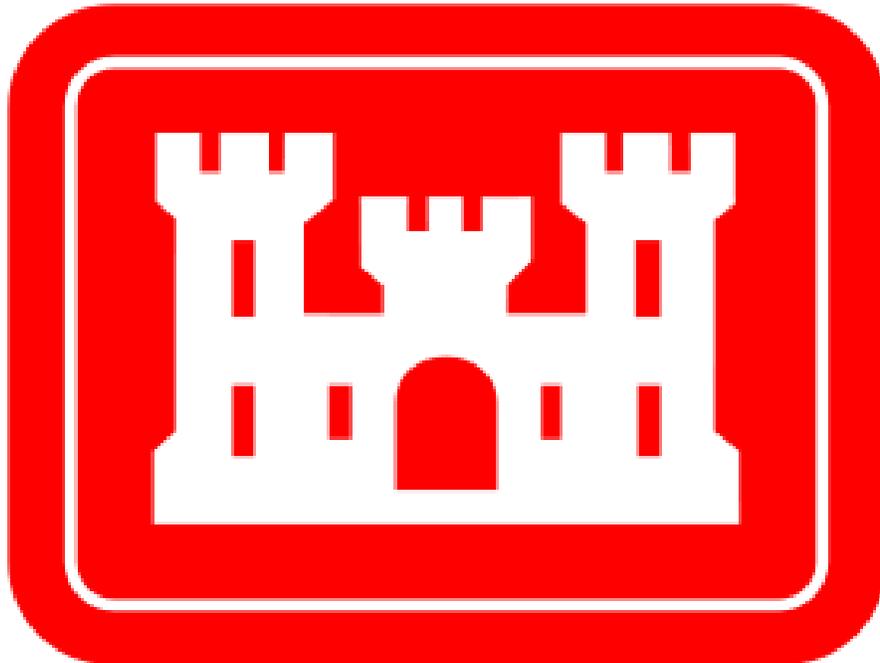


**Environmental Assessment**

**Section 340 Town of Camden on Gauley  
Waterline Extension Project  
Webster County, West Virginia**



**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Huntington District  
Huntington, West Virginia**

**June 2020**



## Executive Summary

The Camden on Gauley Water Works (COGWW) is proposing to design and construct a waterline extension project. The extension project would also include construction of one booster station adjacent to Cranberry Ridge Road. Improvements to existing infrastructure are required in order to provide potable water service in the proposed project area. In addition to the above improvements, the proposed project would also include the construction of new water meter settings, various gate valves, and other necessary appurtenances. This area is currently served by privately-owned wells and cisterns, which are unreliable and pose health and safety risks to humans and increased risk of contamination to the local environment. The proposed infrastructure would enable water to be transported to the residential customers of the communities of Cranberry Ridge and Gauley Mills and surrounding areas of Webster County, West Virginia.

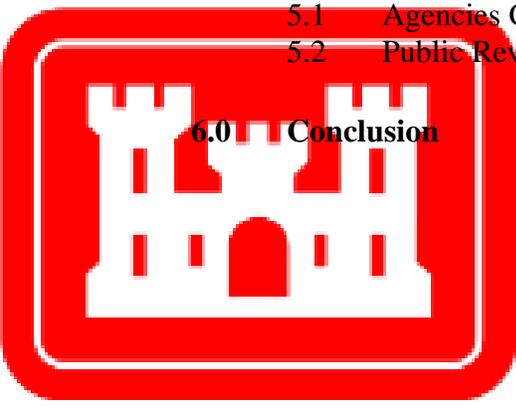
The Proposed Action Alternative would consist of construction of approximately 17,500 linear feet (LF) of force water main; construction of a new booster station adjacent to Cranberry Ridge Road; and installation of 66 new water meter settings, various gate valves and other necessary appurtenances. The waterline would be installed in the Cranberry Ridge and Gauley Mills area along Cranberry Ridge Road, Gauley Mills Road, Proctor Run Road, Short Street, and Mill Fork Road. Water would be purchased through an existing bulk rate established with the Craigsville Public Service District (PSD). All construction areas would be returned to preexisting conditions through soil grading and seed planting.

