



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6

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

May 26, 2011

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.

Wastewater Infrastructure Improvements Project
Proposed by the City of Hondo
Located in Medina County, Texas

Estimated EPA Share: \$246,000
Estimated Local Share: \$539,000

BACKGROUND

The City of Hondo (City) is located in the south-central portion of Texas approximately 40 miles west of San Antonio and has an estimated population of 9,000 residents. The City has proposed to install a new sewer trunk line (East Parallel Trunk Main) in the eastern section of the City. The new trunk line will begin at the intersection of 17th Street and Avenue E and end at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant approximately 1,000 feet (ft) east of the intersection of FM 1250 and FM 462.

The existing FM 462 trunk line is one of two major sewer lines in the City's sanitary sewer collection system. It currently serves approximately half of the City's residents and the majority of Hondo's businesses. The existing FM 462 line is over 40 years old, undersized, and constructed of clay. Due to the potential for the existing FM 462 line to contribute to system overflows, especially when the City is growing to the north and east, replacement of the line is a top priority for the City's Sanitary Sewer Overflow Initiative (SSO). The goal of the SSO is to eliminate the occurrence of sewer overflows. The proposed project includes the installation of approximately 5,400 ft of

18-inch PVC sewer line, 13 sewer manholes, and a section of 30-inch steel encasement dry auger bore under US Highway 90 and the Union Pacific Railroad. The new East Parallel Trunk Main line will be installed parallel to the existing FM 462 line. The location of the existing line under the busy FM 462 thoroughfare makes direct replacement not cost effective. The proposed East Parallel Trunk Main sewer line was determined to be the best and most cost effective option for relieving the existing FM 462 line. The East Parallel Trunk Main sewer line will ultimately reduce the risk of sanitary sewer overflows which can contaminate public water sources and pose a threat to public health, safety, and the environment.

The Fiscal Year 2009 Special Appropriations 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 improvements to their sanitary sewer system. These improvements should enable the City to continue to protect the health and welfare of the citizens living in the area by improving the operational capability of the sanitary sewer system.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the proposed project was reviewed for environmental impacts by the City. The review process determined that no significant adverse environmental impacts should result from implementation of the proposed project, and that the project qualifies for the issuance of a CE. The results of the review process are acceptable to the EPA, and provide adequate and reasonable assurance that no significant adverse environmental impacts should result from the proposed project. The funding recipient has requested that the proposed project be granted a CE by the EPA, and be excluded from the full environmental review and assessment requirements of NEPA.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City is proposing the following improvements to correct the operational inadequacies associated with the sanitary sewer system:

1. Installation of 5,400 ft of 18-inch PVC SDR-26 sewer line
2. Installation of 13 sewer manholes
3. Installation of a 30-inch steel encasement dry auger bore under US Highway 90 and Union Pacific Railroad

All project-related construction activities will occur entirely on City owned property. No new land will be acquired, and no persons or businesses will be displaced by the proposed project. After completion, the new sewer trunk line should insure increased operational functionality of the sanitary sewer system. The proposed project would involve minor expansion of sanitary sewer system capacity, which, according to 40 CFR Part 6.204, is categorically excluded from further NEPA analysis.

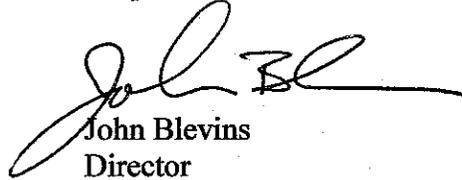
CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION

The proposed project qualifies for a CE. The proposed project is a small-scale, routine action solely directed toward minor expansion and rehabilitation of an existing system. 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, threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat, floodplains, wetlands, prime farmlands, or aquifer recharge zones were identified. There are no Environmental Justice concerns with the proposed project because all residents in the area will benefit equally from the improvements.

APPROVAL

The request for the issuance of a CE is approved. This approval will be revoked if at any time the proposed 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 proposed project.

Responsible Official,



John Blevins
Director
Compliance Assurance and
Enforcement Division

cc: Robert Herrera, City Manager
City of Hondo