and a small portion of Barbour loam. (*See Appendix B for soils map*). NRCS classifies this soil type as prime farmland soil.

The proposed site consists of very deep, well to somewhat excessively drained soils formed in water-sorted glacial material derived from reddish sandstone, siltstone, and shale. The potential for surface runoff is low to very high. Permeability is moderately rapid in the solum and rapid in the substratum. Most gently sloping areas are cleared and used for general farm crops. The erosion hazard for this unit is slight.

Executive Order 12699 requires Federal agencies assisting in the financing, through Federal grants or loans, or guaranteeing the financing, through loan or mortgage insurance programs, of newly constructed buildings to initiate measures to assure appropriate consideration of seismic safety. The United States Geologic Survey (USGS) Percent Peak Ground Acceleration Seismic Hazard Maps adopted by the New York State Building Code (NYSBC) indicate that the facility sites are in a moderate hazard area, as is most of the state (*See Appendix B Seismic Hazard Evaluation Map*).

4.2.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

The previous development of the site as residential community has had minimal impact on geology, soils and seismicity associated with minor site disturbance on a lot that was previously cleared. The No Action alternative and Proposed Action alternative would not adversely impact the geology, seismicity or soils of the interim facility site.

No Action

The No Action alternative would not impact geology, topography or soils.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would develop a portion of the 2.8-acre site at Pine Street and thus convert some of the pervious to impervious cover. Development as described would include building construction and roads. The geology and soils of the site are suitable for construction. The impact to soils is moderate. Appropriate design measures as dictated in the NYS Building Code will be implemented to reduce the seismic hazards during the planning and construction of the facility.

4.3 Land Use

4.3.1 Existing Condition

Greene County is a rural county. The county is predominately forested or agricultural, and the balance being commercial, manufacturing and residential. The Tunkhannock soils of the proposed temporary housing unit site are classified as prime farmland soil. The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) requires federal agencies to minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use and to assess potential conversion of farmland to developed property. The proposed

temporary housing unit site is not actively farmed. See appendix C for consultation with NRCS, farmland conversion impact rating form, and soils map.

4.3.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

The land use for the temporary housing units would not change with the No Action or Proposed Action alternatives.

No Action

No impacts to land use with implementation of the No Action alternative.

Proposed Action

The land use for the proposed site would change with the proposed action. The soils of the proposed project site are classified as prime farmland soils. However, the site is not actively farmed. The Environmental Assessment document will be circulated by FEMA to various federal agencies including USDA-NRCS for concurrence with FEMA's determination per the FPPA.

4.4. Air Quality

4.4.1 Existing Condition

Greene County is designated as being in attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants sulfur dioxide (SO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), lead (Pb), PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}. The State of New York is treated as a moderate nonattainment area for ozone (O₃) because it is included in the Ozone Transport Region (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, the six New England states, Washington D.C. and portions of Virginia).

4.4.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

No air quality impacts would result from the No Action alternative.

Proposed Action

Impacts to air quality with the Proposed Action would be minor, temporary, and localized due to dust and particulate matter during building and site construction at the proposed site. Best management practices, including dust control, could be used during construction to minimize air quality impacts. Construction equipment emissions would be negligible.

Water Resources

4.5 Water Quality

4.5.1 Existing Condition

The temporary housing unit site consists of an open field, and is in the Schoharie Creek watershed. The site is approximately 650 +/- feet east of Schoharie Creek. Schoharie Creek is fed by numerous tributaries as it flows north through Greene County, then through Schoharie and Montgomery Counties before discharging into the Mohawk River, in the Town of Glen. A small tributary, Huntersfield Creek, is located to the south of the site, and is a tributary to Schoharie Creek. (*See Appendix D for Water Resource Mapping*).

4.5.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

No water quality impacts would result from the No Action alternative.

Proposed Action

Impacts to water quality with the proposed action are minor. The proposed action would not increase impervious cover at the proposed site, as the access drive will be constructed of gravel while the temporary housing units will be elevated on piers that are placed on gravel pads. If final design plans call for site disturbance of over one-acre, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be required. A SWPPP would be developed by the owner/operator of the MHP for compliance with a State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity (GP-0-10-001) that would be issued pursuant to article 17, titles 7.8 and article 70 of the Environmental Conservation Law of New York State. The Applicant is responsible for securing all applicable permits for protection of water quality, including a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) General Permit, as applicable.

4.6 Wetlands

4.6.1 Existing Condition

The temporary housing unit site consists of an open field, with no wetlands. (*See Appendix E: National Wetlands Inventory and NYSDEC Wetlands Map*).

4.6.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on wetlands.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action alternative would have no impact on wetlands.

