

## GREENE COUNTY JAIL DEIS SUMMARY

The Greene County Legislature, as Lead Agency, is conducting a coordinated State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) of the proposed new Greene County Jail. The County is planning the construction of a new 130 bed County Jail with administration and operations spaces for the County Sheriff on 50 acres of land in the Town of Coxsackie. The facility will be located on the east side of Route 9W immediately south of the Coxsackie Correctional Facility and will replace the existing aged and inadequate County Jail in the Village of Catskill. The new facility will include approximately 84,000 square feet of floor space incorporating a public entrance, visitation area, central command, Sheriff and jail administration and staff spaces, intake/release/transport area with vehicle sally port, medical area, mechanical and maintenance spaces, food service and inmate housing areas with recreational yards. The project also involves extension of public utility services include electricity, natural gas and telecommunications as well as public water and sewer services from the Village of Coxsackie. Site improvements will include roads, parking areas and stormwater management. This document describes the project in detail, and identifies potential impacts and mitigation measures aimed at construction and operation of the project in an environmentally sound and cost effective manner.

In May 2016, the Greene County Legislature determined that the proposed jail project has potentially significant environmental impacts and issued a Positive Declaration directing preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to further assess these impacts and recommend mitigations. The DEIS has identified impacts and mitigations in five major areas:

### **Impact on Surface Water – Wetlands**

Approximately 2.13 acres of jurisdictional wetlands have been delineated on the proposed jail site and will be avoided to the extent possible during design and construction. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) has determined that the 0.57 acre wetland in the southwest corner of the jail site is under their jurisdiction as it is hydraulically connected to NYSDEC freshwater wetland HN-105 located on the west side of Route 9W via a culvert. All other on site wetlands are under the jurisdiction of the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) which issued a Jurisdictional Determination in August 2015.

Approximately 0.02 acres of a small ACOE wetland may be impacted by the rear ring driveway and will require an ACOE Nationwide Permit. In addition, construction of the southern entry drive may impact the 100' buffer around the NYSDEC jurisdictional wetland, although no direct impacts are anticipated. Any physical disturbance within the boundary of this wetland or within the regulated 100-foot buffer area will require an Article 24 Freshwater Wetlands Permit. A Wetland Mitigation Plan will also be required to mitigate any direct impacts to this wetland on a 2:1 basis. If required, the Mitigation Plan will include a justification for the direct impacts to the wetland area, rationale for site selection, invasive species control and management of the mitigation area.

## **Impact on Plants and Animals – Northern Harriers and Short-eared Owls Habitat**

The New York Natural Heritage Program has identified the jail site as potential habitat for the state endangered Short-eared Owl and threatened Northern Harrier, and as a raptor winter concentration area. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has identified the site as being within the range of the federally endangered Indiana Bat and threatened Northern Long-eared Bat.

The jail project will disturb a maximum of 17.5 acres of grassland which is habitat for the Northern Harrier and Short-eared Owl. A NYSDEC Incidental Taking Permit will be required and a Habitat Mitigation Plan will be prepared at a 1:1 ratio for the loss of grassland habitat. The mitigation plan will include site identification to demonstrate appropriate habitat, invasive species control and management of the mitigation area. It is anticipated that the mitigation area will be created by putting a deed restriction on a portion of the adjacent County-owned parcel 70.00-4-5 to south, and that the Greene Land Trust will manage the mitigation area. It is possible that the mitigation area could also be partially created in the northern unused area of the jail site. No trees will be removed by the project, and a qualified biologist has reviewed the jail site and determined that habitat to support the federally listed bat species is not present.

## **Impact on Transportation – County Route 42**

A Traffic Evaluation was conducted that indicates the existing roadway network is adequate to service the proposed Greene County Jail site with no mitigation. However, as part of the project the hazardous County Route 42/US Route 9W Y-intersection located near the northern entrance will be eliminated. Although this skewed intersection currently encounters minimal traffic, removal of the intersection will result in a standard intersection layout at the proposed northern site driveway and will improve traffic safety.

## **Impact on Surface Water – Wastewater Treatment**

The estimated wastewater flow for the proposed Greene County Jail is 22,500 gallons per day (gpd) to be directed to the Town of Coxsackie sewer system and then to the Village of Coxsackie wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) for treatment and discharge to the Hudson River. The existing Village WWTP is permitted to discharge 1.25 million gallons per day (mgd) on a 30 day average basis. Current flows average 850,000 gpd; however, the sewer system is subject to significant infiltration and inflow during wet weather events resulting in peak flows at or above the plant's hydraulic capacity as well as discharges of untreated wastewater combined with stormwater into the environment at the remote pump station sites.

As a result, the Village wastewater system is currently subject to an Order on Consent executed by the NYSDEC and the Village which mandates repairs to the sewer system and incorporates a moratorium on new connections to the system until the repairs that eliminate the Sanitary Sewer

Overflows (SSOs) are functional. New connections to the system are also permitted through the conduct of mitigation activities that result in reducing SSOs in an amount exceeding the estimated introduction of new wastewater to the system. The Village has conducted a detailed engineering analysis and developed a \$10.3 million wastewater improvement project. Engineering design will occur in the fall of 2016 through mid-year 2017 with bidding of improvements planned for the summer of 2017 and construction to occur from late 2017 through 2018.

If connection of the new jail to the Town of Coxsackie sewer system is made when the Village's overall improvement project has reached a stage of completion whereby SSOs have been eliminated, it may be possible for the jail extension to be made without mitigation required by the Village's Order on Consent. However, if the extension is to be connected to the Town/Village system prior to the elimination of the SSOs, mitigation may be required.

At this time, Greene County is working with the State of New York, the Town and the Village to determine if a contribution by the County is required. It would most likely involve sewer lining or replacement of sewer lines and/or manholes. If such a contribution is required it may be bundled with the overall wastewater improvement project. While the County will benefit from connecting the new Jail to the Town and Village sewer systems, the communities will benefit from a new customer that will share in the costs of operations and maintenance of the sewer system.

### **Impact on Historic and Archeological Resources – Precontact Site**

Hartgen Archeological Associates conducted a comprehensive *Phase I Archeological Investigation and Phase II Site Evaluation* of the 50 acre Greene County Jail site during 2015 and 2016. The initial Phase I investigation identified three precontact site locations. The subsequent Phase II site evaluation determined that one of these sites is a National Register eligible site that has been named the Greene County Correctional Facility Precontact (GCCF) Site. The GCCF Site is a precontact lithic workshop with evidence of heat treatment to harden tools. It is located in a very limited area of the site and not near any planned ground disturbance. As mitigation for any potential impacts to archeological resources, an Avoidance Plan has prepared with both short-term and long-term avoidance measures. The site will be marked and avoided during construction so as not to be disturbed. Furthermore, the site will be demarcated and dedicated in a deed filing for continued preservation.

All potentially significant adverse effects of the new Greene County Jail have been identified and considered in this DEIS. The jail project can be designed and constructed using demonstrated methods that will minimize impacts and in some cases, bring value to the environment beyond the project boundaries.