The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) which analyzes alternatives for control of an outbreak of the Mexican fruit fly (Mexfly), *Anastrepha ludens* (Loew), an exotic agricultural pest detected at actionable levels in the Long Beach region of Los Angeles County, California. USDA’s involvement in a Mexfly cooperative eradication program with California was triggered on October 25, 2018, after the identification of a mated female Mexfly bearing almost fully developed eggs, collected from a McPhail trap in a tangerine tree. The EA is incorporated by reference in this document, and is available from:

USDA–APHIS–PPQ
State Plant Health Director
650 Capital Mall, Suite 6400
Sacramento, CA  95814

or

USDA–APHIS–PPQ
National Fruit Fly Policy Manager
4700 River Road, Unit 26
Riverdale, MD  20737

The EA for this program analyzed three alternatives: (1) no action, (2) quarantine and commodity certification, and (3) eradication. Each of these alternatives is associated with potential environmental consequences. USDA selected the eradication program using an integrated pest management approach because of its capability to achieve eradication in a way that reduces the overall magnitude of potential environmental consequences.

USDA reviewed the program area and determined that the program will have no effect on listed species under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service jurisdiction. The program may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect listed species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service in the program area. Should the program area expand, or a new species or critical habitat be listed that may occur in the program area, USDA will reinitiate consultation with the appropriate agency, as necessary. In addition, implementation of the preferred alternative is not expected to have any adverse effect on migratory birds nor their flight corridors, or other nontarget species in the program area.

I find implementation of the proposed program will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment. I have considered and based my finding of no significant impact on the quantitative and qualitative risk assessments of the proposed pesticides, the analysis in the referenced EA, and on my review of the program’s operational characteristics. In addition, I find the program has fulfilled consultation requirements associated with the human environment (including low-income and minority populations, children, and Tribal, cultural, and historical resources). Lastly, because I have not found evidence of significant environmental impacts associated with this proposed program, I find an environmental impact statement does not need to be prepared and the program may proceed.

Helene Wright
State Plant Health Director, California
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

November 6, 2018