The proposed project is a partnership agreement between the COGWW and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), established under the authority of Section 340 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 (Public Law 106-109), as amended, which provides authority for the Corps to establish a program to provide environmental assistance to Non-Federal entities in southern West Virginia. This law provides design and construction assistance for water related environmental infrastructure projects to Non-Federal interests in southern West Virginia. Funding, as established under Section 340, shall be shared 75% Federal and 25% Non-Federal (State and Local).

This Environmental Assessment is prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508) and the Corps Implementing regulation, ER-200-2-2.

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## Acronyms

BMPs- Best Management Practices  
CEQ – Council on Environmental Quality  
CFR – Code of Federal Regulations  
COGWW – Camden on Gauley Water Works  
Corps – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
DNL – Day Night Average Noise Levels  
EA – Environmental Assessment  
ECSP – Erosion Control and Sediment Plan  
EIS – Environmental Impact Statement  
EO – Executive Order  
FAA – Federal Aviation Administration  
FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FIRM – Flood Insurance Rate Map  
FONSI – Finding of No Significant Impact  
FPPA – Farmland Protection Policy Act  
HTRW – Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste  
NAA – No Action Alternative  
NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act  
NRCS – Natural Resource Conservation Service  
NWI – National Wetland Inventory Map  
PAA – Proposed Action Alternative  
PCS – Petroleum Contaminated Soil  
SHPO – State Historic Preservation Office  
UPUS - Unrestricted Portable Use Standard  
USDA – United States Department of Agriculture  
USEPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
USFWS – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
WRDA – Water Resource Development Act  
WVDEP – West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection  
WVDOH – West Virginia Division of Highways  
WWTP – Waste Water Treatment Plant



*The brief and concise nature of this document is consistent with the 40 CFR requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to reduce paperwork and delay by eliminating duplication with existing environmental documentation, incorporating pertinent material by reference, and by emphasizing interagency cooperation. The majority of data collection and analysis in this document was performed by The Thrasher Group, Inc. in conjunction with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).*

## **1.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **1.1 Project Background**

This Environmental Assessment (EA) examines the potential environmental impacts of the waterline extension project as proposed by the Camden on Gauley Water Works (COGWW). The purpose of this EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). An EIS is typically conducted where significant human or natural resources exist and the implementation of a proposed project may have significant effects to those resources. An EA typically involves projects where no significant resources occur or the project is expected to have less than significant impacts to the human and natural environment. In both EISs and EAs, additional project actions can be implemented to help avoid, minimize, or mitigate for potential project impacts.

### **1.2 Purpose, Need, and Authorization**

The purpose of the proposed project would be to extend existing waterline infrastructure within the water distribution system. Currently, residents in the area rely on individual water systems that experience low quality and quantity of water supply and do not have fire protection. These conditions affect the operations of the water distribution system and could pose health and safety risks to residents if complete failure would occur. The project would extend water service to the communities of Cranberry Ridge and Gauley Mills and surrounding areas in Webster County, West Virginia, which are currently served by privately-owned wells and cisterns. The need for replacing and extending the waterline system in the proposed area is to provide residents with a reliable and safe water supply.

The proposed project is a partnership agreement between the COGWW and the Corps established under the authority of Section 340 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1992 (Public Law 102-580), as amended, which provides authority for the Corps to establish a program to provide environmental assistance to Non-Federal entities in southern West Virginia. This law provides design and construction assistance for water related environmental infrastructure projects to Non-Federal interests in southern West Virginia, including projects for wastewater treatment plants and related facilities, water supply, water storage, water treatment, water distribution facilities and surface water resource protection and development.

This EA is prepared pursuant to the NEPA, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and Corps implementing regulation, ER 200-2-2.



