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January 27, 2006

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CERTIFICATE OF THE SECRETARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS ON THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

PROJECT NAME : Northampton Regional Sanitary Landfill
 - Phase 5/5B Expansion

PROJECT MUNICIPALITY : Glendale Road - Northampton

PROJECT WATERSHED : Connecticut River

EOEA NUMBER : 12351

PROJECT PROPONENT : City of Northampton - Board of Health

DATE NOTICED IN MONITOR : December 21, 2005

As Secretary of Environmental Affairs, I hereby determine that the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) submitted on the above project adequately and properly complies with the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (G. L. c. 30, ss. 61-62H) and with its implementing regulations (301 CMR 11.00).

Project Description

As described in the FEIR, the project consists of the Phase 5/5B Expansion of the Northampton Regional Sanitary Landfill. The expansion will create approximately 29.2 acres of lined landfill with 19.7 acres requiring site assignment. Phase 5 is 15.6 acres and Phase 5B is about 4.1 acres on the expansion parcel. The remaining 9.5 acres are a vertical expansion on the existing landfill site. The project includes the construction of a new northern access road for trucks off Glendale Road, a new scale and scale house, and stormwater control facilities. It also includes the construction of a phased landfill capping and a landfill gas management system.

The landfill would accept approximately 325 tons per day (tpd). It would contain about 2.520 million cubic yards of available gross volume, to be filled at a rate of about 50,000 tons per year (tpy) of solid waste. The landfill expansion represents a total area of about 29.2 acres, up to a maximum elevation of 365 feet, including the overlap onto the existing capped landfill.

The landfill expansion would provide capacity for about 21.3 years. It would be developed into approximately six cells, each with about a five-year life. The first cell would be constructed in 2007 and the last cell about 2024. The existing landfill has an estimated operational life until about the end of 2007.

The project is subject to a mandatory EIR. It will require a Site Assignment by the Northampton Board of Health. The expansion will require a Site Suitability Determination, Authorizations to Construct (phase approvals), Authorizations to Operate (phase approvals), and waivers from the Zone II site suitability criteria (310 CMR 16.40(3)(a)(2)) from DEP. In addition, a Sewer Extension/Connection Permit may be required from DEP. The project must comply with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for stormwater discharges. An Order of Conditions will be required from the Northampton Conservation Commission for work within a buffer zone and a local resource area. The Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) have identified the project site as potential Priority Habitat. Because the proponent is not seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth for the project, MEPA jurisdiction is limited to those aspects of the project whose environmental impacts are related to the subject matter of required state permits (wetlands, stormwater, construction, operation, traffic, and wastewater) that may have significant environmental impacts.

The existing landfill accepts 275 tpd. Construction and demolition (C&D) material is allowed as long as the total for the site is less than 50,000 tpy. However, the DEP permit limits the amount of C&D material that can be delivered to the site for processing at 20 tpd and 4,000 tpy. These C&D tonnage limits are independent of the landfill operating tonnage limits. The proponent is proposing to increase its daily tonnage from 275 to 325 tpd. It accepts solid waste from 39 communities. Most of the member communities participate in DEP's Approved Recycling Program. Most of the member communities have also implemented a "pay as you throw" pricing system. Leachate collected at the site is discharged to public sewers for treatment at the Northampton Wastewater Treatment Facility.

On February 25, 2005, a Notice of Project Change (NPC) Certificate was issued for the lined Phase 5 landfill expansion. The Certificate required the preparation of an EIR. The Phase 5 Expansion involved about 29.8 acres instead of the original 16.4 acres. Since the NPC, the expansion has been reduced in area from 30.9 to 29.2 acres to avoid impacts to identified habitat areas for the Eastern Box Turtle.

The proponent has estimated that the proposed landfill expansion would generate approximately between 180 and 200 vehicle trips per day. Vehicles enter and exit the landfill via the entrance driveway on Glendale Road. The proponent has indicated that the Monday through Saturday hours of operation are between 7:00 AM and 5:00 PM (until 8:00 PM for specific events). The facility will be closed on Sundays. It will continue to serve its 39 member communities.

Review of the FEIR:

The FEIR provided a detailed project description with a summary/history of the project. It included existing and proposed site plans in Appendix B. The FEIR included a site plan that showed the proposed lined and unlined portions of the landfill, the composting area, the physical components of the drainage and leachate collection system, and the wetland resource areas. It described the proponent's monitoring program for its proposed and existing landfill liners.

