



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

February 8, 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 and Wastewater Infrastructure Construction Project
Proposed by the City of Warren
Located in Bradley County, Arkansas

Estimated EPA Share: \$ 612,000
Estimated Local Share: \$ 500,728

The Fiscal Year 2009 and 2010 Appropriations Acts for the EPA included special Congressional funding for water and wastewater construction projects. The City of Warren (City) was selected to receive funding support through these special appropriations for the construction of new drinking water transmission lines, and the construction of new wastewater gravity flow transmission lines, sewer force mains, and pump stations to serve a currently undeveloped area in the northeast portion of Warren. The Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department has recently constructed bypasses around the City to facilitate the flow of traffic in the area. One of the bypasses known locally as the Highway 189 NE Bypass runs through an area that has the potential for both residential and industrial development, but the area is not currently served by utility services. The City has proposed the development of the area by the initial installation of drinking water and wastewater services as an incentive for the anticipated development.

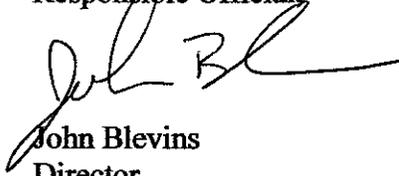
The City will install approximately 19,600 linear feet of 6-inch and 8-inch diameter drinking water supply lines following a path along the route of the newly constructed NE Bypass. The new water lines will tie into the City's existing water supply system, and will include necessary gate valves, manholes, and fire hydrants to provide the area with adequate pressure and flows for both drinking water and fire suppression. The new lines will tie into the City's existing drinking water supply system. Also, the City will install approximately 18,800 linear feet of 8-inch diameter wastewater lines, and will also follow the path along the NE Bypass. The new wastewater lines will tie into the City's existing wastewater collection

system, and will include force mains and pump stations. These improvements should allow for the development of neighborhoods in this area of the City, along with the associated commercial and industrial development typical of urban living. The City will utilize the Congressional funding support in conjunction with local funds to finance the construction of the proposed project.

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: Bryan Martin, Mayor
City of Warren

Randy Young, Executive Director
Arkansas Natural Resources Commission

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

WATER and WASTEWATER INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Proposed by the

CITY of WARREN

Located in BRADLEY COUNTY, ARKANSAS

BACKGROUND

The Fiscal Year 2009 and 2010 Appropriations Acts for the EPA included special Congressional funding for water and wastewater construction projects. The City of Warren (City) was selected to receive funding support through these special appropriations for the construction of new wastewater gravity flow transmission lines, sewer force mains, pump stations and drinking water transmission lines to serve a currently undeveloped area in the northeast portion of Warren. The Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department has recently constructed bypasses around the City to facilitate the flow of traffic in the area. One of the bypasses known locally as the Highway 189 NE Bypass runs through an area that has the potential for both residential and industrial development, but the area is not currently served by utility services. The City has proposed the development of the area by the initial installation of drinking water and wastewater service as an incentive for the anticipated development.

The City will install approximately 19,600 linear feet of six inch and eight inch diameter drinking water lines following a path along the route of the newly constructed NE Bypass. The new water lines will tie into the City's existing water supply system, and will include necessary gate valves, manholes, and fire hydrants to provide the area with adequate pressure and flows for both drinking water and fire suppression. The City will also install approximately 18,800 linear feet of eight inch diameter wastewater lines, and will follow the path along the NE Bypass. The new wastewater lines will also tie into the City's existing wastewater collection system, and will include force mains and pump stations. These improvements should allow for the development of neighborhoods in this area of the City, along with the associated commercial and industrial development typical of urban living. The initial capacity of both systems will not be fully utilized until the area becomes developed. The City will utilize the Congressional funding support in conjunction with local funds to finance the construction of the proposed project.

The City currently owns and operates the drinking water supply and wastewater collection and treatment systems serving the citizens in the area. The City's drinking water supply is provided by three deep water wells each approximately 1,300 feet deep. The drinking water treatment plant is located on West Church Street, and is connected to two water storage tanks each with a 500,000 gallon capacity. The City's wastewater collection system consists of 23 lift stations of various types and sizes, and the treatment plant consists of three 15-acre aerated facultative lagoons with a treatment design flow of 2 million gallons per day.

