



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6

1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

April 12, 2011

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

In accordance with the environmental review guidelines of the Council on Environmental Quality found at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500, and with the use of the implementing environmental review procedures of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found at 40 CFR Part 6 entitled "Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act" as guidance, the EPA has performed an environmental review of the following proposed action:

Water Infrastructure Construction Project
Proposed by the
City of Dardanelle
Located in Yell County, Arkansas

Estimated EPA Share: FY 10: \$291,000

Estimated Local Share: FY 10: \$3,737,332

The Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations Acts for the EPA included special Congressional funding for water and wastewater construction projects. The City of Dardanelle (City) was selected to receive funding support through these special appropriations. The purpose of the proposed project is to construct an additional water treatment facility adjacent to the existing facility and to expand the existing facility. The proposed project would increase the design flow of the water treatment system, thus allowing for increased development within the City.

The City is proposing to increase the design flow of the City's water treatment system from three million gallons per day (mgd) design flow to five mgd design flow. The existing facility is located east side of Front Street just south of Long Street on the City's south side. The existing facility utilizes a clarifier to settle solids, a sand filter to further filter solids, and the addition of chlorine to a clearwell for disinfection. The clearwell pumps are controlled by a 750,000 gallon off-site water tank that maintains the system.

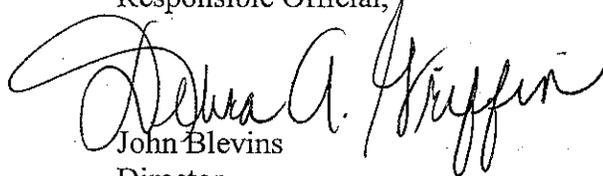
The proposed project includes the expansion of the City's water treatment capabilities from three mgd to five mgd by constructing new facilities adjacent to the existing facility and expanding the existing facility. The proposed project involves the following actions:

1. Construction of a new building to house the chemical feeding process;
2. Construction of a new clarifier and sand filters;
3. Construction of a new clearwell;
4. Construction of a new weir tower;
5. Installation of all necessary pipes; and
6. Expansion of the existing chemical feed building to include yard piping.

The environmental review process, which is documented by the enclosed Environmental Assessment, indicates that no potential significant adverse environmental impacts are anticipated from the proposed action. The project individually, cumulatively over time, or in conjunction with other actions is not expected to have a significant adverse effect on the quality of the environment. On that basis, I have determined that the project is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and that preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary. My preliminary decision is based upon the enclosed Environmental Assessment, a careful review of the Environmental Information Document prepared for the project, the results of the public participation process, and other supporting data which are on file in the office listed below and available for public review upon request. Therefore, I am issuing this preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact pertaining to the project.

Comments regarding my preliminary decision may be submitted for consideration to the attention of the Office of Planning and Coordination (6EN-XP), Environmental Protection Agency, 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733. After evaluating any comments received, the EPA will make a final decision. No administrative action will be taken on this preliminary decision for at least 30 calendar days after release of this Finding of No Significant Impact. The preliminary decision and finding will then become final after the 30-day comment period expires if no new significant information is provided to alter this finding.

Responsible Official,



John Blevins

Director

Compliance Assurance and
Enforcement Division

Enclosure

cc: Mayor Carolyn McGee
City of Dardanelle, Arkansas

J. Randy Young, Executive Director
Arkansas Natural Resources Commission

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

WATER INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Proposed by the

CITY OF DARDANELLE

Located in YELL COUNTY, ARKANSAS

BACKGROUND

The Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations Acts for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) included special Congressional funding for water and wastewater construction projects. The City of Dardanelle (City) was selected to receive funding support through these special appropriations. The purpose of the proposed project is to construct an additional water treatment facility adjacent to the existing facility and to expand the existing facility. The proposed project would increase the design flow of the water treatment system, allowing for increased development within the City.

The City is proposing to increase the design flow of the City's water treatment system from three million gallons per day (mgd) design flow to five mgd design flow. The existing facility is located east side of Front Street just south of Long Street on the City's south side. The existing facility utilizes a clarifier to settle solids, a sand filter to further filter solids, and the addition of chlorine to a clearwell for disinfection. The clearwell pumps are controlled by a 750,000 gallon off-site water tank that maintains the system.

The current population to be served is approximately 4,516 people, but the number is expected to increase because the City is actively pursuing new development opportunities. The project vicinity and project planning area is shown on Figures 1 and 2, respectively.

