



SOMERSET COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

20 Grove Street
P.O. Box 3000
Somerville, NJ 08876-1262
(908) 231-7021 Fax (908) 707-1749 TDD (908) 704-6359
PlanningBd@co.somerset.nj.us
www.co.somerset.nj.us

TO: Property Owners Affected by Proposed Sanitary Sewer Service Area Changes
[Name of Municipalities within which properties are located]

FROM: Robert Bzik, PP, AICP, Director of Planning

DATE: [month day, year]

SUBJECT: **NJDEP Removal Environmentally Sensitive Lands from the Sewer Service Area**

The Somerset County Planning Board, as the Wastewater Management Planning Agency for Somerset County, is writing to notify you that the NJDEP has proposed the removal of all or a portion of your property from the previously adopted Sewer Service Area (SSA) as part of Wastewater Management Planning Process currently underway. The State Water Quality Management Plan Rules adopted by NJDEP in July 2008 require the removal of environmentally sensitive, undeveloped lands from the SSA. NJDEP defines Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) as Landscape Project Rank 3, 4 and 5 Habitat for Threatened and Endangered Species, Natural Heritage Priority Sites, Wetlands, and Category 1 water bodies and associated Riparian Buffers. NJDEP used its GIS-based maps of these environmental features which were derived from aerial photography taken from 1995 through 1997 and 2002 to map ESAs. NJDEP then used its ESA mapping to prepare draft maps of its new proposed Future SSAs for Somerset County.

The County and Municipal WMP Committees have made every effort to work with NJDEP to correct the draft proposed SSA boundaries to reflect development that has occurred or received final approval since 2002 and other land use considerations. A map illustrating the refined proposed Future SSA boundaries that resulted from this process can be examined by visiting the County Website [www.co.somerset.nj.us/planweb/wastewater/index.htm]. Minor technical corrections have also been made that align SSA boundaries with parcel and Right-of-Way boundaries which do not affect the sanitary sewer status of properties.

However, we recognize that additional corrections may be appropriate, provided all of NJDEP's criteria and documentation requirements are met as specified in the enclosed overview. As such, you are strongly encouraged to examine the Proposed Future SSA Maps for your municipality, Somerset County WMP Public Involvement Guidance Document and related information posted on the County Website: www.co.somerset.nj.us/planweb/wastewater/index.htm. All requests for corrections to the Proposed SSA boundaries must be submitted in electronic format via e-mail to the County Planning Board [Planningbd@co.somerset.nj.us] by [date], along with electronic copies of the required documentation and completed Property Owner Response Form, which is also available on the County Website. Please type "Property Owner Response" in your e-mail subject line. Electronic submission via e-mail is required to facilitate coordination of requests for corrections to the draft proposed Sewer Service Areas with the Municipal WMP Committee and NJDEP. An e-mail reply confirming receipt will be issued by the County, as well as a response to your request. It is important that you adhere to the submission requirements and deadline so that corrections to the SSA boundaries can be taken into account when the County performs the required Build-out and Capacity Analyses needed to complete the WMP. If you do not have access to the internet, all of the above maps and documents are available at the County Planning Board Office, which is open from 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM. Please call for an appointment.

Thank you.

C: Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders and Planning Board
Municipal WMP Committees, Branchburg, Franklin and Montgomery Townships
Lawrence Baier, Director, NJDEP Division of Watershed Management