The wastewater is treated with alum using continuous backwash dynasand filters followed by ultraviolet lights for disinfection. There are two industrial users of the City's wastewater collection and treatment system. The project planning area is shown on the map enclosed as Figure 1.

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 Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 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 City has proposed the construction and installation of the above referenced drinking water supply lines and wastewater transmission lines in order to develop the area along the NE Bypass. The project is scheduled to be complete by summer 2011. The City's estimated time schedule should allow for design and approval of the improvements, obtaining all applicable permits for the project to proceed, and the actual construction and installation of the lines. Upon completion of the project and once development in the area is complete, the flows will be 150 gallons per minute for water supply and 100 gallons per minute for wastewater collection.

The proposed improvements will provide safe and dependable water supply and wastewater collection systems to serve the area once citizens are living in the area, and associated support businesses are established. All construction activities will occur either within the footprints of the existing water and wastewater plants, the utility easement immediately adjacent to the new highway, or other rights of way owned or controlled by the funding recipient. The proposed project will not displace any existing citizen, home or business since none presently exist in the project area.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The funding recipient evaluated and considered a range of various alternatives to address the infrastructure needs of the area. Important factors influencing the evaluation of the processes and their recommended solutions include environmental acceptability, overall costs, availability of land for the intended uses, maximum reuse of existing facilities when applicable, operation and maintenance costs, system reliability, accommodation of future expansion needs, and public acceptance. A complete description of the alternatives is provided in the Environmental Information Document (EID) provided by the funding recipient for the project.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The city of Warren is located in the southeast part of the state approximately 17 miles west of Monticello. The City is the county seat for Bradley County, and has a population of approximately 6,500 residents. The existing landscape of the area consists mainly of pine plantations, mixed hardwood forests, and pastureland for grazing livestock. The topography of the land is relatively flat with a few minor elevation changes due to several small streams and creeks in the area. The existing ground in the project planning area has been previously disturbed by construction of the recent NE Bypass. Construction and installation of the water and wastewater lines will be mainly in easements adjacent to the highway. Surface waters in the area consist of the nearby Saline River and intermittent streams that feed into the river. The Saline River is classified as an extraordinary resources stream, and is subject to the issuance of a mercury level warning for most game fish in the river. The warning advises against consuming fish caught in the river. However, the City's current drinking water supply is pumped from wells approximately 1,300 feet deep.

The area has hot summers and moderately cool winters. Annual precipitation in the area is heavy, and is evenly distributed throughout the year. Snowfall occurs every winter but coverage lasts only a few days. Air quality is good and presently not in violation of state or federal air quality control standards. Soils in the area support livestock grazing in more remote areas, and are conducive to reseeding after construction to quickly return disturbed areas to their original condition. There are no wilderness areas, national landmarks or monuments, or wild and scenic rivers within or immediately adjacent to the project area.

The population in the area is comprised of 53 percent Caucasian, 40 percent Black or African American, 5 percent Hispanic, and 2 percent listed as "other". The area has suffered from a lack of economic development and growth over past years. The proposed project is an attempt to address these disadvantages. The project will serve all populations equally, no new land will be acquired, no residents or businesses will be displaced, and the economic characteristics will not be negatively impacted. To the contrary, the improvements will be of economic benefit to the community. A more detailed description of the local environment is provided in the EID developed for 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. There are no anticipated significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the proposed action that cannot be reduced to acceptable levels as identified and discussed below.

1. **Biological Resources Including Threatened and Endangered Species:** Based upon initial coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to biological resources. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the USFWS to insure

protection of any protected animal and plant species that may be discovered during actual construction, including their protected habitat. The funding recipient is responsible for compliance with any recommendations made by the USFWS. The funding is contingent upon compliance with these requirements.

2. Cultural/Historic Resources: Based upon initial coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to archaeological, historical, architectural, or cultural resources since these protected resources are not known to occur in the project area. However, 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 of the discovery. 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. The funding is contingent upon compliance with these requirements.

