

# **Part I**

## **Scoping Process**

### **Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement**

#### **Suffolk County Vector Control and Wetlands Management Long-Term Plan and Environmental Impact Statement**

November 14, 2002

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### Appendix 1

EAF for the Long-Term Plan

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## 1. Introduction

Task 1 of the Suffolk County Vector Control and Wetlands Management Long-Term Plan was the initial step in developing the a management plan to meet the County's needs for mosquito management. The Task Report for this task is described in the Request for Proposals as a description of the process undertaken by the County and the consultant to scope the required Environmental Impact Statement and develop a refined Workplan for the project.

Therefore, this report discusses:

- the preparation of the Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) for the Long-Term Plan, and the Positive Declaration, per the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) recommended by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to the County Legislature, and its subsequent adoption by the Legislature
- preparation of the Draft Scope for the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) by the County
- the Scoping process, including the Public Hearing, participation in the process by the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and the Steering Committee
- compilation of the comments on the Draft Scope
- creation of a Responses to Comments document
- production of a Recommended Final Scope for the DGEIS
- refinement of the consultant Workplan

The report also briefly discusses pertinent activities that occurred outside of Task 1, such as the issuance of the Request for Proposals, and steps in the process between the selection of the consultant through the production of the draft Workplan.

## **2. Environmental Assessment Form for the Long-Term Plan**

The SCDPW prepared an EAF for the development of an expanded Long-Term Vector Control and Wetlands Management Plan. This EAF (see Appendix 1) was submitted to CEQ on May 2, 2002. On May 15, 2002, CEQ issued a recommendation for a Positive Declaration to the Suffolk County Legislature, requiring the preparation of a DGEIS. The Legislature issued the Positive Declaration at its meeting on August 6, 2002.

As part of this process, SCDPW (on behalf of the Suffolk County Legislature) initiated a coordinated review of the project by contacting all potentially involved agencies via certified-return-receipt mail, and announced the Legislature's intention to be lead agency for the project. As no objections were received by June 24, 2002, the County Legislature assumed lead agency status for the Long-Term Plan.

### **3. Draft Scope for the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement**

The CEQ determined that the project would be best addressed by a generic EIS. This is consistent with Section 617.10(a) of the SEQRA regulations, which states that a GEIS “may be used to assess the environmental impacts of ... an entire program or plan having wide application or restricting the range of future alternative policies or projects, including new or significant changes to land use plans, development plans, zoning regulations or agency comprehensive resource management plans.”

The County appointed the Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS) as project manager, although SCDPW was to serve as project sponsor and SEQRA initiating agency. The County further determined that the process would best be served by public scoping of the DGEIS.

Scoping is undertaken to clearly determine the issues of significance for a project. Scoping initially involves the issuance of a draft list of issues relevant to the project (a Draft Scope). Following the receipt of comments on the Draft Scope, a Final Scope for the DGEIS is created and publicly promulgated.

Scoping requires the solicitation of the concerns from the general public. Therefore, it often includes public meetings to generate comments on the Draft Scope. Other outreach steps are required under SEQRA, including publication notices of the availability of the Draft Scope for comment, and the time limits for the Scoping Process.

SCDHS produced a Draft Scope on August 8, 2002. Notification of the availability of the Draft Scope, and the approximately 45-day comment period (until September 25, 2002), were published in the August 14, 2002 issue of the Environmental Notice Bulletin (see Appendix 2). The same notice included the County’s intent to hold a Scoping Hearing on September 10, 2002. A later edition of the Environmental Notice Bulletin (September 4, 2002) carried a further notice from the County listing the William H. Rogers Legislative Building, Hauppauge, NY, as the venue of the Hearing, and 7:00 pm as the time the Hearing would begin (also in Appendix 2).

The Draft Scope was circulated to prospective members of the CAC, TAC, and Steering Committees, to the CEQ, and to all interested parties who requested one. The mailing of the Draft Scope was intended to reach interested parties prior to the Public Hearing. The Draft Scope was also widely circulated by hand – at the September 5, 2002 CAC meeting, for example.

#### **4. Scoping**

Public Scoping was solicited formally through a September 10, 2002, Public Hearing held in Hauppauge. In addition, informal efforts included two meetings of the CAC (September 5, 2002 and September 23, 2002), a meeting of the TAC (September 5, 2002), and a joint meeting of the TAC-Steering Committee (September 17, 2002). Oral comments were noted for all meetings except the September 5, 2002 TAC meeting; written comments were accepted at all of the meetings, and also separately through September 25, 2002.

The Public Scoping meeting on September 10, 2002, ran from 7 pm until 9:30 pm. CEQ member R.L. Swanson chaired the meeting. A stenographer was provided by the County.

The meeting began with a presentation by the County and the consultant on the scope and project workplan. Following this presentation, comments were accepted from the general public. Speakers were limited to five minutes each. After the public comments were received, the CEQ members were given the opportunity to add their own comments.