## **2.0 PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

### **2.1 Proposed Action Alternative (PAA)**

The PAA would consist of construction of approximately 17,500 linear feet of waterline; one booster station adjacent to Cranberry Ridge Road; 66 new water meter settings; various gate valves; and other necessary appurtenances. Construction of the waterlines would occur within West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH) rights-of-way along Cranberry Ridge Road, Gauley Mills Road, Proctor Run Road, Short Street, and Mill Fork Road, which is in previously disturbed ground. Construction of the booster station would occur in a small field adjacent to Cranberry Ridge Road within WVDOH rights-of-way. Installation of the booster station would involve excavation, construction of the booster station, and backfilling of the area. The booster station would be graveled, and a chain link fence would be installed around the booster station for security. Eight tributaries, including Mill Fork, would be crossed during construction of the waterlines. Road crossings during the installation of the waterline would be completed utilizing bore and jack construction methods. A ditch located along Proctor Run Road would be rock-lined in accordance with WVDOH standards. Following construction, all areas would be returned to preexisting conditions through soil grading and seed planting, and driveways and walkways impacted by construction would be repaired.

### **2.2 No Action Alternative (NAA)**

Under the NAA, the Corps would not provide funding for the project. Additionally, the Town of Camden on Gauley would not improve the water distribution system and the community would continue to rely on privately-owned wells and cisterns. As a result, a source of reliable potable water and fire protection would not be available to these residents. Health and safety risks could become a possibility due to unreliable infrastructure and low water quality and quantity. However, it is included in the alternatives analysis to establish a baseline condition for existing human and natural environmental conditions, to allow comparison between future without and with project actions, and to determine potential environmental effects of proposed with project alternatives.

## **3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND CONSEQUENCES**

This section discusses the existing conditions by resource category and any potential environmental impacts associated with the No Action Alternative (NAA) as well as with implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative (PAA).

The Corps took context and intensity into consideration in determining potential impact significance, as defined in 40 CFR part 1508.27. The intensity of a potential impact is the impact's severity and includes consideration of beneficial and adverse effects, the level of controversy associated with a project's impacts on human health, whether the action establishes a precedent for future actions with significant effects, the level of uncertainty about project impacts and whether the action threatens to violate federal, state, or local laws established for the protection of the human and natural environment. The severity of an environmental impact is



characterized as none/negligible, minor, moderate, significant, or beneficial. The impact may also be short-term or long-term in nature.

- **None/negligible** – No measurable impacts are expected to occur.
- **Minor** – A measurable and adverse effect to a resource. A slight impact that may not be readily obvious and is within accepted levels for permitting, continued resource sustainability, or human use. Impacts should be avoided and minimized if possible, but should not result in a mitigation requirement.
- **Significant** – A measurable and adverse effect to a resource. A major impact that is readily obvious and is not within accepted levels for permitting, continued resource sustainability, or human use. Impacts likely result in the need for mitigation.
- **Beneficial** – A measurable and positive effect to a resource. May be minor to major, resulting in improved conditions, sustainability, or viability of the resource.
- **Short-Term** – Temporary in nature and does not result in a permanent long-term beneficial or adverse effect to a resource. For example, temporary construction-related effects (such as, an increase in dust, noise, traffic congestion) that no longer occur once construction is complete. May be minor, significant, adverse or beneficial in nature.
- **Long-Term** – Permanent (or for most of the project life) beneficial or adverse effects to a resource. For example, permanent conversion of a wetland to a parking lot. May be minor, significant, adverse or beneficial in nature.

The Corps used quantitative and qualitative analyses, as appropriate, to determine the level of potential impact from proposed alternatives. Based on the results of the analyses, this EA identifies whether a particular potential impact would be adverse or beneficial, and to what extent. CEQ regulations also require that a proposed action's cumulative impact be addressed as part of a NEPA document. Cumulative impacts are discussed in section 3.19 below.

