Step 1: Determine if the proposed action is in a 100-year floodplain.

This proposed action (Project) is to drill a new potable water well and elevate the well above the 100- and 500-year floodplain at Rotterdam Water District #5 facility located at 49 Rice Road, Rotterdam, Schenectady County, New York. The Project would involve establishing a well connection to existing pipes; installing a chlorinator, motor, and pump; and constructing a new building to house the pump and equipment and a paved access road.

Approximately 7.0 acres of the larger parcel that includes the Project site is within Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) Zone AE (areas of 100-year flood where base flood elevation have been determined), as indicated on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Community Panel Number 36093C0153D, dated January 8, 2014. This map is attached to this document. Areas designated as a SFHA are those subject to inundation by the 1 percent annual chance flood (e.g., a 100-year flood), also known as the base flood.

Step 2: Notify the public of the intent to locate the proposed action in a floodplain.

An early public notice of proposed activity within the 100-year floodplain was published by the Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery on December 10, 2015 (see attached Early Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain). The notice requested comments from the public concerning floodplain and natural resource impacts of the proposed action. The notice also indicated that the proposed action would be evaluated for potential direct and indirect impacts associated with floodplain development and, where practicable, would be designed or modified to minimize potential adverse impacts to lives, property, and natural values within the floodplain. The notice was published in the Schenectady Daily Gazette and posted at http://www.stormrecovery.ny.gov/environmental-docs. The required 15-day period was conducted to allow for public comments, and comments were accepted either electronically or via written correspondence. No comments were received from the early notice concerning the Project.

Step 3: Identify and evaluate practicable alternatives to locating the proposed action in a floodplain.

Most of the Town of Rotterdam is served by the Rotterdam well field, on the north side of Rice Road abutting the Mohawk River and just inside the 500-year floodplain, which nearly flooded during recent storms. To prevent failure due to major storms, the Project would create a well head and other drinking water infrastructure protected from flooding to ensure uninterrupted supply of clean, safe drinking water.

Alternatives to the proposed action considered:

*Alternative 1: Replacement at an Alternative Location*

Addition of a new drinking water well to provide a backup water supply at an alternative location would not be feasible. Other properties in Rotterdam would not be suitable for development because they are either not owned by Wellhead District #5 or are too distant from the existing Rotterdam well field and associated infrastructure.

*Alternative 2: No Action Alternative*

Not undertaking the Project would not be consistent with the goals and objectives of the City of Schenectady and Town of Rotterdam NYRRC and other local and state plans. The town would not develop a key component of the resilient infrastructure it needs to function during emergency situations. Without the project, the communities’ water system would continue to be vulnerable to flood damage.
Under the No Action alternative, the town’s goals to minimize future impacts from flooding would be limited. Providing a self-sufficient drinking water supply facility for the town in the event that the other wells become inoperative, with an existing backup generator for power, would be delayed.

**Step 4: Identify and describe the proposed action’s direct and indirect effects associated with occupying or modifying the floodplain.**

The 100-year floodplain on the 0.7-acre Project site is all previously disturbed but is currently undeveloped. The Project is within Wellhead Protection Zone 1 of the Schenectady-Niskayuna Sole Source Aquifer Designated Area, which is the most protective designation. The Project would be consistent with the regulations for this protection zone including the following:

1. All land uses and development activities other than those directly connected with the pumping and treatment of public water supplies is prohibited (with the exception of existing single family residences); and
2. The handling of hazardous, toxic, or other waste substances is prohibited.

The short-term direct impacts to the 100-year floodplain would consist of grading and construction of the proposed access road, filling the Project site to the appropriate slope, and drilling and construction of the well infrastructure and well housing. Long-term direct impacts would include an increase of impermeable surface area covered by the well house and access road, approximately 900 square feet and 2,900 square feet, respectively. The Project would slightly displace the volume of floodplain capacity. However, the modification to the floodplain fringe storage capacity would result in an increase of flood elevation in the floodway fringe of less than 12 inches. Once the water in the floodplain passes by the end of the new well fill, the water would return to preexisting levels. The proposed action represents short-term impacts to previously disturbed areas and a minor increase in the storage capacity of the 100-year floodplain.

**Step 5: Identify methods to minimize the potential adverse impacts within a floodplain and to restore and preserve its natural and beneficial values.**

The short-term impacts would be mitigated by best management practices for debris, dust, and erosion control during construction activities. In addition, the access road would be constructed prior to the installation of the drinking water supply well. The road would provide access for the drilling equipment and limit the amount of additional ground disturbance. The proposed well facility is designed to minimize the long-term decrease in floodplain fringe storage capacity and consequent increase of flood elevation in the floodway fringe of the well facility by minimizing the modifications to the Project site. Once the water in the floodplain passes by the end of the new well fill, the water would return to preexisting levels.

