

CHAPTER 3.J

OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter assesses the potential for impacts to open space resources as a result of the proposed adulticide application. Impacts to open space resources would include changes to the availability, accessibility, or use of open space resources, or the elimination of such resources. Since it would be impossible to gauge the impacts of the adulticide application on open space resources in every neighborhood in New York City, the seven areas outlined in Chapter 3.A, “Framework of the Analysis,” were selected to represent open space resources in areas throughout the City.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

A detailed discussion of open spaces in the seven representative study areas can be found in Chapter 3.B, “Land Use, Community Facilities, Public Policy, and Zoning.” The study areas contain samples of the entire range of open spaces that can be found in New York City—small vest-pocket parks; mid-sized parks; large regional parks like Central Park and Van Cortlandt Park; playgrounds and basketball courts; dog runs and esplanades; sitting areas; public plazas; and many other types of parks. These parks vary widely in terms of type of use, patronage, condition, hours of use, and accessibility. Most parks are open from dawn to dusk, but many have operating hours that extend beyond daylight hours.

C. THE FUTURE WITHOUT THE PROPOSED ACTION

Open space resources in the seven representative study areas are not expected to change significantly in the future. While individual open spaces may be created or removed, the open space resources in each area are expected to remain generally the same as identified above, in Existing Conditions.

In the future without the proposed project, the New York City Department of Health (NYCDOH) would continue its *Routine Program* to control mosquito breeding, discussed in Chapter 3.B, “Land Use, Community Facilities, Public Policy, and Zoning.” This program would continue to advise people against using open spaces at dawn and dusk. While the *Routine Program* would continue regardless of the adulticiding activities, the presence of adult mosquito-borne viruses would likely be greater in the future without the proposed project. Without the proposed adulticiding activities to reduce the public health threat from mosquito-borne pathogens, public awareness of measures designed to reduce exposure to viruses is likely to be higher and the public may likely avoid certain outdoor open space areas during times of mosquito activity.

Should the incidence of the transmission of adult-mosquito-borne viruses increase dramatically, which is a possibility in the future without the adulticiding activities, avoidance of open space areas at dawn and dusk—as advised by the *Routine Program*’s public education campaign—may occur during the time periods that viruses break out in the summer.

D. POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF ADULTICIDE APPLICATION

As discussed in Chapter 3.B, “Land Use, Community Facilities, Public Policy, and Zoning,” the application of adulticides is not expected to result in permanent changes to open spaces in any of the representative study areas. However, it may cause some open spaces normally open to public use to be closed immediately before, during, and shortly after application. A detailed discussion of the open spaces that have the potential to be affected by the adulticiding activities can be found in Chapter 3.B.

This EIS conservatively assumes that up to ten applications could occur in any area of the City, from May to October. During these times of application, the use of these open spaces may be reduced for a limited period of time. Since adulticiding would take place at night, many of the City’s open spaces would be closed during periods of application. Adulticiding activities would only prevent the use of open spaces that are currently open past dusk. This reduction in availability of open space resources for up to 10 nights each summer would not be significantly greater than the reduction in use of open space resources that would occur in the future without the adulticide application. While the adulticide application would result in the closure of some parks and other spaces for limited times (and would disturb planned and unplanned outdoor activities), an increased incidence of adult-mosquito-borne viruses would likely result in similar, if not greater, reductions in use of open spaces during the summer months.

Since adulticiding would occur on a limited number of nights for a limited duration, and since the reduction in use of open spaces would be similar to the reduction that would take place in the No Action condition, the impacts to open space resources would not be considered significant adverse impacts. G

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