### 3.1 Location

The affected area is located within the communities of Cranberry Ridge and Gauley Mills and surrounding areas in Webster County, West Virginia along Cranberry Ridge Road, Gauley Mills Road, Proctor Run Road, Short Street, and Mill Fork Road (See Figure 1). The project includes the extension of the existing water distribution system; installation of new waterlines; construction of one booster station; and installation of new water meter settings, various gate valves, and other necessary appurtenances. See Appendix A for project location maps.



**Figure 1 - Waterline Extension and Booster Station Location**

### 3.2 Land Use

Land use in the immediate area includes undeveloped forested hillsides and residential properties. The proposed waterline extension project would be constructed in the WVDOH rights-of-way, which are previously disturbed areas. Land contours would be reclaimed upon completion of the underground installation, and the driveways and walkways impacted by construction would be repaired. A ditch located along Proctor Run Road would be rock-lined in accordance with WVDOH standards. The proposed booster station would occur in a small field within WVDOH rights-of-way. The location of this infrastructure is not anticipated to impact land use since the area has been previously disturbed. Various temporary construction easements and permanent waterline easements would be acquired. Due to the previously disturbed nature of the area, land use is not anticipated to be adversely impacted.

There would be no significant adverse impacts to land use as a result of either the PAA or NAA.

### 3.3 Climate

Camden on Gauley experiences seasonal weather patterns with typical summer conditions of hot and humid days and winters being mild to moderate cold temperatures with snowfall. Fall is typically the driest season, while spring is typically wetter. Average temperatures during the



summer months of May to September are 71 degrees Fahrenheit. The hottest month is typically July with an average low of 62 degrees Fahrenheit and high of 79 degrees. The coldest season lasts for three months from December to March with an average temperature of 46 degrees Fahrenheit and average seasonal snowfall of 72 inches. The coldest month is typically January with an average low of 22 degrees Fahrenheit and high of 38 degrees. Average rainfall is 53 inches with the spring being the wettest season.

Only short duration, minor discharges of carbon based pollutants would occur during construction activities that could contribute to greenhouse gases. The NAA or PAA would not involve any activity that could significantly affect the environment in regards to climate change and would not likely be influenced by future changes in climate. Therefore, no significant adverse impacts to climate or climate change would occur as a result of the PAA or NAA.

### **3.4 Terrestrial Habitat**

The PAA would be constructed primarily on previously disturbed areas, including WVDOH rights-of-way. Trees observed within and near the project area are primarily hardwood species such as oak and maple. Removal of grass and vegetation may occur within areas where open-cut/trenching methods for the waterlines and bore construction methods are implemented. There are approximately 0.33 acres of forested area within the WVDOH rights-of-way and tree clearing would occur within these areas to facilitate installation of water lines. No tree clearing would be required at the location of the proposed booster station. Streambank slopes would be protected via installation of belted silt fences, and a ditch located along Proctor Run Road will be rock-lined in accordance with WVDOH standards. Potential impacts to vegetation would be minimal. Areas would be returned to pre-construction conditions upon completion of construction activities through soil grading and grass seeding with the exception of the booster station. Only minor impacts to existing vegetation during construction are anticipated to occur. Therefore, no significant long-term impacts to terrestrial habitat are anticipated as part of the PAA.

Selection of the NAA would result in minor and temporary impacts to terrestrial habitat.

### **3.5 Floodplains**

Executive Order 11988 requires Federal agencies to consider the potential effects of their proposed actions to floodplains. In order to determine the PAA's potential floodplain impact, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) were reviewed for portions of the proposed project that would be located within the floodplain of Gauley River and Mills Creek (<https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/flood-zones>). Project components to be located in Zone AE, 1-percent change of a flood event in a given year, include a portion of the proposed waterline construction. The remaining portion of the waterline construction is located within Zone X, which is an area of 0.2% chance of flooding. The booster station is located within an area of minimal flood hazard.

