

Finding of No Significant Impact Cooperative Gypsy Moth Eradication Program in Snohomish County, Washington State

Site-Specific Environmental Assessment April 2020

The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) prepared an environmental assessment (EA) evaluating the impacts of treatments for gypsy moth in Snohomish County, WA. The EA is incorporated in this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by reference and is available at the WSDA website <https://agr.wa.gov/departments/insects-pests-and-weeds/gypsy-moth/control-efforts/current-control-efforts>

The EA was prepared to evaluate the potential impacts to human health and the environment from the proposed treatment of 1,311 total acres in two locations in Snohomish County, WA, with the biological insecticide, *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *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 moths and was found to be the most effective method for treating gypsy moth outbreaks similar to the ones described in the two areas in Washington. The EA was made available to the public for a 30-day public comment period beginning on March 6, 2020, on the WSDA website and a library in the affected areas. Notice of the availability of the EA was published once per week for 30 days in the Everett Herald starting on March 6, 2020. Other outreach activities were described in the Draft EA. No public comments were received during the 30-day comment period.

The analysis in the EA suggests that the Btk treatments for gypsy moth on 1,311 acres in Snohomish County, WA, will not result in significant impacts to human health and the environment. Three applications of Btk will be applied with an interval of approximately three to ten days between each application. These applications are estimated to start sometime in late-April or early-May, 2020. The exact date of applications will be timed so that treatments occur during early larval stages (late 1st and 2nd instar) when the gypsy moths are most susceptible to the insecticide. WSDA will notify occupants in the affected areas about the upcoming eradication activities through bulk mailings and social media. WSDA will also offer a prior notification list upon which interested parties can request to be placed. Persons on the list will receive a robocall, email or text message the day before treatments occur.

Reasons for the finding of no significant impact include:

- Btk, used as described in the environmental assessment (EA), present minimal risk of significant impact on human health.
- It is not anticipated that any non-target animal or plant populations would be adversely affected. Any detrimental effects on susceptible non-target organisms

would be transient and these populations would recover as individuals from nearby untreated areas re-colonized the treatment areas.

- No threatened, endangered, or sensitive species would be adversely affected by this eradication project.
- No detrimental effects on vegetation, water, or soil are known or anticipated due to this eradication program.
- No cumulative effects are known or anticipated.

The USDA-APHIS consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Both agency concurred with the determination that there would be no effect to listed species in the program areas.

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”, there are no disproportionate adverse effects to minorities, low-income populations or children in the treatment areas. Furthermore, no historic properties or sites of tribal importance would be affected by treatments.

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 EA. Lastly, because I have not found evidence of significant environmental impact associated with the proposed program, I further find no additional environmental documentation needs to be prepared and the program may proceed.

4/8/2020

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Date