Seven members of the County and consultant team presented material for approximately 45 minutes. Thirteen members of the public gave comments thereafter, and several written comments were submitted. Following this, four members of the CEQ made comments on aspects of the plan, scope, and presentation. The transcript of the meeting has been included in the collected Scoping Comments.

The initial meeting of the TAC was held on September 5, 2002, at the Riverhead Legislative Building, from 1 pm to approximately 3 pm. The meeting began with a presentation by the County on the Scope and the project Workplan. The minutes for this meeting were not included in the formal collection of comments on the project.

The initial meeting of the CAC was also held at the Riverhead Legislative Building on September 5, 2002, from 6:30 pm until approximately 9 pm. The County began the meeting with a presentation on the scope and project plan. Discussion followed, and several written comments were submitted. Meeting notes prepared by Laura Bavaro (Office of Ecology, SCDHS) were included in the collected Scoping Comments.

A joint meeting of the TAC and Steering Committee was held on September 17, 2002, from 10 am until approximately 12:30 pm. The meeting consisted of a presentation of the project workplan by the consultant, and comments on various aspects of that plan from the attendees. Detailed minutes of these comments were prepared by John Ellsworth (Cashin Associates). The minutes were included in the collected Scoping Comments.

A second CAC meeting was held September 23, 2002, at the Suffolk County Fire Academy, Yaphank, from 6:30 pm until 9:15 pm. Meeting minutes and a compilation of CAC consensus

comments on both the Scope and the Workplan were prepared by Laura Bavaro. The minutes were included in the collected Scoping Comments.

Scoping closed at the end of business (4:30 pm) on September 25, 2002. Several comments were received after this deadline, including comments not forwarded immediately to the Office of Ecology. All comments were treated as timely, however.

## **5. Comment Compilation**

The Office of Ecology, SCDHS, was originally tasked with comment compilation. It was intended that all comments would be received by SCDHS, and distributed as necessary. However, it became clear that the consultant would require access to all comments to prepare the Final Scope for the County. Therefore, the compilation of the Comments became the responsibility of the consultant, with assistance from the Office of Ecology.

The comments were arranged in approximate chronological order. Strict chronological order was not possible, due to late receipt of three documents noted in Section 4 of this report. Each submission, whether written comment, meeting minute, or transcript, was assigned a unique numerical identification, and all comment pages were consecutively numbered; a Table of Contents was prepared. The Comments Collection was distributed to CEQ by the consultant; and to the CAC, TAC, Steering Committee, and other interested parties by the County.

In all, the comment set consists of 39 documents, including 35 submitted comments, three meeting minutes, and the transcript of the Public Scoping meeting held on September 10, 2002. The meeting minutes were from the September 5, 2002 CAC meeting, the September 17, 2002 Joint TAC-Steering Committee meeting, and the September 23, 2002 CAC meeting. The 35 written comments that were submitted represent the issues and concerns of 31 distinct organizations, agencies, and individuals.

The Comment Compilation was distributed to the CEQ beginning October 10, 2002, and to others shortly thereafter.



## **6. Responses to Comments Document**

The consultant, in cooperation with the County, created a Responses to Comments Document for Scoping. This document is intended to describe in detail how comments were included in the Final Scope and Workplan for the Project.

The Consultant identified 23 key issues that comprised the majority of the issues and concerns raised in written and oral comments. Each of the 23 issues is briefly discussed. For each of these issues, the written comments, transcript, and meeting minutes that addressed the issue are cited. A discussion of how the comments are addressed in either the Final Scope or Workplan is also included.

The Responses to Comments Document was submitted in draft form to the County on October 25, 2002. It was revised and resubmitted to the County on November 15, 2002, for further distribution.

The Responses to Comments Document also comprises Part IV of this Task 1 report.

## **7. Recommended Final Scope**

The consultant, in conjunction with SCDHS and SCDPW, created a final Draft Scope on October 10, 2002. The final Draft Scope reflected the comments received on the Draft Scope, and project reconsideration within the County. The final Draft Scope was circulated to CEQ.

Comments from CEQ on the final Draft Scope were received on October 29, 2002. The final Draft Scope was revised in response to those comments, and the final Draft Scope was submitted to CEQ on November 6, 2002, for consideration by CEQ at its November 20, 2002 meeting. At that meeting, some further revisions were made, and in anticipation of the incorporation of the further changes, the CEQ finalized the Scope. It is anticipated that CEQ will recommend adoption of this Recommended Final Scope (December 2, 2002, attached as Part III of this Task 1 report) to the County Legislature at either the Legislature's December 5, 2002 or December 17, 2002 meeting.

## **8. Workplan Refinement**

On April 30, 2002, SCDPW issued a Request for Proposals for professional services in conjunction with the development of the Suffolk County Vector Control and Wetlands Management Long-term Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. Responses were due June 17, 2002, and were to include a Workplan for the project.