4.7 Floodplain Management

Executive Order (EO) 11988 Floodplain Management requires federal agencies to take actions to avoid long-term and short-term impacts associated with occupancy and modification of floodplains. The 8-Step Process for compliance with this EO is integrated with this EA document per 44 CFR Part 9.

4.7.1 Existing Condition

A large portion of the proposed temporary housing unit site is located within the 100-Year Floodplain as illustrated on Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM Panel 158 of 531, of Map Number 36039C0158F, dated May 16, 2008). Areas along the Schoharie Creek were greater than the 100-year in this immediate stretch. While FEMA requested the original LOMA a rolling Base Flood Elevation was discussed. Looking at the map it drops three feet in a very, very short range. A decision was made against doing the LOMA for engineering reasons. This area should be restudied since areas did remain dry during the event. FEMA is considering requesting a CLOMAR. Chances for flash flooding from the Creek would be low in this proposed area. The lower portion of the existing park is subject to flash flooding. There could be alternate escape paths made if the road leading to this upper portion was to be cut off. There are also neighboring tracts of land owned by the Town that could be used as means of egress. The remaining portion of the site is within the 500-Year Floodplain, as depicted on the above referenced map. The current surface elevation is approximately 1152 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the eastern portion of the site, and approximately 1156 feet amsl in the western portion of the site. A review of

the topographic conditions as noted on the USGS Quad map of Prattsville NY indicate that groundwater within the vicinity of the proposed site flows in a westerly direction toward Schoharie Creek approximately 650 feet to the west of the site. (See Appendix F: Flood Plain 8-Step Process and Insurance Rate Map for the proposed site).

4.7.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on floodplains. However, the no action is not practicable because there are no alternative sites outside the floodplain and there will be significant social and economic impacts of not providing temporary housing to the affected individuals and households in Prattsville.

Proposed Action

Locating the site in the floodplain would expose disaster survivors to future flooding. Fill will be brought to raise approximately 2 acres of the site above the base flood elevation to 1154 feet amsl in order to minimize this impact. Placement of fill, however, and turning the site into impervious surface would result in adverse effects to floodplain natural and beneficial functions and values such as those associated with natural flood and erosion control and water quality maintenance. However, the majority of the area that would be increased in elevation, removing it from the 100-year floodplain, is within the higher elevations of the floodplain, where flooding is predicted to be minimal. Therefore it has been determined that, based on the proposed site location within the 100-year floodplain and on the minimal size of the area being filled, the adverse effects on the floodplain associated with the project would be minimized and would not be significant.

FEMA will have an evacuation plan in place prior to occupancy of the THU's that will entail the following: what potential signs of flooding to be aware of, what to listen to by way of media messaging/warnings, know the primary evacuation routes and alternative routes, know where the designated shelters are and when to return home after the threat/incident has passed.

A floodplain development permit must be obtained from the floodplain manager before fill is brought in and the site is developed.

4.8 Biological Resources - Fish and Wildlife Habitat

4.8.1 Existing Condition

Small mammals, passerine birds, raptors, or an occasional, larger mammal such as deer would be anticipated to be found on occasion at the proposed site; however, the land at this location does not support any known critical or sensitive wildlife habitat. The land has been disturbed by agricultural practices in the past and currently is a maintained grass field, most recently used as a storage area for used mobile homes.

Federal agencies must evaluate potential impacts to threatened and endangered species per the Endangered Species Act. After review of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service website database and the Corps's consultation with them and the NYSDEC, FEMA has determined that there are no federally listed threatened or endangered species at the proposed site (See Appendix G). Federal agencies must evaluate potential impacts to bald eagle and its habitat per the Bald Eagle Protection Act. The bald eagle, *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*, may be occasionally found in the project vicinity; however there is no habitat for the bald eagle at the proposed site.

Federal agencies must evaluate potential impacts to migratory bird habitat per the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. There is no sensitive migratory bird habitat at the proposed site.

4.8.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on fish and wildlife habitat, including federally listed threatened or endangered species, bald eagles or migratory bird habitat.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action alternative would have no impact on fish and wildlife habitat, including federally listed threatened or endangered species, bald eagles or migratory bird habitat.

4.9 Cultural Resources

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) directs federal agencies to take into account the effect of any undertaking on historic properties. "Historic property" is any district, building, structure, site, or object that is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because the property is significant at the national, state, or local level in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, or culture. Typically, a historic property must be at least 50 years old and with retained integrity.

4.9.1 Existing Condition

The area of potential effect (APE) for this project is the area where the units and access road will be located. The proposed temporary housing unit location is mapped as an archaeologically sensitive area, as shown on NYSHPO GIS online interactive mapping. There are no known National Register listed historic properties within or immediately adjacent to the sites.