Underground infrastructure such as waterlines will result in no adverse impact to floodplain areas. The booster station is located within an area of minimal flood hazard and is not anticipated



to adversely impact the floodplain. Coordination with the floodplain manager for Webster County has been conducted (see Appendix B). Prior to construction, submission of a Floodplain Development Permit Application would be required. The PAA meets the intent of EO 11988 and no significant impacts to floodplains are anticipated to occur from the PAA.

As no construction related activities would be implemented, no impacts to floodplains are anticipated to occur from the NAA.

### **3.6 Prime and Unique Farmland**

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) requires Federal agencies to minimize the conversion of prime and unique farmland to non-agricultural uses. The majority of the project is within previously disturbed areas. Two soil units, considered to be either prime farmland or farmland of local importance, comprise 18% of the Proposed Action Area. The waterline within these areas would be installed within previously disturbed areas, and the booster station would not be located within these areas. The Corps' Huntington District has determined that due to the majority of the area being pre-disturbed lands, the FPPA would not apply to this proposed project and no impacts on prime or unique, statewide, or locally important farmland is expected to occur. Coordination with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is ongoing and will be completed prior to a FONSI.

Likewise, there are no direct impacts to Prime and Unique Farmland anticipated as part of the NAA.

### **3.7 Aquatic Habitat/Water Quality**

The project is within the Gauley River Watershed (HUC 8- 05050005). According to the 2000 West Virginia Water Quality Assessment Status 305(b) Report, the Gauley River is a tributary to the Great Kanawha River and the watershed contains 524 streams totaling 1,969 miles. The Gauley River Watershed lies within Kanawha, Clay, Fayette, Nicholas, Summers, Greenbrier, Webster, Pocahontas, and Randolph Counties. There are no Sole Source Aquifers in the project area. Thirty-eight streams within the watershed have been found impaired. Surface water has been degraded throughout the watershed and the leading impacts are caused from pH, siltation, and metals.

Implementation of the PAA would not result in new discharge of pollutants. Eight tributaries, including Mill Fork, will be crossed by the waterline as part of the PAA. Stream crossings associated with the PAA would fall under the non-reporting Nationwide Permit 12 for Utility Line Activities. No further coordination with the Corps Regulatory Division is required. Therefore, a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, Section 404 permit (individual) and associated Section 401 permit under the Clean Water Act would not be required prior to construction. The local Sponsor would be responsible for obtaining any necessary permits prior to construction.



Impacts to aquatic habitat would be temporary at streams and water crossings through use of open-cut/trenching construction methods in addition to bore construction methods. In-stream work would be conducted during periods of low flow. Prior to construction, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit would be required and an erosion and sediment control plan (ESCP) would be drafted and submitted to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP) as part of a construction stormwater permit. The limits of disturbance for the project would be approximately 6.5 acres, and the booster station's limits of disturbance would be approximately 50 feet by 100 feet. These construction related impacts would be short-term and minor and mitigated through the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) throughout the project area to prevent runoff into adjacent surface waters. For example, belted silt fences would be installed for streambank slope protection. Other BMPs include the use of a compost filter sock and rolled erosion control products. Based on the above, implementation of the PAA would not result in significant adverse short or long-term environmental impacts to aquatic habitat and water quality.

Under the NAA, no aquatic impacts would occur and water quality in the project area would remain unchanged. However, without the proposed project, it is likely that the individual water systems would fail in the future, which could result in poor water quality and a reduced quantity of existing wells. This would pose a health and safety risk to both humans and wildlife in the natural environment.

### **3.8 Wetlands**

National Wetland Inventory Maps (NWI) were reviewed for the proposed project area and a site reconnaissance field investigation was conducted to determine the validity of NWI Maps. NWI maps indicated that there are no wetlands adjacent to the project area and the site reconnaissance confirmed that no wetlands are located within the proposed project area.

No impacts to wetlands are anticipated as part of the PAA or NAA.

