



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6

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

November 30, 2010

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO ALL INTERESTED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

In accordance with the environmental review regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500, and the implementing environmental review procedures at 40 CFR Part 6 entitled "Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act", the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has determined that the following action is eligible for a Categorical Exclusion (CE) and is exempt from further environmental review.

Drinking Water Infrastructure Rehabilitation Project
Proposed by the City of Crystal City
Located in Zavala County, Texas

Estimated EPA Share: \$ 485,000

Estimated Local Share: \$ 396,818

BACKGROUND

The City of Crystal City (City) is located in deep southwest Texas approximately 120 miles southwest of San Antonio, and 50 miles east of Eagle Pass on the border with Mexico. The City encompasses approximately four square miles, is the county seat for Zavala County, and has a population of about 7,600 residents which are predominately of Hispanic origin. The City operates its own drinking water supply system, and serves approximately 2,700 homes, schools and businesses. The drinking water system is located entirely within the corporate city limits, is more than 60 years old, and has been plagued in recent years with constant problems such as broken pipes and leaks. These problems often cause a dangerous and significant loss of water pressure. The loss of pressure often causes back flows which can allow the infill/inflow of untreated surface and ground water into the system. The situation has allowed the possibility of constant environmental contamination, and has resulted in a public health hazard for the citizens living in the area. The City often experiences insufficient pumping capacity, and is out of compliance with the pumping capacity requirements established by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for small cities.

In order to protect the safety of their drinking water supply system, the City has proposed repairs to the system to correct these deficiencies. The City will replace aging and deteriorated unsafe cast iron water lines with polyvinyl chloride (PVC) lines, install two new booster pumps at two existing water wells, perform repairs to the existing water storage tower, and replace the existing monitoring and control system. These improvements are presently unaffordable to the City without financial assistance, and should enhance the City's ability to attract new businesses and employment opportunities for its citizens upon completion of the proposed repairs.

The Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations Act for the EPA included special Congressional funding for water and wastewater construction projects. The funding recipient was selected to receive funding support through these special appropriations for the repairs needed to protect the health of the public. The funding recipient will utilize the special Congressional funding support in conjunction with local funds to finance the implementation of the proposed project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City is proposing corrective rehabilitation improvements to the City's drinking water supply system as follows:

1. Replacement of existing cast iron water lines with PVC lines;
2. Install two new 900 gallons per minute water pumps at the existing East Kinney and West Kinney pump stations;
3. Perform maintenance and repairs to the existing water storage tower; and
4. Replace the existing supervisory control and data acquisition system.

All project related rehabilitation and construction activities will occur entirely within the footprint of existing water infrastructure. No new land will be acquired, and no persons or businesses will be displaced by the project. All citizens will be served equally, and will receive full benefits from the improvements. After completion, the rehabilitated facilities should insure an adequate and safe water supply system for the City. The proposed project will not increase or expand the City's existing water supply capacity. Any such expansion would not qualify for exclusion from full NEPA review.

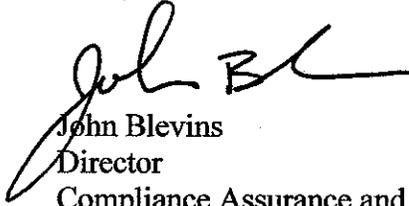
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

The proposed project qualifies for a CE. The project is a small-scale, routine action solely directed toward minor rehabilitation of an existing facility and functional replacement of existing equipment. The proposed action will not individually, cumulatively over time, or in conjunction with any other federal, state, local, or private actions have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment and may be exempted from environmental review under NEPA. No adverse direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on cultural resources, endangered and threatened species and their critical habitat, floodplain, wetlands, prime farmlands or aquifer recharge zones were identified. There are no Environmental Justice concerns with the proposed project since all residents in the area will benefit equally from the infrastructure improvements.

APPROVAL

The request for the issuance of a CE is approved. This approval will be revoked if at any time the project no longer meets the eligibility for a CE, new evidence determines that significant local or environmental issues exist, or that federal, state, local or tribal laws are being or may be violated by implementation of the project.

Responsible Official,



John Blevins
Director
Compliance Assurance and
Enforcement Division

cc: Ricardo Lopez, Mayor
City of Andrews

Kevin Ward, Executive Administrator
Texas Water Development Board