



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

APR 22 2005

Ronald C. Jackson, P.E.
Blasland, Bouck and Lee, Inc.
6723 Towpath Road
P.O. Box 66
Syracuse, New York 13214

Dear Mr. Jackson:

This is in response to the City of Syracuse's request for a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) from substantive environmental review requirements, pursuant to 40 CFR Part 6, for its proposed Grant Boulevard/Fordham Road Area Sewer Improvements Project. This project is being partially funded through a federal Special Appropriation Act Grant.

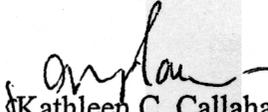
The project consists of rehabilitating/repairing 44 existing sewer manholes in the area, and replacing approximately 2,000 linear feet of storm sewer pipe.

Based on our review of the supporting documentation, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approves the request for the CATEX. Please be reminded that EPA may revoke this CATEX if any of the following conditions occur:

- changes in the proposed action render it ineligible for exclusion;
- new evidence indicates that serious local or environmental issues exist; or
- federal, state, or local laws would be violated.

Should you have any questions regarding this decision, please address them to John Filippelli, Chief, Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch, at the above address.

Sincerely,


Kathleen C. Callahan
Acting Regional Administrator

Enclosure

cc: Mary Robison, P.E, City of Syracuse

Internet Address (URL) • <http://www.epa.gov>

Recycled/Recyclable • Printed with Vegetable Oil Based Inks on 100% Postconsumer, Process Chlorine Free Recycled Paper

ENCLOSURE

**Grant Boulevard/Fordham Road Area Sewer Improvements Project
City of Syracuse
Syracuse, New York
Special Appropriation Grant No. XP992580-01**

Background

The project area is located in the northeast part of the City of Syracuse. It is served by both sanitary and storm sewers. The sanitary sewers range from 8 inches to 24 inches in diameter, and the storm sewers are from 12 inches to 66 inches in diameter. However, contrary to presently acceptable practice, the two sewer systems share common manholes. As a result, during storm events, these common manholes direct storm water flow to the sanitary sewer system, overloading the sanitary sewer system with combined sewage. The resulting quantity of combined sewage results in basement flooding and overflows of combined sewage to Teall Brook, Ley Creek and Onondaga Lake. It also increases the volume of non-sanitary wastewater flows which must be treated at the Syracuse Metro Wastewater Treatment Facility, resulting in unnecessary treatment costs. To rectify this situation, the existing stormwater and sanitary sewer infrastructure in this area of the City needs to be improved.

Proposed Action

To resolve the identified stormwater and sanitary sewer infrastructure problems, the City proposes to improve 44 manholes and replace approximately 2,000 linear feet of existing storm sewer. The manholes will be modified to enable them to independently convey both sanitary sewage and storm water under both dry weather and wet weather conditions, eliminating existing cross-connections between the two types of sewer systems. Where necessary to accommodate projected stormwater quantities, sections of storm water pipe will be replaced with pipe designed for the anticipated volume of flow.

Alternatives Considered

In addition to the "Proposed Action," the "No Action" alternative was considered. "No Action" would continue the present practice of allowing the storm sewers to overflow into the sanitary sewer system. It was rejected because it would not address any of the public health or water quality problems associated with the cross-connections between the sanitary and storm sewer systems.

Eligibility for Granting a Categorical Exclusion

The project meets the general Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) eligibility criteria found in 40 CFR 6.107(d)(1). The regulations allow CATEXs for activities involving “actions which are solely directed toward minor rehabilitation of existing facilities, functional replacement of equipment, or toward the construction of new ancillary facilities adjacent or appurtenant to existing facilities.”

Additionally, the available information on the proposed action indicates that the specific criteria for not granting a CATEX, found in 40 CFR 6.505(c)(1), are not present. Specifically, the project will not result in a new or relocated discharge to surface or ground waters; will not increase the amount of pollutants discharged to receiving waters; nor will it provide capacity to serve a population significantly greater than the existing population. Furthermore, there will be no significant adverse effects on cultural resources, endangered or threatened species, environmentally sensitive areas, or other environmentally important natural resource areas.

Conclusion

The proposed action conforms to the category of actions eligible for exclusion under 40 CFR 6.107(d)(1). Accordingly, EPA approves this request for a CATEX from detailed environmental review pursuant to our procedures for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act.