

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

Date: November 18, 2014

Project Name: Valley Service Road Extension

Municipality: North Haven

Staff Contact: Mark Alexander

This assessment is being conducted in conformance to the Connecticut Department of Transportation's (CTDOT) Environmental Classification Document (ECD) to determine Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) obligations.

Project Description:

Valley Service Road, a town owned and maintained roadway, begins at Connecticut Route 22 (Bishop Street) and extends northerly approximately 9,500 feet to a cul-de-sac. It is a 32 foot wide, paved, two-way road carrying one lane of traffic in each direction. The southerly 3,100 feet of Valley Service Road is currently open to the public. It provides access to an On-Ramp to Interstate 91 Southbound, various businesses, and the undeveloped land on each side. The remaining roadway is presently not intended to be open to the public and is blocked. This project involves the extension of Valley Service Road from the general location of its existing terminus, a cul-de-sac, approximately 950 feet to the existing perimeter road around the former Pratt and Whitney site, now called the 415 Washington Avenue Partners LLC site. The section of this perimeter road from the proposed intersection of Valley Service Road, east to Washington Street will become a public road upon completion of the Valley Service Road extension. The purpose of this proposed project is to improve traffic circulation in the project area by making Valley Service Road a through road open to the public.

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) Section 22a-1a-3 Determination of Environmental Significance (Direct/Indirect)

1. *Impact on air and water quality or on ambient noise levels*
 - a) *Air Quality* – No negative impacts are anticipated. The project is located within the boundaries of the portion of the state which has been classified as attainment maintenance for carbon monoxide and PM 10 and non-attainment for PM 2.5 and Ozone. Potential air quality impacts associated with this type of project would be the result of increased vehicular traffic associated with the road improvements. Mobile source emissions tend to be greatest near locations where vehicles accumulate, slow down and idle for a period of time (e.g., at signalized intersections.) However, this project does not involve the installation of traffic signals nor will it have any negative impact on any signalized intersections within the immediate project area. On the

contrary, the purpose of this project is to improve traffic circulation in the project area by making Valley Service Road a through road open to the public. This project has the potential to divert traffic away from signalized intersections located along Route 5, which would result in a reduction of the number of vehicles idling at these intersections.

- b) *Water Quality*- The roadway will cross inland wetlands associated with the Quinnipiac River floodplain. The jurisdiction over inland wetlands depends on the nature of the applicant. Since the Town of North Haven will be the applicant, inland wetlands are regulated by the North Haven Inland Wetlands Commission, pursuant to section 22a-42 of the CGS.

Any work or construction activity within federally regulated wetland areas or watercourses at the site will require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Therefore, a Water Quality Certificate will also be required from DEEP pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act. During the Federal process, the project's purpose and need will be defined and alternatives that avoid or minimize wetland impacts explored.

- c) *Ambient Noise Levels*- No negative impacts are anticipated.

2. *Impact on a public water supply system or serious effects on groundwater, flooding, erosion, or sedimentation*

- a) *Water Supply* – The project area is not within a public water supply source water area.
- b) *Groundwater* - No negative impacts are anticipated; see 1.b above.
- c) *Flooding* – No negative impacts are anticipated. The proposed roadway crosses the 100-year flood zone on the community's Flood Insurance Rate Map. Since funding for the project is coming through the Department of Transportation the department will have to insure that it meets the requirement of the flood and stormwater management standards. A Flood Management Certification will be obtained before the project is advanced into construction.
- d) *Erosion or Sedimentation* - No negative impacts are anticipated. Stormwater discharges from construction sites where one or more acres are to be disturbed require a permit pursuant to 40 CFR 122.26. Approximately 2.5 acres will be disturbed as a result of this project. The DEEP Permitting & Enforcement Division has issued a General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters Associated with Construction Activities (DEP-PERD-GP-015) that will cover these discharges. For construction projects with a total disturbed area between one and five acres, no registration is required as long as the projects erosion and sediment control measures adheres to the Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.