### **3.9 Wild and Scenic Rivers**

No designated State Wild or Scenic Rivers are present within the Project Area. Therefore, no impacts to these resources are anticipated as part of the PAA or NAA.

### **3.10 Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste (HTRW)**

A Phase 1 HTRW Environmental Site Assessment was conducted on 8 June 2019 for the Town of Camden on Gauley to identify environmental conditions and to identify the potential presence of HTRW contamination located in the project's construction work limits.

The Phase I HTRW investigation identified one historical recognized environment condition existing near the Proposed Action area and one de Minimis condition existing within the Proposed Action area. After review of the Phase I HTRW investigation, Corps' HTRW staff determined that no further investigation was needed and no further HTRW action is required.



Therefore, no impacts to HTRW are anticipated with the PAA. Corps' HTRW staff concurred in an email on 17 January 2020.

The NAA would not result in ground disturbing activities. Therefore, no direct construction related HTRW impacts would be associated with the NAA.

### 3.11 Cultural Resources

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (36 CFR 800), the West Virginia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) was consulted regarding the proposed project. On April 25, 2017, the SHPO determined "no archaeological historic properties would be affected by the proposed project". However, SHPO expressed concerns regarding effects to the Half Acre Bethel Church, a property eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places located east of a proposed pump station. SHPO requested additional information concerning this property in the letter. After receiving additional information regarding structures within the project viewshed, SHPO concluded in a letter dated July 31, 2019 "the proposed project will affect no architectural properties eligible for or listed in the National Register [of Historic Places]". No further cultural resources coordination is required unless the scope of the project changes. Therefore, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1)(i), the Huntington District has fulfilled its obligation under Section 106. See Appendix B for coordination letters.

If unanticipated archaeological deposits or human remains are discovered during construction, all work near the location of the discovery shall cease and the Project Manager and Huntington District Archaeologist shall be contacted immediately. The West Virginia State Police, the Webster County Coroner, and SHPO must also be notified immediately if human remains are discovered.

Under the NAA, no construction related actions would be implemented, so no significant detrimental impacts to cultural resources would occur.

### 3.12 Threatened and Endangered Species

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) tool, the project area is within the range of the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), Candy darter (*Etheostoma osburni*), Running buffalo clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*), and Virginia spiraea (*Spiraea virginiana*).

The proposed project would primarily occur in previously disturbed areas and it is anticipated that minor tree clearing activities may be required. In correspondence dated 30 March 2017, the USFWS stated, "the Service does not anticipate that this project is likely to adversely affect the Indiana bat because your project: (1) will affect less than 17 acres of potential Indiana bat foraging or roosting habitat; (2) is not within any of the Indiana bat hibernacula or summer use buffers; and (3) will not affect any potential caves or mines that could be used as hibernacula for this species." Additionally, the USFWS stated that impacts to the Northern long-eared bat are



covered under the 4(d) rule. Therefore, the Corps' Huntington District has determined that the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the Indiana bat and Northern long-eared bat.

Mill Fork, in addition to seven other unnamed tributaries of the Gauley River, will be crossed by the waterline utilizing open-cut/trench construction methods in addition to bore construction methods. These streams are not suitable habitat for the Candy darter however, the project is within close proximity to the Gauley River, which is known to contain the Candy darter. In correspondence dated 27 September 2019, the USFWS stated, "The project does not propose direct impacts to the Cherry River, and the applicant will adhere to a sediment and erosion control plan to minimize any potential sedimentation to the Gauley River. Therefore, any effects to the candy darter from this project will be minimal or unlikely to occur." Therefore, the Corps' Huntington District has determined the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect, the Candy darter.

Furthermore, the proposed action would have no effect on endangered or threatened flowering plant species as work would occur in previously disturbed areas that do not fall within the habitat requirements of these species. Coordination with USFWS under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act is ongoing and will be completed prior to a FONSI. The USFWS was copied on this EA to provide concurrence with USACE's determinations.