4.9.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on historic properties.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action involves ground disturbing activities at the proposed site, which is located within an area identified by the NYSHPO as "Archeo Sensitive". The Corps consulted with the NYSHPO and received a letter stating that the project will have No Effect upon cultural resources in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places with the following conditions/construction options:

- Each unit is placed using one of the following methods 1) place unit on gravel over geo textile, 2) place unit on existing grade, 3) place unit on poured concrete piers 2x2 ft or less, x 10 piers or less (less than 40 sq ft of disturbance), and
- Utilities are excavated using a trencher with the minimum disturbance practical, i.e. 14 inches or less in width.

Therefore, with the conditions/construction options being implemented, the Corps and FEMA concur with the NYSHPO that the proposed action will have No Effect upon cultural resources in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places..

4.10 Visual Resources

4.10.1 Existing Condition

The majority of the proposed site consists of 2.85 acres and is currently a vacant, mowed field located adjacent to an existing mobile home park.

4.10.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on visual resources.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would have minor impacts on visual resources. The proposed new site construction would expand an existing mobile home site, thereby increasing the footprint of manufactured housing units. The expansion would result in a minor change in appearance of the area. In order to minimize adverse impact to visual resources of the site, the project would be designed to fit with the surrounding context.

4.11 Socioeconomics

4.11.1 Existing Condition

According to the 2010 Census Data website for Zip Code 12468 (Prattsville), the current population for the Town of Prattsville is 1,036 persons. Approximately 49,221 people live in Greene County in a total of 29,210 households. The median income for a household in the County was \$45,492 (2009 data), and in the Town was \$35,556 (1999 data), as compared to the State average of \$55,980 (2008 data). About 14.08 % of persons in the County are below the poverty level.

4.11.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would adversely impact the Town and residents socioeconomically. Individuals in need of housing may have to find housing elsewhere, outside of the Town, thereby causing hardship on families, as well as eliminating their contribution to the local economy through the purchase of goods and services.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would have a positive impact on socioeconomics. The temporary housing units would afford individuals housing, thereby eliminating the hardships of relocating to other geographic locations. By remaining in Prattsville, they continue contributing to the local economy, thus enhancing the economic health of the community through the purchase of goods and services.

4.12 Environmental Justice

EO 12898, entitled “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations,” directs Federal agencies to “make environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations.”

4.12.1 Existing Condition

According to 2010 census data, the population within the 12468 zip code (Prattsville) is comprised of 98.6 % White, 0.1% Black or African American, 0.5 % American Indian and Alaskan Native, and 0.1 % Asian (2010 Census at <http://factfinder.census.gov>) . The percentage of families below the poverty level is 9.1.

4.12.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on the human health and human environment of minority or low-income populations.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action alternative would have no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on the human health and human environment of minority or low-income populations. The proposed project would benefit the entire community with the addition of temporary housing for displaced individuals and families.

4.13 Public Health and Safety

4.13.1 Existing Condition

Floods are the most probable natural cause of emergencies or disasters in this community. Observations made during an on-site environmental review of the proposed project area confirmed that Tropical Storm Irene floodwaters did not reach surface elevations at the site.

4.13.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action Alternative would entail no construction or preparation of sites for temporary housing; therefore, there would be no public health and safety impacts.

Proposed Action

The temporary housing facility would be constructed in compliance with local, state and Federal safety standards and codes. Adverse impacts resulting from safety and health issues associated with this project would be minor. Risk of flooding would be minimized by elevating the site above the base flood elevation.

4.14 Utilities

4.14.1 Existing Condition

The proposed site has existing utilities (water, sewer, and electric) available on the perimeter of the site.

4.14.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on utilities

Proposed Action

Utilities at the proposed site including sewer, water, and electric would be expanded to accommodate the facility. Safety codes and standards would be adhered to for safe installation and future use. No adverse impacts are anticipated as a result of trenching for utility installation. The Applicant would develop plans to manage stormwater runoff on-site.

4.15 Traffic

4.15.1 Existing Condition

The traffic in the vicinity of the proposed site is minimal and comprised mostly of residents of the existing mobile home park. Pine Street provides access to the facilities.

4.15.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on traffic.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would increase the amount of traffic for ingress and egress to the site. Roads within the site would be constructed in compliance with local and state construction requirements to minimize traffic hazards.

4.16 Noise

4.16.1 Existing Condition

The ambient noise level in the vicinity of the proposed site is normal for a small, rural, municipal area. The proposed site is adjacent to an existing mobile home facility and approximately 300 feet from New York State

Route 23, an active roadway that supports vehicle, truck, and agricultural traffic and resulting noises. Thus the project area has existing transportation noise.

