

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Section 340 Big Sandy Water Extension Project McDowell County, West Virginia

1. Members of my staff have conducted an Environmental Assessment (EA), in the overall public interest, which considers potential impacts on the human environment from the proposed Waterline Expansion Project, located in McDowell County, West Virginia. The Preferred Action Alternative will provide potable water service to the communities of Roderfield, Clear Fork, Hensley, and Big Sandy. Residents within the communities of Roderfield, Clear Fork, and Hensley obtain their water from wells, mine seeps, springs, and cisterns. The Big Sandy area's local water system has difficulty operating and maintaining its potable water service. This has resulted in health and safety issues associated with inadequate water supply.

2. The possible consequences of the proposed action have been studied for environmental, cultural, and social well-being effects.

3. The Preferred Action Alternative (PAA) and the No Action Alternative (NAA) were the only alternatives carried forward for detailed evaluation. Primary ecological impacts from the PAA are the effects of construction, which are considered to be minor and temporary. The PAA is expected to have beneficial long-term impacts on drinking water quality which is currently impacted by the existing wells, mine seeps, springs, and cisterns. No threatened or endangered species or any associated critical habitat would be impacted by the PAA.

Under the NAA, the USACE would not provide the funding for the project. Additionally, the NAA would result in continued use of existing inadequate water supply resulting in low quality and quantity of water supply.

4. An evaluation of the PAA and NAA produced the following pertinent conclusions:

a. Environmental Considerations. The Huntington District has taken reasonable measures to assemble and present the known or foreseeable impacts of the PAA to the human and natural environment in the EA. All potential adverse impacts of the proposed action are temporary and minor.

b. Social Well-Being Considerations. No significant economic or social well-being impacts that are both adverse and unavoidable are foreseen as a result of the PAA. The community would benefit from the proposed action through reliable and safe drinking

water. The PAA would have no effect on sites of significant archaeological or historical importance.

c. Coordination with Resource and Other Agencies. Pursuant to the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) of 1958 as amended, coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been conducted. In accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1970, as amended, the PAA will have no effect on listed species. Coordination with the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resource Section under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act has been conducted. There will be no effect to any rare, threatened, or endangered species or sensitive habitats within the project area. The project will be conducted in accordance with Nationwide Permit #12 in compliance with the Clean Water Act. Finally, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, coordination with the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office has been conducted. No historic properties will be affected by the proposed undertaking. Appropriate measures and best management practices have been identified and incorporated into the plan.

d. Other Public Interest Considerations. There has been no opposition to the PAA expressed by state or local governments, or organized environmental groups, and there are no unresolved issues regarding the implementation of the PAA.

5. I find the PAA has been planned in accordance with current authorization as described in the EA. The PAA is consistent with national policy, statutes and administrative directives. This determination is based on thorough analysis and evaluation of the PAA and NAA. In conclusion, I find that the proposed water extension project in McDowell County, West Virginia, would have no significant adverse effect on the quality of the human and/or natural environment and preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Leon F. Parrott
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer