

NOTIFICATION

Environmental Assessment for the Keene Valley Fire Department Facility Replacement Project, Town of Keene, Essex County, N.Y.
FEMA 4020-DR-NY

Notification is hereby given to the public of the intent of the Department of Homeland Security-Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS-FEMA) to provide assistance to the New York State Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, (NYSDHSES) as Grantee, and the Keene Valley Fire Department, as Subgrantee, for the construction of the Facility Replacement Project at 10858 Rt 73/9N, in the Town of Keene, New York. The proposed action involves the construction of a new 8000 square-foot Fire Department Building on a 1-acre parcel. The Fire Department Building experienced storm damage due to flooding From August 26 - September 5, 2011, high winds and heavy rains associated with Hurricane Irene caused flooding in watersheds throughout the state. The storm incident period was declared a major disaster by President Barack Obama on August 31, 2011. Federal public assistance was made available to affected communities and certain nonprofit organizations per FEMA 4020-DR-NY and in accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act of 1974 (Stafford Act; 42 U.S.C. 5172), as amended. The FEMA project worksheet reference number is 4020-DR-NY PW#7289.

The Subgrantee has elected to construct the new 8000 square-foot Fire Department Building on a 1-acre parcel at 10858 NYS Rt. 9N. The applicant's original building at Hurricane Road sustained damage as a result of overtopping of Gulf Brook. Project elements involve demolition of several small mid-20th century buildings found on the new lot, site grading, facility construction, a stormwater management system, water and sewer service connections and landscaping. The original Fire Department Building would be demolished, and its site would be stabilized.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared by Essex County Office of Community Resources on behalf of the Subgrantee, and submitted to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The HUD EA resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). HUD's EA concluded that "The project is not of sufficient size, scale or mass and does not exceed the threshold for preparation of a [n environmental impact] statement nor will the project have significant impact on the human environment under NEPA." FEMA has conducted a review of HUD's EA and has adopted it pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's Implementing Procedures for NEPA at 40 CFR 1506.3.

A cooperating federal agency may adopt another federal or state agency's EA, and is encouraged to do so when such adoption would save time and money (40 CFR 1500.4(n), 1500.5(h) and 1506.3), providing the original document satisfies the agency's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. The cooperating agency may also reject or supplement portions of the original agency's review to satisfy its requirements. In lieu of preparing a new EA, FEMA has reviewed the HUD EA to assess the proposed project's impacts on the human environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 through 1508), and FEMA regulations for environmental consideration pertaining to NEPA compliance (44 CFR Part 10). In reviewing the HUD EA, FEMA agrees that the proposed action will not result in any known significant adverse impacts to geology, hydrology, air quality, floodplains, wetlands, water quality, wildlife or fisheries habitat, vegetation, socioeconomics, public safety, transportation or agricultural or forest land. However, FEMA has undertaken an independent review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) to clarify the location of the project site and identify potential adverse effects resulting from excavation in an archeologically sensitive

area and demolition of structures that are 50 years old or older. FEMA has obtained concurrence from the New York State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) that no historic properties are affected by the proposed action (dated October 26, 2012; SHPO response reference # 12PR04625, dated October 30, 2012).

In preparation of the EA, the HUD coordinated with federal and state agencies such as the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New York State Housing Trust Fund Corporation, the New York State Historic Preservation Office, and the Adirondack Park Agency. Public notice was issued in the *Press Republican* newspaper on August 30, 2012. The public comment period for the proposed project was open from August 30, 2012, to September 14, 2012. No adverse public comments or concerns were received either in person or in writing.