On July 16, 2002, a meeting was held between SCDPW, SCDHS, and Cashin Associates working together with Cameron Engineering and Associates (CA/CE), a short-listed respondent to the RFP. CA/CE submitted an Addendum to the original Workplan on July 23, 2002. The Addendum was further revised and re-submitted on August 17, 2002, in response to a second round of comments dated (August 1, 2002) from SCDPW and SCDHS.

In response to Scoping, including the production of the draft Final Scope, further revisions of the CA/CE Workplan were made. The revised Workplan was submitted to SCDHS on October 17, 2002, in a "redline" version to illustrate the changes created by Scoping. Following receipt of comments from the County the Workplan was finalized November 14, 2002.

The Final Workplan has been included as Part 2 of this Task 1 report.

**APPENDIX 1**

**EAF for the Long-Term Plan**

**see separate file:**

**Task 1 Report**

**Section 1**

**Appendix 1**

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **ENB Notices of the Scoping Comment Meeting**

## Positive Declaration And Scoping Meeting

**Suffolk County** - The Suffolk County Legislature, as lead agency, has determined that the proposed Suffolk County Vector Control and Wetlands Management Long-Term Plan may have a significant effect on the environment, requiring the preparation of a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS). The overall goals of the Long-Term Plan are to:

- Assist Suffolk County in developing an effective long-term vector control program which includes a comprehensive wetlands management component.
- Minimize pesticide usage while protecting public health.
- Preserve and restore wetlands managed by Vector Control via open marsh water management, natural reversion of ditched areas, and other alternatives.

The proposal constitutes a Type I Action as it involves the physical alteration of more than 10 acres throughout the County, and may affect County Parks and a National Natural Landmark. The Long-Term Plan may have a significant effect on the environment, in that it may exceed the criteria set forth in Title 6 NYCRR 617.7(c)(1)(i),(ii) and (iii) as demonstrated in the Environmental Assessment Form. The proposed Long-Term Plan differs greatly from the scaled-back 2002 Annual Plan of Work, most notably in that it will evaluate Open Marsh Water Management in combination with other water management approaches (e.g., ditch reconstruction, rather than mere maintenance) as well as numerous other alternatives to control mosquitoes and manage wetlands. The DGEIS would result in specific recommendations to minimize environmental impact for program implementation, which would eventually guide preparation of future annual Vector Control work plans. Scaled-back Annual Plans of Work will be proposed until such time as the Long-Term Plan is completed.

### DGEIS Public Scoping Period and Public Meeting

The Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality, on behalf of the Suffolk County Legislature as lead agency, will conduct public scoping for the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the Suffolk County Vector Control and Wetlands Management Long-Term Plan. Comments may be provided in writing, or orally at a public meeting to be held on **September 10th at 7 p.m.** (location to be announced). The public comment period opens on August 14, 2002, and comments on draft scope will be accepted until September 25, 2002.

**Contact:** Walter Dawydiak, Chief, Office of Ecology, Suffolk County Department of Health Services, 310 Center Drive, Riverhead NY 11901. Phone #: 852-2077; Fax #: 852-2743; [walter.dawydiak@co.suffolk.ny.us](mailto:walter.dawydiak@co.suffolk.ny.us)

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**Suffolk County** - The Planning Board of the Town of Southold, as lead agency, has determined that the proposed Hog's Neck Peninsula may have a significant adverse impact on the environment and a Draft Environmental Impact Statement must be prepared. A public scoping session will be held on **August 15, 2002 at 3:00 p.m.** at the Southold Town Hall Meeting Room, 53095 Main Road, Southold. The action involves a large number of subdivision applications. The project is located in the Town of Southold.

**Contact:** Bennett Orlovski, Planning Board Office, town of Southold, P. O. Box 1179, Town Hall, 53095 State Route 25, Southold, New York 11971-0959, phone: (631) 765-1938, fax: (631) 765-3136.

<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/enb/20020814/not1.html>

10/24/2002

## Positive Declaration and Scoping Meeting

**Suffolk County** - The Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality, on behalf of the Suffolk County Legislature as lead agency, is conducting public scoping for the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the Suffolk County Vector Control and Wetlands Management Long-Term Plan. Suffolk County hereby publishes notice that the public scoping meeting will be held on **September 10, 2002 at 7 p.m.** at the William H. Rogers Legislators Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, 11787. The date and time of this meeting, were initially published in the August 14, 2002 ENB, along with notices of a positive declaration and a public scoping period. The public comment period opened on August 14, 2002, and comments on the draft scope will be accepted until September 25, 2002.

**Contact:** Walter Dawydiak, Chief, Office of Ecology, Suffolk County Department of Health Services, 310 Center Drive, Riverhead NY 11901. Phone #: 852-2077; Fax #: 852-2743; [walter.dawydiak@co.suffolk.ny.us](mailto:walter.dawydiak@co.suffolk.ny.us)

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<http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/enb/20020904/not1.html>

10/24/2002

