

**FINAL SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE
CROTON WATER TREATMENT PLANT
METHODOLOGIES**

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4.8. GROWTH INDUCEMENT

4.8.1. Introduction

The analysis of potential growth inducement impacts focuses primarily on potential residential development that may occur as a result of the proposed project. Growth inducement refers to the potential for the proposed project to increase the attractiveness of a community and accelerate its rate of development, primarily as a consequence of four types of actions: (1) tax payments that New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) would make to a variety of taxing districts with jurisdiction over the project sites; (2) induced employment, sales and other economic activity due to capital and operating expenditures made in the area; (3) potential changes in water supply service to downstream towns and (4) potential actions that would be taken by NYCDEP to relax components of the watershed memorandum of agreement signed in January 1997. NYCDEP has already stated that it will not relax components of the watershed memorandum of agreement signed in January 1997, and therefore no potential growth inducement would occur.

The analysis of tax payments is only applicable to components of the proposed project located in Westchester County, as no property tax payments would be necessary for those components of the proposed project located within New York City boundaries. Similarly, there are no communities further downstream of New York City that would be served by the project. The analysis of potential induced employment and other activity due to capital and operating expenditures is applicable for sites in both Westchester County and New York City.

The potential for indirect regional employment growth is discussed for the water treatment plant and off-site facilities sites in both the Bronx and Westchester County using information from the Socioeconomic Conditions Analysis (Section 4.7, Data Collection and Impact Methodologies).

The growth inducement analysis also includes an identification of those communities that may have the opportunity to obtain filtered water from the New Croton Aqueduct (NCA) or possibly the Kensico-City Tunnel (KCT). This analysis is only applicable to those communities downstream of the Eastview Site if the water treatment plant is sited there.

4.8.2. Baseline Conditions

4.8.2.1. Existing Conditions

Estimates of the amount of undeveloped land in Mount Pleasant and Pocantico Hills school district have been made using Westchester County Generalized Land Use Map (1996) with subsequent updates provided by Town representatives. Undeveloped land that contains wetlands has been eliminated from the evaluation. Wetland areas have been identified through the use of available mapping. Although land with slopes greater than 25 percent has limited development potential, all undeveloped land, regardless of slopes, has been included in the inventory.

Information on current tax rates has been collected from the Westchester County Tax Commission. Effective, or equalized tax rates for the County, as well as Mount Pleasant and relevant school districts, have been collected. Interviews have been conducted with a sampling of real estate brokers working in Mount Pleasant to help verify the role and relative importance of property taxes in influencing home purchases. Additional information has been collected on the quality and achievement of school districts. These factors have been measured using information on per-pupil expenditures, pupil-teacher ratios, the percentage of secondary school graduates going to college, and standardized test scores.

Details of the existing watershed program applicable to the area east of the Hudson River are provided in the “Baseline Conditions” sections for the Mosholu Site, Harlem River Site and Eastview Site. Details on the existing watershed program, as it relates to land development in Mount Pleasant, have been summarized in the “Baseline Conditions” section for the Eastview Site only. Communities downstream of Mount Pleasant with existing access to the Croton Water Supply System have been identified and a discussion of their current water rates is presented in the “Baseline Conditions” section for the Eastview Site.

4.8.2.2. *Future Without the Project*

For the Eastview Site, a discussion of growth in the “Future Without the Project” was presented, based on the list of development proposals compiled as part of the Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy analysis. Information on possible changes in property tax rates and income, school district taxes, or other special assessments has been obtained from local and school financial offices. Any special changes planned in school operations that might affect quality of schools have been noted. Any proposed changes in the City’s watershed program east of the Hudson River have been noted. Any planned changes in water rates for the Croton and Catskill/Delaware Water Supply Systems have also been noted, based on the analysis of Socioeconomic Conditions.

4.8.3. Potential Impacts

As noted above, the evaluation of growth inducement impacts addresses a greater number of factors for the Eastview Site than for the Mosholu Site or Harlem River Site primarily due to the influence of property tax payments that would have to be made by the City if the water treatment plant is located outside New York City. The evaluation addresses whether the development of the proposed plant at the Eastview Site would induce residential development. An increase in tax revenues and a resultant increase in spending on community services and/or a decrease in tax rates could potentially induce growth by making the town of Mount Pleasant more attractive to home buyers. The evaluation examined net gain in property tax revenue to Mount Pleasant as a result of implementation of the proposed project. The resultant change in property tax revenue has been evaluated in light of whether property taxes are considered a major factor in home selection.

The impacts of potential increases in annual tax payments to the school district as a result of implementation of the proposed project have been evaluated. The increase related to the

proposed project has been assessed in light of existing school costs and a determination has been made as to whether the increase would be considered significant.

Using the economic information provided in the Socioeconomic Analysis, the potential for indirect employment growth has been assessed for the Mosholu Site, Harlem River Site, and Eastview Site. The significance of the growth has been reviewed in light of existing and future anticipated employment and output to the respective county's economy.

The analysis identifies communities that may have the opportunity to obtain treated Croton water via the NCA or possibly the KCT. This analysis only applies to communities downstream of the Eastview Site if that site were selected for the water treatment plant. The evaluation considers the costs that identified communities would incur to provide or modify infrastructure required to connect or reestablish a connection to the City Water Supply System versus the savings that might be achieved if the community could avoid constructing its own filtration plant.

4.8.4. Mitigation

The need for mitigation was evaluated if any significant impacts were identified. Mitigation strategies are dependent upon the nature of the estimated displacement, and the potential impacts causing such displacement.