

**Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
For Avian Influenza Control in Commercial Poultry Operations
In North and South Carolinas, April 2020**

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), prepared an environmental assessment (EA) analyzing potential environmental consequences of an adaptive management approach for control of pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks in commercial poultry operations throughout the United States. The EA and its associated FONSI are incorporated by reference in this document, and are available from:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Veterinary Services
Science and Policy
4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD 20737

The 2015 FONSI accepted the preferred alternative which allows APHIS to conduct avian influenza control activities on an as-needed basis during outbreaks anywhere in the nation using an adaptive management approach. At that time, these activities typically included depopulation, transport, disposal of carcasses, and disinfection of equipment and premises.

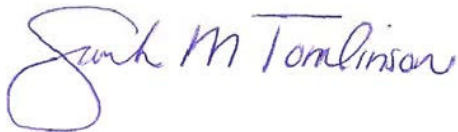
In 2020, an avian influenza outbreak occurred in North Carolina (NC) and South Carolina (SC) necessitating the emergency use of burial for turkeys in SC, indoor composting in NC, and in all cases bird depopulation using foam. The foam technology does not contain perfluorochemical components (Phos-Chek® or Silv-Ex Plus®). All disposal was performed in accordance with provisions in the adaptive management approach. All disposal was performed as directed by the respective State Animal Health officials with the understanding that the disposal decision was in accordance with all state laws. In SC, this includes S.C. Code of Regulations chapter 61 section 43 part 200.130. Dead Animal Disposal Requirements which requires an Animal Facility Management Plan and Dead Animal Disposal Plan for each location.

APHIS expects there to be limited environmental impacts as analyzed and mitigated in the 2015 EA. APHIS bases this expectation on its subsequent avian influenza control experience in several states including California, Utah, Nevada, and Tennessee. APHIS finds this proposed action does not represent any unique or unexpected circumstances that raise the potential for significant impacts, and there is no significant new information of relevance to the proposed action or its impacts. For these reasons, preparation of additional environmental documentation in the form of site-specific EAs would not meaningfully inform the decision-making process.

APHIS does not anticipate environmental impacts from the depopulation and composting measures based on their known characteristics and proven effectiveness. APHIS does not anticipate significant environmental impacts from the recommended burial of carcasses at the selected sites. APHIS does not anticipate environmental impacts based on the limited

number, locations, and duration of these activities. APHIS does not anticipate environmental impacts to threatened or endangered species or critical habitats from these regulatory actions. For these reasons, APHIS determined there would be no significant impact to the human environment from the implementation of avian influenza control activities in NC and SC.

Further, APHIS finds that implementation of avian influenza control activities under the adaptive management approach does not pose highly disproportionate adverse effects to minority or low-income populations, Tribes or Tribal members. APHIS finds these activities do not pose disproportionate adverse effects to children. APHIS has not found evidence of any significant environmental impacts associated with the avian influenza control activities under an adaptive management approach in NC and SC. Finally, APHIS finds that an environmental impact statement does not need to be prepared, and that the avian influenza control activities may proceed.



April 8, 2020

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