The proposed project is considered to be a federal action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In accordance with the environmental review requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality found at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500, and with the use of the EPA's implementing regulations found at 40 CFR Part 6 entitled "Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act" as guidance, the EPA is preparing this Environmental Assessment to assist in determining the environmental impacts of the proposed action, and in evaluating whether an Environmental Impact Statement or a Finding of No Significant Impact will be prepared for the proposed project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project includes the expansion of the City's water treatment capabilities from three mgd to five mgd by constructing new facilities adjacent to the existing facility and expanding the existing facility. The proposed project involves the following actions:

1. Construction of a new building to house the chemical feed process;
2. Construction of a new clarifier and sand filters;
3. Construction of a new clearwell;
4. Construction of a new weir tower;
5. Installation of all necessary pipes; and
6. Expansion of the existing chemical feed building to include yard piping.

The proposed project would only occur on land owned or controlled by the City. No land would be purchased and no relocations or displacements would occur.

ALTERNATIVES

Three alternatives are considered within this Environmental Assessment. Alternative One, the preferred alternative, is to expand the water treatment system from three mgd design flow to five mgd design flow, as described above in the project description. Alternative Two is to construct a new water treatment facility with a five mgd design flow. The new facility would replace the existing facility. Alternative Two would substantially increase the cost of the proposed project, while minimally increasing the design flow by two mgd. Under the No-Action Alternative, the expansion of the water treatment system would not take place. The existing facility would continue to process three mgd and would not allow for increased development within the City.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The project planning area is located in the west central portion of the state approximately 80 miles northwest of the capital city of Little Rock. The terrain in this area varies from pine plantations, mixed hardwood forest, and pasture. The topography of the general area consists of rolling farmlands, forested ridges, and isolated mountains and lakes. The area has warm summers with cool to cold winters. Air quality in the area is in attainment of all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and is not in violation of any state or federal air quality control standards. The soils within the proposed project area consist of Roxana silt loam and Udipsammments. Roxana silt loam is a very deep, well drained soil on natural levees and low terraces bordering major streams and their former channels. This soil is frequently flooded. Udipsammments is an alluvial soil on floodplains. The soil is well drained and frequently flooded.

The geology of the area is of the Quaternary Period, Holocene Epoch. The geological formations include areas of floodplains of the Arkansas River and significant tributaries. A search of the Arkansas Geological Map revealed that the proposed project area contains alluvial deposits of present streams. Sediments include gravels, sands, silts, clays, and mixtures of any and all of these clastic materials.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City had a population of 4,228 people in 2000 and 4,516 in 2009. The economy of the City is based on a balance of light manufacturing and port activities, such as shipping, transfer, and storage of commodities. The Port of Dardanelle, on the Arkansas River, is one of the busiest ports in the state. The project will serve all

populations equally, and will not exclude any particular person or population. The proposed project construction will not change the current land use patterns in the area, and will be compatible with applicable zoning ordinances in the area. The benefits, costs, and minor impacts of the project, such as limited noise and dust created during construction activities, will be shared equally by all citizens and will cease upon completion of the project.

IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project was analyzed to identify potential short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts on the environment.

1. Biological Resources Including Threatened and Endangered Species: According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Endangered Species database, Yell County contains the following listed species: interior least tern (*Sterna antillarum*), harperella (*Ptilimnium nodosum*), and Florida panther (*Puma concolor coryi*). Based upon the location and description of the proposed project area and upon coordination with the USFWS and the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to fish and wildlife resources, including any threatened or endangered species. The vegetation in the proposed project area consists of maintained native and introduced grasses. Thus, there should be no significant adverse impacts to rare or important vegetation types. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the USFWS and AGFC to insure protection of any listed animal and plant species that may be discovered during construction.

2. Cultural/Historic Resources: Based upon coordination with the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) construction of the proposed project should have no significant adverse impacts on archeological or historical resources because no known resources occur in the project area. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the SHPO to insure that such resources are protected during construction activities.

If cultural materials are encountered during construction, work will stop immediately in the general area of the discovery, and the funding recipient will immediately notify the SHPO to initiate accidental discovery procedures. Any such resources discovered will be evaluated in accordance with the requirements of 36 CFR Part 800, and appropriate mitigation measures developed and implemented, as needed, in consultation with the SHPO before construction in the area is allowed to continue.

3. Floodplain: The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) indicate that the proposed project area is located in Zone X. Zone X is an area determined to be outside the 500-year flood. Based upon the FIRM maps and upon coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the local Floodplain Administrator (FA), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to the floodplain. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the FA and must complete any subsequent permitting prior to the initiation of construction activities.

4. Wetlands: The proposed project is located approximately 1,350 feet west of the Arkansas River. A search of the USFWS's National Wetland Inventory maps and aerial photographs revealed no wetlands within or adjacent to the proposed project area. Based upon these findings and upon coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to wetlands or jurisdictional waters of the United States. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the ANRC and USACE to insure protection of any wetlands that may be discovered during construction.

