



Western Nassau County Aquifer Committee
Coordinated by Residents For A More Beautiful Port Washington
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June 21, 2017

Vincent Sapienza, P.E., Acting Commissioner
Angela Licata, Deputy Commissioner of Sustainability
New York City Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Environmental Planning and Analysis
59-17 Junction Boulevard, 11th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373-5108

Dear Acting Commissioner Sapienza and Deputy Commissioner Licata;

We, the undersigned, ask the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYC DEP) to incorporate the data and findings from the US Geological Survey's (USGS) **Delineation of the Hydrogeologic Framework and Saltwater-Freshwater Interface and Determination of Water-Supply Sustainability Study of Long Island, New York** (Groundwater Sustainability Study) into the analysis of the proposed In-City Water Supply Resiliency Project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). In addition, we respectfully request that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) allow the USGS to complete the Groundwater Sustainability Study before making a decision on NYC DEP's application to renew the Water Supply/Water Withdrawal permit (DEC Permit #2-6399-00005/00001, which expires on December 31, 2017) for the Queens Groundwater system.

The Western Nassau County Aquifer Committee, which is comprised of elected officials, water suppliers, environmental advocacy organizations, and individuals in Nassau County, work collaboratively with all levels of government to ensure the proper science and technology is in place to shape best management practices of our fragile sole source aquifer.

With the heightened incidence of contamination and the continued threat of saltwater intrusion due to various causes including the potential reactivation of Queens Wells, our committee has worked for more than two years with the USGS to shape a comprehensive sustainability study to accurately predict impacts of various scenarios to our Long Island groundwater supply. In addition to the reactivation of the Queens Wells, these scenarios include development, drought, climate change, conservation and more. The Groundwater Sustainability Study finally affords a technologically advanced groundwater flow model, which will include current data from a network of *new* deep aquifer observation wells to fill in *existing data gaps* throughout Queens, Nassau and Suffolk County. We need data collection that includes streamflow measurements

throughout Long Island as well as estimates of future Queens and Nassau County groundwater withdrawals especially *during peak season* (emphasis added), which is not currently addressed in the Draft Scope of Work for the DEIS.

This long-awaited sustainability study should not be taken lightly. Governor Andrew Cuomo has spearheaded this effort holding a heralded press conference a year ago to announce his support for the Sustainability Study. He appointed the DEC to oversee the Groundwater Sustainability Study with a steering committee of esteemed stakeholders.

Today the study is well underway as well drilling has begun, and stakeholders meet regularly with the DEC and USGS to discuss progress.

We cannot ignore History and Science.

Historically, saltwater intrusion in Brooklyn and Queens has led to compromised groundwater quality beneath Brooklyn and Queens and has contributed to saltwater intrusion beneath the southwest and western corners of Nassau County.

It is most notable that the DEIS Draft Scope of Work does not mention that, in 2007, The Jamaica Water Supply Company discontinued operating the water supply wells to the communities in southeastern Queens and portions of Nassau County because of poor groundwater quality caused by saltwater contamination. It is imperative that our water supply is not further put at risk. We cannot afford further saltwater contamination at a time when Long Island's drinking water supply is at a tipping point.

We also question the confidence given in the DEIS Draft Scope of Work to the "so-called" robust data records kept on Long Island as a basis for the validity of the proposed model to be used for analyzing the different pumping scenarios. The use of historical data only to validate baseline saltwater condition interface positions is unacceptable. It has been 30 years since the position of the saltwater-freshwater interface in the Magothy Aquifer was delineated using water quality sampling in Southeastern Queens and Southern Nassau Counties. Today, *no one* knows where the saltwater interface is actually located. The NYC DEP model will be *incapable* of answering this fundamental question.

That is why we urge the USGS be allowed to complete The Groundwater Sustainability Study with its updated technologically advanced modelling system and new wells so that this new data can enhance the existing hydrologic data that is referred to in the DEP DEIS.

We cannot afford to rush.