**Step 6: Reevaluate the proposed action to determine if it is still practicable given its floodplain effects.**

The proposed project would improve the resilience of the Rotterdam Water District #5 infrastructure to future storm events by a providing self-sufficient drinking water supply facility for the town in the event that the other wells become inoperative for any reason. The proposed Project location is the only one that would be practicable due to the location of the current well field and infrastructure. Potential effects to the floodplain during construction would be minimized by best management practices and constructing the access road prior to the well facility, and a potential long-term increase of flood elevation in the floodway fringe would be localized at the Project site.

The No Action Alternative would not be practicable because without the project the community’s water system would continue to be vulnerable to flood damage.

**Step 7: If the only practicable alternative is locating in a floodplain, publish a final public notice.**
It has been determined that there is no practicable alternative to locating the project in the floodplain. This is due to the location of the current well field and infrastructure supplying Rotterdam Junction. The modification to the floodplain fringe storage capacity would result in an increase of flood elevation in the floodway of less than 12 inches and would be localized at the Project site. Once the water in the floodplain passes by the end of the new well fill, the water would return to preexisting levels.

A final public notice was published by the Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery on January 22, 2016, (see attached Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain) in accordance with 24 CFR Part 55 for a minimum 7-day comment period. The final notice details the reasons why the project must be located in the floodplain, a list of alternatives considered, and all mitigation measures taken to minimize adverse impacts and preserve natural and beneficial floodplain values.

All comments received during the comment period will be responded to and fully addressed prior to funds being committed to the proposed project, in compliance with Executive Order 11988 or 24 CFR Part 55.

**Step 8: The proposed action can be implemented after steps 1 through 7 have been completed.**

Implementation of the proposed action may require additional local and state permits, which could place additional design modifications or mitigation requirements on the project.
EARLY NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF
A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN

ROTTERDAM WATER DISTRICT #5 WELLHEAD AREA EXPANSION,
TOWN OF ROTTERDAM, SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NEW YORK

Thomas King, Assistant General Counsel and Certifying Officer
Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery
99 Washington Avenue, Suite 1224
Albany, NY 12260

NOTIFICATION OF ACTIVITY IN A 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) under 24 CFR Part 58 has determined that the Rotterdam District #5 Wellhead Area Expansion Project in the Town of Rotterdam, Schenectady County, New York (Project) is located in the 100-year floodplain. GOSR is conducting an environmental review of the Project on behalf of the State of New York as the recipient of a Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under 42 USC 5304(g) and 70 Fed. Reg. 62,182 (Oct. 16 2014). As required by Executive Order 11988, in accordance with HUD regulations 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C, Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands, GOSR will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action in the floodplain, as well as potential impacts on the floodplain.

Pursuant to the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program and Federal Register Notices 78 Fed. Reg. 14329, 78 Fed. Reg. 69104, and 79 Fed. Reg. 62194 (Notices), published March 5, 2013, November 18, 2013, and October 16, 2014, respectively, the State of New York has been allocated approximately $4.4 billion of CDBG-DR funds for storm recovery activities, including but not limited to the acquisition, demolition, reconstruction, improvement, financing and use of existing properties in storm-impacted communities and counties.

A portion of this funding will be used for the Flood Protection of the Rotterdam District #5 Well Heads Project to drill a new well and elevate the well above the 100- and 500-year floodplain at Rotterdam District #5 facility located at 49 Rice Road, Rotterdam, Schenectady County, New York. The new well will be protected by a well house similar in design to that of the existing well house and on-site building. Construction activities will include site preparation, well drilling and testing, site grading, drain installation, and site restoration post-construction. Based on the available site plan, it is estimated that the footprint of disturbance will measure approximately 172 by 185 feet and cover 0.7 acre. This area will be elevated approximately 6.5 feet above sea level to an elevation of 238.5 feet, or 0.5 feet above the 500-year floodplain. The Project is designed to be a self-sufficient drinking water supply facility for the town in the event that the other wells become inoperative for any reason with an existing back-up generator for power. The well will serve as a back-up and add reliability to the water supply system. The Project would benefit residents of the Town of Rotterdam.

The Project site is on a 9.38-acre parcel that is owned by Rotterdam Water District #5. It is currently undeveloped and wooded. The Project site is surrounded on three sides by wooded areas, and is adjacent to the existing wellhead facility to the northwest. The Mohawk River is approximately 392 feet from the proposed new well.

