

Finding of No Significant Impact for the Spotted Lanternfly Eradication Program in Berks, Montgomery, and Lehigh Counties, Pennsylvania

**Environmental Assessment
June 2015**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) prepared an environmental assessment (EA) evaluating the impacts of an eradication program for the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) (*Lycorma delicatula*) in Berks, Montgomery, and Lehigh Counties, Pennsylvania. The EA is incorporated into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by reference and is available at the APHIS website at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/ea/> or from-

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The draft EA was prepared to evaluate the potential impacts to human health and the environment from the proposed eradication program for the SLF. The EA was made available to the public for a 30-day public comment period beginning on May 5, 2015, on the APHIS web site at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/planthealth/ea/>. Notice of the availability of the EA was published in the Reading, Boyertown, and Norristown newspapers. APHIS received no comments on the EA. The analysis in the EA suggests that the proposed SLF Eradication Program will not have significant impacts to human health and the environment. The SLF eradication program proposed several measures to address the recent detection in Berks County, Pennsylvania, as well as Montgomery and Lehigh counties if SLF is detected in those counties in the future. Eradication efforts may include any or all of the following: regulatory control, surveys, egg mass scraping, sanitation, tree removal, and insecticide and herbicide applications.

- Regulatory control - consists of a quarantine established to eliminate intrastate and interstate movement and reduce human-assisted spread of SLF. High-risk host material from within the quarantine area would be prohibited from moving outside the area, except under a permit issued by APHIS.
- Survey/Egg mass scraping - Detection survey will use visual inspection and sweep netting to determine if SLF is present. Egg mass scraping consists of scraping egg masses from plants with a stiff plastic card into bags with an alcohol solution to cause mortality.
- Sanitation - Sanitation of all other green waste within a quarter-mile of SLF detections that may include chipping or grinding the debris, and disposal through incineration or burning.

- Tree removal – The invasive species, tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), will be removed up to a quarter-mile radius from infested trees. Herbicide treatment of the stumps will be used during periods of the year when the phloem moves toward the root.
- Insecticide applications – Insecticide treatments for select tree of heaven trees will be made using ground equipment by certified applicators

APHIS consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding the potential impacts of the SLF Eradication Program to federally listed species. APHIS received a letter dated June 12, 2015 that the proposed program would not adversely affect the federally listed northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), Indiana bat (*M. sodalis*), bog turtle (*Glyptemys muhlenbergii*), and northeastern bulrush (*Scirpus ancistrochaetus*) which are known to occur in the proposed action area. Protection measures to ensure protection of the bog turtle and northeastern bulrush include 100 foot no-pesticide application buffers from wetland areas. Wetland areas will be identified by qualified wetland staff from the Program prior to pesticide treatments.

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.” SLF eradication activities are not currently anticipated on historic properties; however, in cases where there may be these types of treatments, they would be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer and other appropriate contacts to ensure the program will have no impact to historic properties, including sites of tribal importance, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

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 the 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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6-17-15

Date