

Section 6

Public Involvement

6.1 Public Coordination

In the Federal Register of April 28, 2000, the US Army Corps of Engineers New York District (USACE) published a notice of intent to prepare a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for proposed Route 92. The notice of intent encouraged interested parties to submit their names and addresses to the USACE contact for inclusion on the distribution list for the draft and final EIS and related public notices.

Written comments on the proposed scope of the EIS were accepted for 45 days following publication of the notice of intent. In addition, USACE held a public scoping meeting on June 8, 2000, at the Holiday Inn Princeton on US Route 1 at Ridge Road, near the western terminus of proposed Route 92. The public scoping meeting was announced 30 days in advance and was publicized through mailings and on the USACE-New York District website.

At the public scoping meeting, USACE received oral and written comments on the proposed scope of the EIS. Commenters included officials from South Brunswick, Plainsboro, Franklin and Hopewell townships; residents of the area; and representatives of environmental and citizen groups, a construction laborers union, and a trucking organization.

6.2 Permits/Legal Requirements

Proposed Route 92 requires a permit from USACE allowing filling of wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC 1344). This permit is commonly called a "Section 404 permit." NJTA submitted an application for a Section 404 permit for proposed Route 92 on January 6, 1999. USACE conducted a public hearing on the application on March 29, 1999. This EIS will assist USACE in determining whether to issue a Section 404 permit for the project. The EIS process is following USACE procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 33 CFR parts 230 and 325.

NJTA submitted an application for a freshwater wetlands individual permit (FWIP) for proposed Route 92 to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) in September 1996. On March 29, 1999, NJDEP issued the FWIP and Water Quality Certificate for proposed Route 92. The FWIP and Water Quality Certificate expired March 29, 2004.

Because implementation of proposed Route 92 would involve construction in flood plains, the project also requires a stream encroachment permit from NJDEP. NJTA submitted an application for a stream encroachment permit for proposed Route 92 on November 21, 1996. Six revisions and supplements to the application have been

submitted, the last of which was submitted on April 21, 1999. NJDEP has not acted on the application.

The Freehold Soil Conservation District must certify the soil erosion and sediment control plan for proposed Route 92. The plan was submitted for certification on July 30, 1997 and was certified on April 6, 1998. The certification expired on October 6, 2001. The soil erosion and sediment control plan will have to be resubmitted for recertification.

6.3 Cooperating Agencies

Federal

United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 2
United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service

State

New Jersey Department of Transportation