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

Supplemental Environmental Assessment
April 2018

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) prepared a supplemental environmental assessment (SEA) evaluating the impacts of a treatment for gypsy moth in Hennepin County, Minnesota The SEA 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-

USDA-APHIS-PPQ,
900 American Blvd East, Suite 204
Bloomington, MN 55420

The draft SEA evaluated the potential impacts to human health and the environment from the proposed treatment of a 310 acre block in the Lowry Hill area 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 SEA was made available to the public for a 30-day public comment period beginning on February 26, 2018, 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. APHIS and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture received one comment on the EA supporting the program. The analysis in the SEA suggests that the treatment of gypsy moth in a 310 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. A third application will be made to 66 acres within the treatment area due to a higher density of caterpillars and egg masses in the area. These applications are estimated to occur sometime in early to mid-May 2018. 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*) and the rusty patched bumble bee (*Bombus affinis*). APHIS received a concurrence letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on this determination on March 28, 2018.

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 29, 2018 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 SEA. 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.

ERIN STIERS

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April 3, 2018

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

Date