5. Surface Water Resources: The Arkansas River is located approximately 1,350 feet east of the proposed project area. Segment AR-3F-11110203-932 of the Arkansas River is on the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality's (ADEQ) 2008 List of Impaired Waterbodies Section 303(d) list for dissolved oxygen. However, the proposed project is not expected to impact the Arkansas River or any of its tributaries. Based upon these findings and upon coordination with the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to surface water resources including waters which have been designated as a wild and scenic river. Because this project would disturb more than one (1) acre, the City would be required to comply with ADEQ's - National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Construction General Permit (ARR150000). Project disturbances would remain less than five (5) acres; therefore, it would not be necessary to file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with ADEQ.

A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SW3P) would be prepared by the construction contractor in accordance with good engineering practices and would identify potential sources of pollution that may reasonably be expected to affect the quality of the stormwater discharges during construction of the project. Best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented to prevent or minimize erosion and sedimentation, especially where there is a slope where soil disturbance would occur due to digging. Appropriate methods such as hydroseeding or providing cover in order to prevent or minimize erosion and sedimentation should be implemented. To prevent stormwater flows from entering disturbed areas, structural BMPs, such as earthen dikes or silt fences are recommended. Measures to minimize off-site tracking of sediments by construction vehicles is also recommended. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the ANRC and ADEQ, and must obtain and abide by any/all necessary permits to insure that surface water resources in the area will not be adversely impacted by construction activities.

6. Ground Water Resources: Based upon coordination with the EPA Region 6 Ground Water/UIC Section and the ANRC, construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to protected ground water resources because the project area is not located over a designated sole source aquifer. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the ANRC, and must obtain and abide by any/all necessary permits to insure that ground water resources will not be adversely impacted by construction activities.

7. Prime and Unique Farmlands: Coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) confirmed that the proposed project area is urbanized and no longer meets the criteria for Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance. Thus, construction of the proposed

project should not have significant adverse impacts to prime or unique farmlands since these protected resources no longer occur in the proposed project area.

8. Air Quality: Construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to air quality because the project is located in an area which is in compliance with the NAAQS for all criteria air pollutants. To further insure compliance with NAAQS standards, all vehicles and motorized equipment used in construction must comply with regulations regarding the control of air pollution from mobile sources. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the ADEQ, and must complete any subsequent permitting process prior to the initiation of actual construction activities.

9. Environmental Justice: Executive Order 12898 - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations directs federal agencies to identify and address the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their actions on minority and low-income populations, to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law. As such, the project was reviewed to ensure that construction would be conducted in an appropriate manner so that all persons and populations are served equally by the infrastructure improvements. Based upon the results of an evaluation to rank the potential environmental impacts to local communities using a computer-assisted mathematical formula, including Geographic Information System maps and census demographic data, no persons or populations will be discriminated against or denied the benefits of the proposed project. Because all persons and populations will be served equally by the project, there will be no adverse impacts that are considered disproportionate to any particular portion of the population.

No schools, hospitals, churches, or other public facilities and services near or adjacent to the proposed project are expected to be affected by the project. Regional and community growth in the vicinity of the proposed project is expected to continue along present trends.

10. Coastal and Barrier Resources: Because the entire state is inland and not adjacent to any coastal location, construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to coastal and barrier resources.

11. Cumulative Impacts: Potential cumulative impacts would be those impacts to the local environment that would result from the proposed project in combination with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. The Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (ASHTD) has programmed the reconstruction of State Highway (SH) 7 from SH 154 to SH 28 for the near future. Reconstruction of a state highway may have multiple adverse impacts to the natural and human environment. ASHTD and other local, state, and federal entities would monitor environmental impacts related to highway reconstruction and would mitigate for any adverse impacts. No other major construction activity is being conducted presently or planned for the immediate future. The proposed project will not individually nor cumulatively over time have a negative impact on the quality of the human or natural environment. Improving the water treatment capabilities within the City would have a positive environmental effect by enhancing public health and protecting the natural environment from continued contamination and degradation.

Based on the information described above, there are no anticipated significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

DOCUMENTATION, COORDINATION, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A public meeting for the proposed project was held on November 30, 2010, in the Dardanelle City Hall chambers in Dardanelle, Arkansas. A public notice appeared in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette on October 24, 2010 informing the public of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the public of the proposed project, to identify any concerns, and to request public participation in the development of the project. Because the proposed project is supported by the community, no adverse public comments or concerns were received.

During the process of conducting the environmental review and preparing this Environmental Assessment for the project, coordination has been conducted with all required resource protection agencies and offices to solicit and incorporate their initial review and comments. Copies of this Environmental Assessment will be provided to those agencies and offices for their final review and comments. Other interested parties may request a copy of the Environmental Assessment in writing from the EPA, Office of Planning and Coordination (6EN-XP), 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202-2733.