4.16.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

No Action

The No Action alternative would have no impact on noise levels.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would cause temporary noise increases due to operation of heavy equipment during construction. The Applicant will be responsible to conduct construction in accordance with any local noise ordinances that may/may not include work hour restrictions. The Proposed Action would not cause a significant increase or change in noise levels.

4.17 Climate Change

Climate change could potentially increase temperatures in the northeast, cause more severe weather incidents to occur, and cause sea level rise. Consideration of climate change does not change the decision-making to implement the proposed project. As stated previously, the temporary housing units would be designed to current codes and standards to ensure the structures would be sound and able to withstand storms and seismic events. In addition, the temporary housing units would be installed on piers located on gravel pads, which will result in the bottom of the temporary housing units being at least two feet above the base flood elevation (BFE). This will prevent future damage being caused by future flood events.

4.18 Cumulative Impacts

Table 1 summarizes the potential environmental impacts of the No Action and Proposed Action alternative.

Neither alternative would significantly adversely impact the environment due to the cumulative assessment of potential impacts. There are no known past or reasonably foreseeable future actions in the project vicinity that would change the cumulative impact determination for the proposed action. In addition, the property owner has stated that no additional building or modifications to the existing mobile home park were anticipated in the future.

5.0 PERMITS AND CONDITIONS

The Owner/Operator of the MHP is responsible to obtain all applicable permits for project implementation prior to construction, and to adhere to permit conditions. The proposed temporary housing site would require Town Building Permits for each individual unit and may also require a NYSDEC General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity. It is expected that the Applicant and its construction contractor(s) will conduct construction utilizing best management practices to limit noise, dust and sedimentation & erosion during construction.

The Town of Prattville has issued a variance to allow the necessary fill and construction activities within the floodplain (*See Appendix I*). In addition, the Town must complete a Short Environmental Assessment Form for this activity per the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) (Article 8 of Environmental Conservation Law), prior to construction the site.

Any substantive change to the approved scope of work will require re-evaluation by FEMA for compliance with NEPA and other laws and executive orders. If ground disturbing activities during construction reveal any potential archaeological resource discoveries, the Applicant shall immediately cease construction in that area and notify the NYSHPO, NYSOEM and FEMA.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY COORDINATION

As stated in Section 3, the Applicant has conducted alternative analysis and project formulation at a local level to evaluate and screen a reasonable alternative for site selection to arrive at the proposed action. In accordance with NEPA, this Environmental Assessment (EA) Report will be released for a 5-day public review and comment period. Availability of the document for comment will be advertised via a public notice in Schenectady Gazette newspaper. A hard copy of the EA will be made available for review at the Prattville Town Hall, which is currently located within temporary trailers at NYS Route 23, Prattville, NY. An electronic copy of the EA will be available for download from the FEMA website at www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/ea-region2.shtm.

This EA reflects the evaluation and assessment of the Federal government, the decision- maker for the federal action; however, FEMA will take into consideration any substantive comments received during the public review period to inform the final decision regarding project implementation. The public is invited to submit written comments by mail to Ms. Megan Jadrosich, Regional Environmental Officer, FEMA Region II, Mitigation Division, RM1337F, 26 Federal Plaza, NY, NY 10278 or via email to Megan.Jadrosich@dhs.gov.

If no substantive comments are received from the public and/or agency reviewers, the EA will be adopted as final and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued by FEMA. If substantive comments are received, FEMA will evaluate and address comments as part of Final Environmental Assessment documentation. The federal government will post the FONSI to the FEMA website.

Copies of the EA will be sent to:

Town of Prattsville
P.O. Box 418
Prattsville, NY 12468

NYSOEM
1220 Washington Avenue, Suite 101, Building 22
Albany, NY 12226-2251

NYSDEC Region 4
Stamford Field Office
65561 State Highway 10
Stamford, NY 12167-9503

USDA-NRCS
441 S. Salina Street, Suite 354
Syracuse, NY 13202

The following agencies will receive notice of the Environmental Assessment's availability:

Mr. John Bonafide
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
Peebles Island, PO Box 189 Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Mr. David Stilwell
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, New York Field Office
3817 Luker Road
Cortland, NY 13045

7.0 CONCLUSION

During the construction period, short-term impacts to soils, surface water, transportation, air quality, and noise are anticipated. Short-term impacts will be mitigated utilizing best management practices, such as silt fences, proper equipment maintenance, and appropriate signage. Environmental impacts of construction will also be minimized per adherence to any required Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and building permit conditions.

At this time, it is anticipated that the proposed action will not have any significant impact upon the human environment. FEMA anticipates that a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued upon closure of the public review period. The FONSI will be made available on the FEMA website.

8.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

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