3. *Effect on natural land resources and formations, including coastal and inland wetlands, and the maintenance of in-stream flows* – See 1.b above.
4. *Disruption or alteration of an historic, archaeological, cultural, or recreational building, object, district, site or its surroundings* – A Phase 1 archeological survey was done to determine the archaeological sensitivity of the project area of potential effect. The survey included background research, field reconnaissance, and subsurface testing of a limited area determined to be archaeologically sensitive. No artifacts, cultural features or other evidence of potentially significant resources were identified and it was recommended that no further archaeological investigation be conducted. The Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office has concurred with CTDOT's recommendation that no historic properties will be affected by this project.
5. *Effect on natural communities and upon critical species of animal or plant and their habitats; interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species* – A preliminary site assessment of the Natural Diversity Data Base was performed for the Valley Service Road Extension. There are records of extant species of species listed by the State, pursuant to section 26-306 of the CGS, as endangered, threatened or special concern, that occur either within or in close proximity to the project area. A list of these species is attached. This is a preliminary review and not a final determination. A more detailed review will be necessary to move forward with any subsequent environmental permit applications submitted to DEEP for the proposed project.
6. *Uses of pesticides, toxic or hazardous materials or any other substance in such quantities as to create extensive detrimental environmental impact* - No negative impacts are anticipated.
7. *Substantial aesthetic or visual effects* - No negative impacts are anticipated.
8. *Consistency with the written and/or mapped policies of the Statewide Plan of Conservation and Development and such other plans and policies developed or coordinated by the Office of Policy and Management or other agency* – No negative impacts are anticipated. One of the state's policies identified in the state Plan of Conservation and Development is to protect the ecological, scenic and recreational values of lakes, rivers and streams by promoting compatible land uses and management practices in the vicinity of these resources. The Quinnipiac River is identified as being one of the state's water trails and the state has funded efforts to promote the use of such water trails. This project will promote land uses and management practices compatible with the river's scenic and recreational values by opening up this area for a recreational trail. In that vein, the proposed road extension will have a shelf built into the side slope to accommodate a trail in the future. In addition, the project will maintain the existing buffer between Valley Service Road and the Quinnipiac River, as all project related activity will be located to the east of the existing roadway.

9. *Disruption or division of an established community or inconsistency with adopted municipal and regional plans* - No negative impacts are anticipated. Although one of the goals identified in the Town of North Haven's current Plan of Conservation and Development (2005) (Plan) is to widen and install utilities along the length of Valley Service Road, the Town of North Haven, at this time, has no plans to develop the area around Valley Service Road, including the extension of utilities. In addition, the Plan recognizes that the Valley service Road industrial zones are located along the Quinnipiac River and comes with natural resource protection issues since they contain wetlands. The Plan is due to be updated next year. At that time the inconsistencies of the plan will be addressed concerning the Valley Service Road future.
10. *Displacement or addition of substantial numbers of people* - No negative impacts are anticipated.
11. *Substantial increase in congestion (traffic, recreational, other)* - No negative impacts are anticipated. See 1a above
12. *A substantial increase in the type or rate of energy use as a direct or indirect result of this action* - No negative impacts is anticipated.
13. *The creation of a hazard to human health or safety* - No negative impacts is anticipated.
14. *Any other substantial impacts on natural, cultural, recreational or scenic resources* - No negative impacts are anticipated. Although the scoping notice states that the intent of the road extension is to make Valley Service Road a through road, the installation of utilities is not a part of this project and any potential action by the town to install utilities could be in relation to future development of the Pratt and Whitney site. Additionally, the project will not impact an existing buffer between Valley Service Road and the Quinnipiac River. Any indirect effects on local or regional social, economic or natural conditions or resources which could result from additional activities induced or stimulated by the installation of utilities or the redevelopment of the Pratt and Whitney site should be investigated when more is known of the scope of any future proposal. For purposes of this project, no negative impacts are anticipated.

Conclusion:

After examining any potential environmental impacts and reviewing all comments received from the various resource agencies as well as the public, CTDOT has concluded that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Evaluation will not be required for the Valley Service Road Extension.

Comments received by various State agencies as a result of the Scoping Process:

As a result of the Scoping Process, comments were received by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Health and the Office of Policy and Planning, copies of which are provided as part of the Post Scoping Notice.

Attachment

Natural Diversity Data Base

Species List for Request Number R201402073 4/2/2014

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Protection Status
Animals		
<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>	Grasshopper sparrow	E
<i>Asio flammeus</i>	Short-eared owl	T
<i>Cicindela tranquebarica</i>	Dark bellied tiger beetle	SC
<i>Eucrotopcnemis fimbriaris</i>	Noctuid moth	SC
<i>Euxoa violaris</i>	Violet dart moth	T
<i>Lepipolys perscripta</i>	Noctuid moth	SC
<i>Owl Roost</i>		
<i>Thaumatopsis edonis</i>	Grassland thaumatopsis	T
Natural Communities		
<i>Floodplain forest</i>		
Plants		
<i>Floerkea proserpinacoides</i>	False mermaid-weed	E
<i>Helianthemum propinquum</i>	Low frostweed	T

E = Endangered, T = Threatened, SC = Special Concern, SC* = Special Concern, Presumed Extirpated 1