

# **Finding of No Significant Impact Gypsy Moth Cooperative Eradication Program in Hennepin County, Minnesota**

## **Environmental Assessment May 2017**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) prepared an environmental assessment (EA) evaluating the impacts of a treatment for gypsy moth in Hennepin County, Minnesota. The EA is incorporated into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by reference and is available at the APHIS website at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/ea/> or from-

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Bloomington, MN 55420

The draft EA was made available to the public for comment in March 2017, and was prepared to evaluate the potential impacts to human health and the environment from the proposed treatment of a 329 acre block in Hennepin County, MN with the microbial insecticide, *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (Btk), for gypsy moth control. The use of Btk for eradication was previously evaluated in an Environmental Impact Statement as one of six alternatives for treating gypsy moth and found to be the most effective method for treating gypsy moth outbreaks similar to the one described in Hennepin County, MN. The EA was prepared and made available to the public for a 30-day public comment period beginning on March 30, 2017, on the APHIS web site at <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/ea/>. Notice of the availability of the EA was published in The Star Tribune on March 30, 2017. APHIS received no comments on the EA. The analysis in the EA suggests that the treatment of gypsy moth in a 329 acre block in Hennepin County, Minnesota with Btk will not result in significant impacts to human health and the environment. Two aerial applications of Btk will be applied with an interval of approximately five to 10 days between each application. These applications are estimated to occur sometime in early to mid-May 2017. The exact date of application will be timed so that the applications occur during the early larval stages when GM caterpillars hatch from their eggs and are most susceptible to treatments.

APHIS has consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and has determined that the preferred treatment alternative may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the threatened Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). APHIS received a concurrence letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on this determination on December 28, 2016.

There are no disproportionate adverse effects to minorities, low-income populations, or children, in accordance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice

in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations,” and Executive Order 13045, “Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks.” Available risk assessment and toxicity data that is summarized in this EA show low risk to the human population, including children, from the proposed use of Btk. The potential for impacts to historic properties, including sites of tribal importance were evaluated pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. A letter from the State Historic Preservation Office of the Minnesota Historical Society received on March 7, 2017 confirmed that no historic properties occur in the proposed treatment block.

I have determined that there would be no significant impact on the quality of the human environment from the implementation of the preferred alternative. APHIS' finding of no significant impact from the preferred alternative is based on the results of the analysis in this EA. Lastly, because I have not found evidence of significant environmental impact associated with the proposed program, I further find that no additional environmental documentation needs to be prepared and that the program may proceed.

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Erin Stiers  
State Plant Health Director - Minnesota  
Plant Protection and Quarantine  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

5/2/2017

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Date