

Dear Mr. Rosenthal,

The following scoping questions concern the United Water New York application for a Hudson River desalination plant (Haverstraw Water Supply Project).

Population characteristics, business activity, and growth
Population

The population of Rockland County increased 2.9 percent from April 2000 to June 2006, to an estimated 2006 population of 294,965 (US Census estimates). . . Population growth in Rockland County has been slightly higher than New York State Growth.

Questions

What is the increase in Rockland County for the 10 years previous to the period quoted by UW?

The Rockland Cares study

(www.co.rockland.ny.us/RCCCAres/Services/achievements.htm) shows a greater than 3X growth in Rockland compared to the rest of the State. From 1990-2000, the study shows an 8% increase in Rockland population compared to a 2.8% increase for the "Rest of the State." Are the current estimates (2006-2008) accurate?

Can an accurate estimate of population growth be accomplished without an up-to-date demographic study of Rockland?

The largest growing area in Rockland (Town of Ramapo) has a population with a far greater number of large families. The growth in Ramapo was 16% for 1990-2000 compared to Clarkstown 3.4%.

Because new demographic information is not parsed into UW's 2.9% increase, are the numbers reliable?

Even with the numbers presented by UW, the claim that the growth in Rockland (2.9%) is only "slightly higher" than the State's (1.7%) is a little disingenuous. Rockland's recent growth, if the numbers are not skewed, is 71% higher than the rest of the State--is that "slightly" or radically higher?

NOTE: A current demographic study has been promised, and we have been told that its publication is imminent. The UW data does not include the study.

Preserve Ramapo has tried for three years to get information from UW about their studies projecting needs and resources and have been denied the information.

Probable Impacts of the Proposed Project

Over the next 20 years, the population in Rockland County is projected to continue to grow. The proposed project would be executed in stages to keep pace with projected growth. Therefore, the new water supply infrastructure would serve the population growth that is expected to occur in the existing service area irrespective of the proposed project; it is not intended to accommodate additional growth beyond what is already

forecast for the area. Therefore the proposed project would not induce new residential growth.

Questions:

How would this new source (one of the largest rivers in the nation) not be viewed by developers, planners, and politicians as an "unlimited resource"?

Why would the company not maximize its efforts to keep up in any way with whatever pace the expansion might result from this "unlimited resource"?

With an enterprise that has profit as its central reason for being, can the claim "it is not intended to accommodate additional growth beyond what is already forecast for the area" be accepted on its face as true?

Will this unlimited advantage for developers exacerbate the following infrastructure disasters already existing because of overdevelopment?:

Nearly 200 raw sewage spills from Rockland County Sewer District #1 of millions of gallons of unprocessed sewage into streets, yards, waterways, and businesses from Feb 11, 2000 to the present? (see

http://www.preserveramapo.org/Sewers/spills_table_2008.htm for a summary of FOIL reports)

A DEC Consent order resulting in an estimated \$50million in repairs to RCSD#1 to prevent these spills. (estimate from Sterns and Wheler)

A lawsuit based on the Clean Waters Act filed by Upper Saddle NJ for sewage spills into a federally protected waterway.

Growth in the largest town in the county, Ramapo, has created traffic that has won failing ratings from the DOT for three major roadways (Routes 59, 306, and Maple Avenue) and a number of side roads.

The growth in some villages has reached densities that are unsupportable. Recently, a State Inspector called the building violations in the village of New Square "probably the worst example in our state's history of noncompliance with the state codes."

How will increased development enabled by the increased supply of water affect these current situations?

Finally, will the increased growth exacerbate air quality problems?

There are no studies of air quality in Ramapo, especially near the major thoroughfares, so how can projections be made concerning safety and air, traffic, and growth?

Thank you for the opportunity to present these questions.

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Michael Castelluccio
Editor
PreserveRamapo.org