



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

300 Westgate Center Drive
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SEP 11 2019

Finding of No Significant Impact:

Proposed Additions to the Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (August 2001): A Long-Term Program of Sea Lamprey Control in Lake Champlain

Pursuant to requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to evaluate a proposed expansion of the long-term sea lamprey control program on Lake Champlain.

Two alternative actions were considered:

Alternative 1: Expansion of the sea lamprey control program to include Hoisington Brook and its delta in New York (proposed action).

Alternative 2: Continue the sea lamprey control program without expansion (No Action).

The Lake Champlain sea lamprey control program is a vital component of a multidimensional effort to restore native lake trout and landlocked Atlantic salmon populations and provide a quality fishery that benefits the regional economy. When left uncontrolled, invasive sea lamprey quickly multiply, parasitize their preferred trout and salmon host species, and prevent the reestablishment of a healthy fishery. In 2001, after an eight-year experimental program, the Service prepared a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) outlining a long-term program of sea lamprey control for Lake Champlain. Pursuant to CFR 40 1508.28 and 1502.20, this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and EA are tiered documents, which rely on the SEIS. Specific information relating to the proposed action (Alternative 1) is to be considered in addition to the information included in the SEIS.

The Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Management Cooperative plans to continue its program of Integrated Pest Management whereby lampricide treatments of larval lamprey, physical barriers, and selective trapping of spawning adult lamprey are used in concert to reduce the lamprey population in Lake Champlain. Currently, lampricide treatments are permitted on nineteen tributaries and five river deltas of Lake Champlain.

Alternative 1 (the proposed action) will expand the ongoing long-term sea lamprey control program by adding one Lake Champlain tributary, Hoisington Brook, and its delta where a population of sea lamprey larvae was recently discovered. All potential impacts from this alternative were assessed in the original SEIS. This EA does not identify any new or unique impacts; only the geographic location of the potential effects is different.

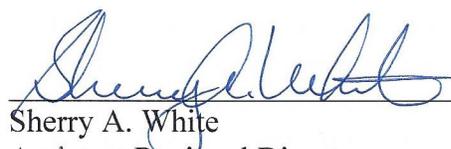
Alternative 2 (No Action) would continue the sea lamprey control program as it was outlined in the original SEIS and two subsequent EA's (2008 and 2017) without expanding scope to include Hoisington Brook tributary where a sea lamprey population was recently discovered. The control program would continue at *status quo* levels and wounding rates of native fish may remain unacceptably high.

The proposed action has been coordinated with interested and/or affected agencies and organizations. The EA was made available to the public through notification of municipal government, an online angler forum, and posting on the Service's Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office website. Local media were notified repeatedly, but declined to print the Service's announcement. A public review and comment period was open from July 8, 2019 through August 9, 2019. The public was informed of the availability of the Draft EA, the 2008 and 2017 EAs which previously expanded the program, the original 2001 Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) outlining the long-term control program, and a comprehensive evaluation of the eight-year experimental control program. These documents were posted to the Lake Champlain Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office's website at <https://www.fws.gov/lcfwro/sealamprey/NEPA.html>.

During the public comment period, six comments from the public were received, all of which were in support of Alternative 1.

Based on a review and evaluation of the information contained in the EA, and information provided during the public comment period, I have determined that Alternative 1, expansion of the Sea Lamprey Control Program to include Hoisington Brook in New York, would not constitute a major Federal action nor significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Accordingly, preparation of an EIS for the proposed action is not required.

All aforementioned documents and this FONSI are available upon request from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 11 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452, or by phone: (802) 662-5304.



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