We ask the DEP and DEC to give the USGS the time they require to compile the regional data and information from the Groundwater Sustainability Study to ensure that the Proposed Project is sustainable and reasonable before making a decision that could change the future of Long Island. Long Island has no reservoir or surface water alternatives. Our aquifers are our only

source of drinking water. Long Island's aquifers cannot afford any risks or missteps; they are already showing signs of fragility,:

- **We have heightened threats of contamination from over 150 superfund sites.** Most public water supply wells in Nassau County have some form of mitigation treatment. Nassau County is struggling with the largest concentration of superfund sites in New York State including the Navy/Grumman in Bethpage on the east side of the county to the Lockheed Martin plume in Western Nassau. The Groundwater Sustainability Study will investigate how these sites are affected by withdrawal demands on the regional groundwater system. However, the DEIS Draft Scope of Work is silent on how potential shifts to this complex set of plumes will be successfully addressed within its own scope and modeling approach. A qualitative analysis based only on information included in publically available databases is *not sufficient*.
- **We have new, very troubling threats of unregulated contaminants.** Television and print news cycles have been dominated by threats of 1,4 Dioxane, Chromium 6 and Perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs), known carcinogens, to Long Island's water supply. These plumes are encroaching on water supply wells in many Western Nassau communities.
- **We have Saltwater advancing toward both the north and south shores of Nassau County,** putting a number of drinking water wells at risk of irreversible chloride contamination. Nassau is experiencing significant saltwater intrusion into all three of its aquifers, even the Lloyd Aquifer. It has been decades since a fresh look at this regional problem has been undertaken, and with the rapid rise in sea level due to climate change, we must seriously address the potential that saltwater intrusion may be much closer to essential public water supply wells than we know.
- **We don't have the position of saltwater-freshwater interface** in the Magothy Aquifer delineated. Even if the City can tell us through their New York City groundwater model, as cited in the DEIS, how many feet the interface will advance each year with their pumping, we have no confidence in the baseline condition interface location. A wrong baseline interface location can pose *major and irreversible risks*.
- **Lloyd aquifer is threatened.** USGS reports suggest that portions of the Lloyd Aquifer may be experiencing active saltwater intrusion in Queens and Nassau County. There are four Lloyd wells within the Queens Groundwater system that may aggravate this problem. The NYC Groundwater Model will not be able to confirm or refute this risk.

Without a comprehensive scientific study with a technologically advanced groundwater flow model using a network of existing and *new* deep aquifer observation wells throughout Queens, Nassau, and Suffolk County, which includes current data, **the DEIS can not adequately analyze the potential impacts from the Proposed Project.**

Thanks to Governor Cuomo, the Groundwater Sustainability Study will be using open source scientific data collection to determine public supply sustainable yield of wells within Queens, Nassau and Suffolk Counties and regionally within the aquifers in a variety of scenarios including activation of Queens Groundwater system.

We, the undersigned, urge that the Groundwater Sustainability Study be completed and thoroughly vetted before any well permits are considered for the Queens Groundwater system. We have before us today, the opportunity for advancing the science of groundwater flow modeling and the movement of the freshwater/saltwater interfaces under realistic scenarios in our region. This important study will allow informed planning decisions and strategies, and- positive actions to protect the regional groundwater resource. Remember, Long Island has no reservoir or surface water alternatives. Our aquifers are our only source of drinking water. Please don't ignore Long Island and move forward with science.

SIGNATORS:

DELECTED OFFICIALS

NY STATE:

NYS Senator Todd Kaminsky, 9th State Senate District

NYS Senator Kemp Hannon, 6th State Senate District

NYS Assemblyman Anthony D'Urso, 16th Assembly District

NASSAU COUNTY:

Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano

Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, 11th District

Nassau County Legislator Rose Marie Walker, 17th District

Nassau County Legislator Ellen Birnbaum, 10th District

TOWN OF NORTH HEMPSTEAD:

Supervisor Judi Bosworth, Town of North Hempstead

Councilwoman Dina De Giorgio, Town of North Hempstead 6th District

Councilwoman Anna Kaplan , Town of North Hempstead, 4th District

Councilman Peter Zuckerman, 2nd District

Councilwoman Lee Seeman, 5th District

Councilman Angelo Ferrara, 3rd District

CITY OF LONG BEACH

City Manager Jack Schnirman, City of Long Beach

Councilman Scott Mandel, City of Long Beach

Councilwoman Chumi Diamond, City of Long Beach

Councilwoman Anissa Moore, City of Long Beach

City Council VP Anthony Eramo, City of Long Beach

Len Torres, City of Long Beach Council President

VILLAGES:

Mayor Bob Weitzner, Village Of Port Washington North

Mayor Steven Weinberg Village of Thomaston

Mayor Adam Hoffman Village of Lake Success

Robert S. Bernstein, Former Mayor Village of Lake Success, Former head of Environmental Commission

Mayor Nora Haagenon , Village of Baxter Estates

Mayor Barbara C. Donno, Village of Plandome Manor

Mayor Lloyd Williams, Village of Plandome

Trustee Don Richardson, Village of Plandome

Mayor Robert McNamara, Village of Flower Hill

II)WATER SUPPLIERS

Water Authority of Great Neck North

Michael C. Kalnick, Chairperson, Mayor Village of Kings Point

Ralph J. Kreitzman, Vice-Chairperson Water Authority of Great Neck North

Robert Graziano, Deputy Chairperson Water Authority of Great Neck North

Pedram Bral, Mayor Village of Great Neck

Jean Celender, Mayor Village of Great Neck Plaza

Carol Frank, Representative Town of North Hempstead

Dan Levy, Mayor Village of Saddle Rock

Susan Lopatkin, Mayor Village of Kensington

Michael Smiley, Representative Village of Great Neck Estates

Steven Weinberg, Mayor Village of Thomaston

Gregory C. Graziano, Superintendent Water Authority of Great Neck North

Manhasset-Lakeville Water District

Mark S. Sauvigne, Chairman

Brian J. Morris, Treasurer

Steven L. Flynn, Secretary

Paul J. Schrader, P.E., Superintendent

Roslyn Water District

William K. Costigan, Commissioner

Michael Kosinski, Commissioner

Sanford Klein, Commissioner

Richard Passariello, Superintendent

Port Washington Water District

David Brackett, Chairman

Peter Meyer, Secretary

Mindy Germain, Treasurer

Paul J. Granger, P.E. ; Superintendent

Water Authority of Western Nassau County

Board of Directors:

John Ardito

George Bakich

Christopher Gorman

Gregory Ifill

Dominick Longobardi

Susan Powderly

Curtis Axelsen

Marianna Wohlgemuth

Cherie Zacker

Superintendent: Michael Tierney

Bethpage Water District

John R. Sullivan, Commissioner

John F. Coumatos, Commissioner

Theresa M. Black, Commissioner

Michael J. Boufis, Superintendent

III) ORGANIZATIONS

Western Nassau Aquifer Committee, Honorable Michelle Schimel

North Shore Land Alliance, Inc. President Lisa W. Ott

Water for Long Island Chairperson Sarah Meyland

Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Executive Director Adrienne Esposito
Grassroots Environmental Education, Inc. Executive Director Patricia J. Wood
Friends of the Bay, Executive Director Paul DeOrsay
Long Island Pine Barrens Society, Executive Director Richard Amper
Residents For A More Beautiful Port Washington, Chairman Curt Trinko
Long Island Water Conference, Chairman Stan Carey
Amsterdam at Harborside Public Affairs and Advocacy, Chairperson Judith Schmertz
Surfrider Foundation Central Long Island Chapter, Chairperson Michael Regan
PW Green, President Elizabeth Moran
Sludge Stoppers Task Force Co-Founder and Member of Long Beach Environmental
Advisory Board, Scott Bochner
All Our Energy, Gorge Povall, Director
Rocky Point Civic Association, President Charles Bevington
Open Space Council, Karen Blumer
NYIT Center for Water Resources Management, Director Sarah Meyland

CC:

NYS Department Environmental Conservation Commissioner Basil Seggos
NYS Department Environmental Conservation Region 1 Commissioner Carrie Meek Gallagher
Sangamithra Iyer, P.E. Director of Office of Water Supply Infrastructure & Watershed
Assessment New York City Department of Environmental Protection