The FEIR identified hazardous waste screening and collection at the landfill. It also identified the extent of leaf and yard composting operations.

The FEIR outlined the proponent's maintenance program for the drainage system. This maintenance program outlined the actual maintenance operations, responsible parties, and back-up systems. In Appendix E, the proponent included the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for its NPDES General Permit for the existing landfill.

The FEIR described how litter impacts on surrounding streets are responded to by the proponent. A monitoring and inspection program for litter was discussed in the FEIR.

The FEIR updated its habitat assessment, and the proponent addressed the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program (NHESP) concerns as stated in their comment letter (MassWildlife) on the DEIR. It summarized the proponent's efforts to work with NHESP.

Mitigation:

The FEIR included a separate chapter on mitigation measures. It included Section 61 Findings for both DEP and NHESP. In the FEIR, the proponent has committed to implement the following mitigation measures:

- Replicate the isolated wetland in an immediately adjacent area to meet the requirements of the local wetlands bylaw.

Provide erosion control barriers, control of dewatering discharges, use of seeding and mulch stabilization practices and short- and long-term stormwater controls to protect wetland resource areas.

- Avoid the defined habitat area of the Eastern Box Turtle.
- Complete a wildlife capture and relocation program within the isolated wetland and the existing detention basin prior to the disturbance of those areas.
- Purchase land to the north of the project site and preserving it as conservation land. This land contains important habitat features.
- Use diversion fencing to prevent wildlife from entering the work site.
- Repair groundwater seeps along the north edge of the gravel pit to preserve the hydrology of the vernal pools.
- Better control of the use of illegal all terrain vehicles on the conservation land north of and adjacent to the project site.
- Stabilize eroding slopes near an identified vernal pool.
- Construct a double composite liner system with a leak detection layer to monitor the upper liner for any leakage into the groundwater. Leachate that is generated will be collected in the drainage sand and piping layer and will be pumped to the Northampton Wastewater Treatment Facility for treatment.
- Install a system of groundwater monitoring wells to routinely check for any changes over time.
- Expand the existing active gas collection system at the site and provide interim gas management techniques such as passive gas wells equipped with solar ignited flares if warranted.
- In order to control dust emissions, the proponent will use water and other dust suppression measures, pave on-site roads to the extent practicable, sweep paved access roads, require trucks accessing the site to be covered, limit vehicle speeds, stabilize disturbed areas with vegetation, vegetate or cover long-term soils stockpiles if necessary, limit engine idling, use low sulfur fuel, maintain engines on landfill equipment, and install particulate filters on equipment.
- In order to control noise generated by the project, the proponent will use properly designed engine enclosures and intake silencers, provide regular equipment maintenance and lubrication, maintain exhaust systems and replace as needed, new equipment will be subject to new product noise emission standards, avoid early morning use of pyrotechnic gull deterrent operations, on-site roadways are established as far from sensitive receptors as practical, employ natural

and/or manmade barriers where possible, limit the use of back-up alarms by using OSHA-approved alternatives, set up tipping operations to allow greater access while decreasing the need to reverse, require all facility users to properly secure loads against rattling and banging, limit vehicle speeds to 20 mph or less, and implement a method to receive, log, and respond to community complaints.

- Provide a stormwater detention basin on the east and one on the west sides of the site with groundwater recharge.
- Reconstruct the northerly site drive to better accommodate tractor-trailers and include a stop sign and stop line.
- Initiate a publicity campaign to inform landfill users that separate driveways are provided for trucks and other vehicles.
- Upgrade pavement markings and provide directional signage to the landfill at the intersection of Glendale Road/West Farms Road/Route 66.
- Design and install a containerized landfill gas fired engine driven generating system for the beneficial use of the landfill gas.

These mitigation measures are estimated to cost about \$1.73 million. Because the proponent has reduced the Phase 5 landfill footprint by 1.7 acres to preserve the turtle habitat, this lost landfill volume is about 17,700 cubic yards, which has an estimated value of about \$682,500 at today's tipping fee. The proponent has also paid \$225,000 for the purchase of 20 acres of property to the north of the site for turtle habitat with a conservation restriction placed on it.

January 27, 2006

Date


Stephen R. Pritchard

cc: Craig Givens, DEP/WERO
Charles Cline, DEP/WERO
Senator Stan Rosenberg
Senator Stephen M. Brewer

Comments received:

DEP/WERO, 1/20/06
MassWildlife, 1/20/06

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