

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

Fort Hall Wastewater System Improvements

Fort Hall Reservation, Idaho

July 2018

I. Background

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District (Corps) proposes to assist the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes (Tribes) with their wastewater system improvements project under the authority of Section 595 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999. The Corps is proposing to share costs with the Tribes for replacement of a wastewater lift station and 1,600 feet of force main sewer lines.

The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes are a sovereign nation located on the Fort Hall Indian Reservation on the eastern edge of the Snake River Valley in southeastern Idaho. The Tribes own and operate wastewater facilities, including collection and treatment systems that serve the Fort Hall community. The system consists of approximately 7 miles of gravity sewer main, 1.2 miles of force main, four lift stations, and a five-cell lagoon system for treatment with approximately 92.5 million gallons of storage capacity. The existing wastewater system is aging and there are multiple portions identified as problems, such as the Tribal Business Center wastewater lift station that was installed in 1988. The lift center is reaching the end of its design life, with observed mechanical and structural deficiencies.

The Water Resources Development Act of 1999, Section 595 authorized the Corps to participate in environmental infrastructure projects. Public Law (PL) 106-53 authorized environmental infrastructure projects in rural Nevada and Montana. In 2003, PL 108-7, Section 126 amended PL 106-53 to include rural Idaho. As a result, the Corps is able to participate in the Fort Hall Wastewater System Improvement Project.

II. Proposed Action

Under the proposed action, the Corps would share costs with the Tribes to assist with the rehabilitation of the Tribal Business Center lift station and the replacement of 1,600-feet of associated force main sewer lines. Work would include the installation of a new wet well and valve vault, new pumps, and new pump controls. This project would include the pipe, fittings, valves, and any other required component to make a complete system.

III. Purpose and Need

The Corps proposes to assist the Tribes with their wastewater system improvements project, under Section 595 of WRDA 1999 (as amended). The purpose of the proposed action is to improve the collection and treatment of wastewater in Fort Hall. The operation of the Tribes' wastewater collection and treatment systems are protective of public health. The action is needed because system deficiencies in the collection system could create public health concerns if they are not addressed. An upgrade to larger capacity pumps and 6-inch force main lines is required to ensure that the lift station can continue to serve the Tribal Business Center adequately. The lift station is nearing the end of its planned service life and is at risk of failure. Failure of the lift station or force main lines could cause sewer backups into the Tribal Business Center.

IV. Project Alternatives

The Corps prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA), which evaluates two options for wastewater line replacement: The No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action - Alternative 2: Lift Station and Force Main Wastewater Collection Line Replacement. Alternative 2 was selected because it met the purpose and need to reduce the risk of lift station or force main line failure.

V. Environmental Effects

The Proposed Action Alternative and the No Action Alternative were analyzed for potential effects to the following resources: air quality, historic/cultural resources, wildlife, soils, socioeconomics, environmental justice, and threatened and endangered species. This analysis is detailed in Section 3 of the EA. The analysis concluded there would be no adverse effects to any of the resources from implementation of the Proposed Action.

The Corps also considered the cumulative effects of the Proposed Action along with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the Fort Hall area. The Corps concluded that replacement of the Proposed Action would not cause a significant cumulative effect.

VI. Public Comment/Involvement

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, this Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and EA will be made available to the public and local, state, and Federal agencies for a 15-day review and comment period from July 11 to July 24, 2018. Any comments received would be addressed in the final FONSI, if the Corps determines a FONSI is appropriate.

VII. Compliance with other Laws and Regulations

The Corps completed a review of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and determined "no effect" to ESA listed species within the vicinity of the project area.

Therefore, the project did not require coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service or the National Marine Fisheries Service.

The Corps has reviewed the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 compliance and determined there would be "No Historic Properties Affected".

See Section 4 of the EA for a discussion of compliance with other laws, regulations and Executive Orders. The proposed action complies with other Federal laws, applicable regulations and Executive Orders.

VIII. Findings and Decision

Having reviewed the Fort Hall Wastewater Improvements Project EA, I find that the document provides sufficient discussions on the purpose of and need for the proposed action, alternatives, the environmental effects of the proposed action and the alternatives, and a listing of agencies and persons consulted. I have taken into consideration the technical aspects of the project, best scientific information available and public comments received. These documents provide sufficient evidence and analysis to meet the Corps requirements pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Based on this information, I find that implementation of the proposed action would not result in significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and that an environmental impact statement is not required. The Corps will proceed to fund the proposed project under the authority of Section 595 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999, when funds are made available for that purpose.

DAMON A. DELAROSA
Lieutenant Colonel, EN
Commanding

Date