References

1. Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality, "2008 List of Impaired Waterbodies Section 303(d) List.", 2008.
2. *Endangered Species Database*. 5. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 23 Feb. 2011. Web. <<http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>>.
3. Haley, B.R. and Arkansas Geological Commission staff. "Geologic Map of Arkansas." 1993.
4. McClelland Consulting Engineers. *Dardanelle SAAG Grant Application, Dardanelle, Arkansas*. Rep. 2010.
5. *Soil Data Mart*. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Dec. 2008. Web. <<http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>>.

RECOMMENDATION

The engineering, social, economic and environmental investigations conducted thus far indicate that the proposed project qualifies under the criteria as an Environmental Assessment. Significant environmental impacts are not expected to occur. Therefore, it is recommended that a Finding of No Significant Impact be issued for this project.

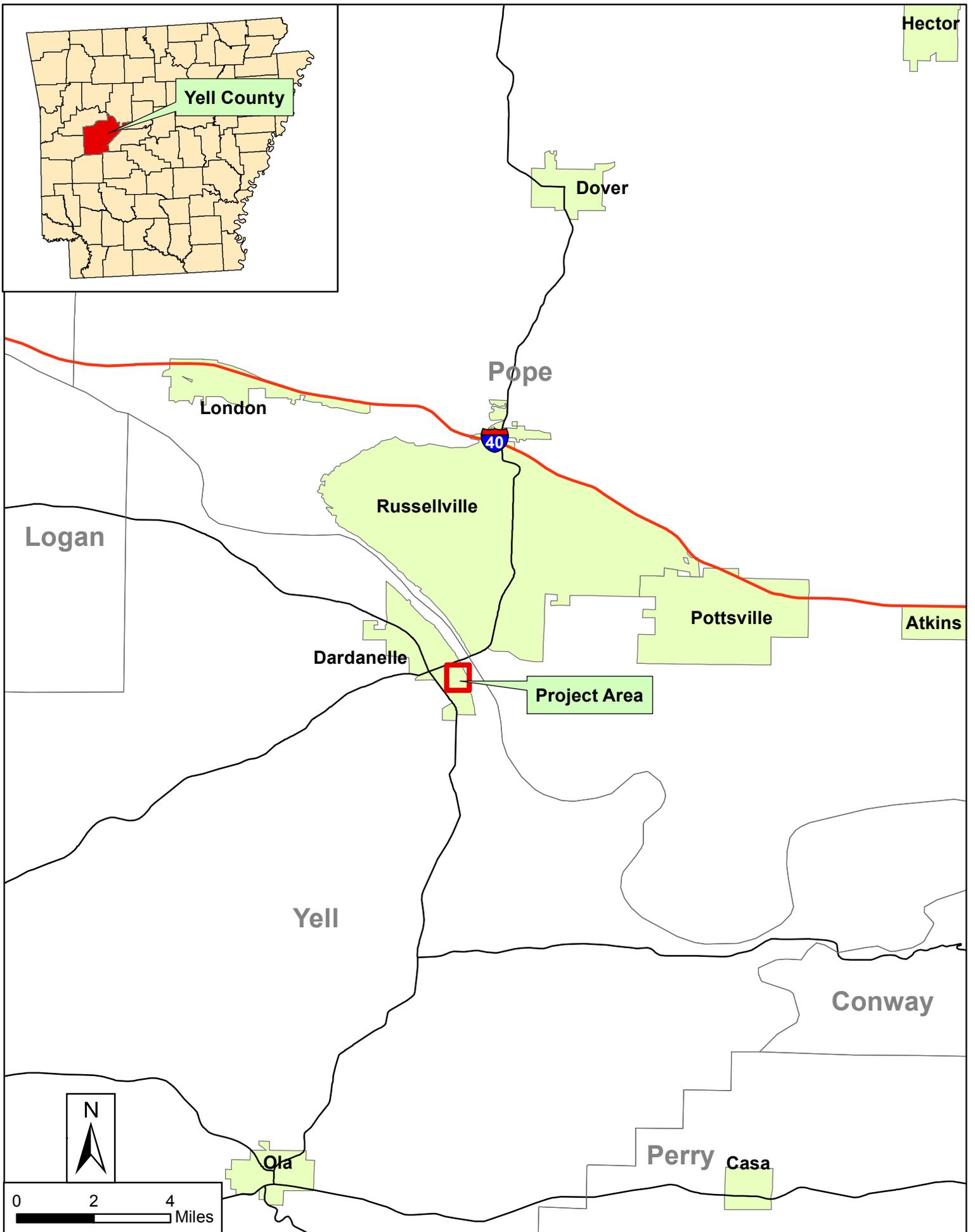


Figure 1. Project Vicinity



Arkansas River

Figure 2. Project Area

EA for City of Dardanelle, AR