

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Section 531

Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Elkhorn City, Kentucky

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 Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade, located in Elkhorn City, Kentucky. The Preferred Action Alternative would upgrade the existing wastewater treatment plant to ensure compliance with the Clean Water Act as the plant is currently overloading. The PAA would also increase capacity for future development and potential sewer collection system expansion to area residents.
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 would be the effects of construction, which are considered to be minor and temporary. The PAA would be expected to have beneficial long-term impacts on public health and safety and water quality. No threatened or endangered species or any associated critical habitat would be impacted by the PAA.

Under the NAA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) would not provide the funding for the project. Additionally, the NAA would result in continued overloading and overcapacity of the existing treatment plant, threatening release of untreated sewage or plant malfunction.

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 draft EA. The PAA would have no effect on sites of significant archaeological or historical importance. All potential adverse impacts of the proposed action would be 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. Temporary and minor disturbances to noise and traffic are anticipated effects of the PAA. The community would benefit from the proposed action through an upgrade of the existing wastewater treatment system.

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 would have no effect on listed species. Coordination with the Kentucky Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resource Section under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act has been conducted. There would be no effect to any rare, threatened, or endangered species or sensitive habitats within the project area. The project would be conducted in accordance with the Clean Water Act. Finally, pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, coordination with the Kentucky Heritage Council has been conducted. No historic properties would 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 wastewater treatment plant project in the City of Elkhorn City, 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.

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District Engineer