3. Floodplain: Based upon initial coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the funding recipient is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program and has implemented the appropriate Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. Therefore, the funding recipient is required to coordinate with the local Floodplain Administrator (FA) for review, and must complete any permit requirements prior to construction of the proposed project. Compliance with any requirements imposed by the FA prior to construction activities should insure that there will be no significant impacts to the floodplain from the proposed project. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the FA during actual construction activities. The funding is contingent upon compliance with these requirements.

4. Wetlands: Based upon initial coordination with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (COE), construction of the proposed project will likely require the issuance of a project-specific construction permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act to protect any wetlands and jurisdictional waters of the United States that may be present. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the COE, and must complete any subsequent permitting process prior to the initiation of actual construction activities. Compliance with the permit should insure that construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to designated wetlands within the project construction area. The funding is contingent upon compliance with these requirements.

In order to further protect the natural beneficial functions of the floodplain and wetlands, and to minimize the potential flood hazards to life and property, the construction funding is conditioned to read:

a. The recipient agrees not to collect or treat wastewater generated by new development in the floodplain or wetlands by the project facilities for a period of 50 years from the date of the environmental assessment related to this project. This restriction does not apply to development in the floodplain or wetlands which existed prior to that date;

b. The recipient agrees to adopt and enforce suitable ordinances and implementing procedures for effective local administration of this floodplain and wetlands service area restriction. On application of the recipient's governing body and after considering all relevant information on a proposed development's effects on the natural functions and values of the affected floodplain and wetlands, the EPA Regional Administrator may waive the service area restriction in individual cases; and

c. EPA and the recipient intend that this floodplain and wetlands service area restriction shall benefit any person, organization, or entity possessing an interest in preservation of the natural environment in the 100-year floodplain and wetlands subject to this restriction. Any such beneficiary may seek enforcement of the restriction against the recipient or its successor in a court of competent jurisdiction, if notice of the intent to seek enforcement is first given to the recipient and the EPA Region 6, and neither entity initiates corrective action within 90 days of receiving such notice.

5. Surface Water Resources: Based upon initial coordination with the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission (ANRC) and the National Park Service, construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to protected surface water resources. There will be no discharge into any waters which have been designated as a wild and scenic river. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the ANRC, and must complete any subsequent permitting process prior to the initiation of actual construction activities. The funding is contingent upon compliance with these requirements.

6. Ground Water Resources: Based upon initial coordination with the ANRC and the EPA Region 6 Ground Water/UIC Section, construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to protected ground water resources since 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 complete any subsequent permitting process prior to the initiation of actual construction activities. The funding is contingent upon compliance with these requirements.

7. Prime and Unique Farmlands: Based upon initial coordination with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to prime or unique farmlands. The funding recipient is responsible for continued coordination with the NRCS, and must comply with NRCS recommendations during construction activities. The funding is contingent upon compliance with these requirements.

8. Air Quality: Based upon initial coordination with the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to air quality since the project is located in an area which is in compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for all criteria air pollutants. Therefore, general conformity rules under the air State Implementation Plan do not apply. 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: The project was reviewed to ensure that construction will 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 Geographical Information System maps and census demographic data, no persons or populations will be discriminated against or denied the benefits of the proposed project. Since 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.

10. Coastal and Barrier Resources: Construction of the proposed project should not have significant adverse impacts to coastal and barrier resources since the construction project area is not adjacent to the coastal zone.

11. Cumulative Impacts: Potential cumulative impacts would be those impacts to the local environment that would result from the proposed project in combination with other ongoing actions, and those reasonably foreseeable future actions. 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. To the contrary, improved infrastructure will have a positive environmental effect by enhancing public health and protecting the natural environment from continued contamination and degradation.

DOCUMENTATION, COORDINATION, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A public hearing for the proposed project was held on March 3, 2009, in the Warren City Hall building located at 104 N. Myrtle. 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. The project is supported by the community. No members of the general public attended the hearing, and no adverse public comments have been received about the project.

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. Environmental Information Document, Warren Water and Sewer Improvements, January 2010.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon completion of this Environmental Assessment, and a detailed review of the Environmental Information Document for the project, it has been determined that construction activities are considered to be environmentally sound. Therefore, it is recommended that a Finding of No Significant Impact be issued.