Approximately 7.0 acres of the Project parcel is within Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) Zone AE (areas of 100-year flood where base flood elevation have been determined), as indicated on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Community Panel Number 36093C0153D, dated January 8, 2014. Areas designated as a SFHA are those subject to inundation by the 1 percent annual chance flood (e.g., a 100-year flood), also known as the base flood.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, citizens who may be affected by activities in
floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the proposed action or a request for further information to: Thomas King, Assistant General Counsel and Certifying Environmental Officer Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery
99 Washington Avenue, Suite 1224
Albany, NY 12260; e-mail NYSCDBG_DR_ER@nyshcr.org
Attn: Thomas King, Certifying Environmental Officer

All comments received by December 24, 2015 will be considered.

Thomas King, Assistant General Counsel and Certifying Officer

December 10, 2015
FINAL NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN

ROTTERDAM WATER DISTRICT #5 WELLHEAD AREA EXPANSION, TOWN OF ROTTERDAM, SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NEW YORK

Thomas King, Assistant General Counsel and Certifying Officer
Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery
99 Washington Avenue, Suite 1224
Albany, NY 12260

NOTIFICATION OF ACTIVITY IN A 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

This is to give notice that the Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) has conducted an evaluation as required by Executive Order 11988 in accordance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Renewal (HUD) regulations under 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C - Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands, to determine the potential effects that its activity in the floodplain would have on the human environment.

Pursuant to the Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Program and Federal Register Notices 78 Fed. Reg. 14329, 78 Fed. Reg. 69104, and 79 Fed. Reg. 62194 (Notices), published March 5, 2013, November 18, 2013, and October 16, 2014, respectively, the State of New York has been allocated approximately $4.4 billion of CDBG-DR funds for storm recovery activities, including but not limited to the acquisition, demolition, reconstruction, improvement, financing and use of existing properties in storm-impacted communities and counties.

A portion of this funding is proposed be used for the Flood Protection of the Rotterdam Water District #5 Wellhead Facility to drill a new well and elevate the well above the 100- and 500-year floodplain at Rotterdam District #5 facility located at 49 Rice Road, Rotterdam, Schenectady County, New York. The new well would be protected by a well house similar in design to that of the existing well house and on-site building. Construction activities would include site preparation, well drilling and testing, site grading, drain installation, and site restoration post-construction. Based on the available site plan, it is estimated that the footprint of disturbance would measure approximately 172 by 185 feet and cover 0.7 acre. This area would be elevated approximately 6.5 feet above sea level to an elevation of 238.5 feet, or 0.5 feet above the 500-year floodplain. The proposed Project is designed to be a self-sufficient drinking water supply facility for the town in the event that the other wells become inoperative for any reason with an existing back-up generator for power. The well would serve as a back-up and add...
reliability to the water supply system. The proposed Project would benefit residents of the Town of Rotterdam.

The proposed Project is on a 9.38-acre parcel that is owned by Rotterdam Water District #5. It is currently undeveloped and wooded. The proposed Project site is surrounded on three sides by wooded areas, and is adjacent to the existing wellhead facility to the northwest. The Mohawk River is approximately 392 feet from the proposed new well.

Approximately 7.0 acres of the proposed Project parcel is within Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) Zone AE (areas of 100-year flood where base flood elevation have been determined), including the Project site, as indicated on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Community Panel Number 36093C0153D, dated January 8, 2014. Areas designated as a SFHA are those subject to inundation by the 1 percent annual chance flood (e.g., a 100-year flood), also known as the base flood.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, citizens who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT PLAN

GOSR has reevaluated the alternatives to project activities in the floodplain and has determined that there is no practicable alternative. A copy of the 8-step floodplain analysis summary documenting compliance with Executive Order 11988 can be viewed online at http://www.stormrecovery.ny.gov/environmental-docs.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

An early notice of activity in a 100-year floodplain was published on December 10, 2015. The comment period was held open until December 31, 2015 in order to address a typo in the notice that closed the comment period on December 24, 2015. Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the proposed action or a request for further information to: Thomas King, Assistant General Counsel and Certifying Environmental Officer.

Governor’s Office of Storm Recovery
99 Washington Avenue, Suite 1224
Albany, NY 12260; e-mail NYSCDBG_DR_ER@nyshcr.org
Attn: Thomas King, Certifying Environmental Officer

All comments received by January 29, 2016 will be considered.

Thomas King, Assistant General Counsel and Certifying Officer

January 22, 2016