Finding of No Significant Impact

Mexican Fruit Fly Cooperative Eradication Program
Rio Grande Valley, Texas
Environmental Assessment
March 2018

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA) prepared an environmental assessment (EA) that analyzes alternatives for control of an outbreak of the Mexican fruit fly (Mexfly), Anastrepha ludens (Loew), an exotic agricultural pest often detected at actionable levels in the Rio Grande Valley region of Texas. USDA’s involvement in a new Mexfly cooperative eradication program with the State of Texas was triggered on March 13, 2018, after confirmed identification of one mated female Mexfly in the San Perlia region of Willacy County, Texas. The EA is incorporated by reference in this document, and is available from:

USDA–APHIS–PPQ or USDA–APHIS–PPQ
State Plant Health Director Center for Plant Health Science & Technology
903 San Jacinto Boulevard, Suite 270 1730 Varsity Drive, Suite 400
Austin, TX 78701 Raleigh, NC 27606

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 completed a programmatic Section 7 consultation for a potential seven-county Mexfly program area, and has determined that program activities may affect, but are not likely to adversely affect federally listed species or critical habitat with the implementation of protection measures. USDA contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Texas Coastal Ecological Services Field Office, in Alamo, Texas, to identify species locations in the program area and determine if protection measures must be implemented. USDA will coordinate with FWS if the program area expands to ensure that federally listed species and critical habitat are protected. In addition, implementation of the preferred alternative is not expected to have any adverse effect on migratory birds or 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.

Stuart W. Kuehn
State Plant Health Director, Texas
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

April 16, 2018
Date