### **3.13 Air Quality**

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) website, Webster County is classified as "in attainment" for all criteria pollutants. Under the PAA, emissions from construction equipment would occur during the construction period. Contractors would be required to operate all equipment in accordance with local, state and Federal regulations. The PAA is exempt through 40 CFR Part 93.153 from making a conformity determination, since estimated emissions from construction equipment would not be expected to exceed de minimis levels, or have direct emissions of a criteria pollutant or its precursor. Any impacts would be short-term, localized and would occur during construction activities. Impacts to air quality under the PAA would be temporary during construction and would be considered minor.

No impacts to air quality are anticipated as part of the NAA.

### **3.14 Noise**

Noise associated with the PAA would be limited to constructed related sounds generated during construction. The noise associated with construction would be short in duration and would only occur during daylight hours and on weekdays. Noise is measured as Day Night average noise levels (DNL) in "A-weighted" decibels that the human ear is most sensitive to (dBA). There are no Federal standards for allowable noise levels. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development Guidelines, DNLs below 65 dBA are normally acceptable levels of exterior noise in residential areas. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) denotes a DNL above 65



dBA as the level of significant noise impact. Several other agencies, including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, use a DNL criterion of 55 dBA as the threshold for defining noise impacts in suburban and rural residential areas. According to Dr. Paul Schomer in his 2001 *A White Paper: Assessment of Noise Annoyance*, while there are numerous thresholds for acceptable noise in residential areas, research suggests an area’s current noise environment, which has experienced noise in the past, may reasonably expect to tolerate a level of noise about 5 dBA higher than the general guidelines. The Corps Safety and Health Requirements Manual provides criteria for temporary permissible noise exposure levels (see Table 3.1 below), for consideration of hearing protection or the need to administer sound reduction controls.

<b>Duration/day (hours)</b>	<b>Noise level (dBA)</b>
8	90
6	92
4	95
3	97
2	100
1.5	102
1	105

Construction noise would be similar to that of farm equipment and other small machinery used in the local area. A backhoe, end loader, road grader and/or vibratory roller are examples of equipment that is likely to be used during construction. Each emits noise levels around 85 dBA at 45 feet. Construction equipment would be operated during daylight hours; therefore a reasonable exposure time of two hours would be expected during the time residents may be home during day. Peak outdoor noise levels ranging from 78-90 dBA would occur during the time in which equipment is directly in front of or in proximity to homes and businesses (within 25-100 feet). A maximum noise exposure of approximately 98 dBA, for one hour should occur if equipment were within 10 feet of homes and business. The noise projections do not account for screening objects, such as trees, outbuildings or other objects that muffle and reduce the noise being emitted. The outdoor construction noise would be further muffled while residents are inside their homes. While the construction noise generated would be considered unacceptable according to HUD and FAA standards, these limited exposures and time intervals are still within allowable Corps safety levels. Further, they are similar to typical neighborhood noise generated by gas powered lawnmowers in the local area, which could range from 90-95 dBA at three feet and 7-75 dBA at 100 feet. Residents being exposed to these noise levels would occur if and/or when residents are home and outdoors.

Due to daytime construction and the short and limited duration of elevated noise levels associated with the PAA, impacts from the noise to local residences would be temporary and minor. No long-term significant noise impacts are expected with the PAA.

There would be no change in noise and thus no impact under the NAA.



### **3.15 Environmental Justice and Protection of Children**

Executive Order (E.O.) 12898 requires Federal actions to address environmental justice in minority populations and low-income populations. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2019 population estimate for Webster County was 8,285 and does not contain significant minority population. The census indicates Webster County is 97.7% white and has a median household income of \$34,312 compared with the median household income of \$44,921 for the State of West Virginia. Individuals residing in the county below the poverty level is 23% compared to 17.8% statewide. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Town of Camden on Gauley has a total population of 150.

EO 13045 requires each Federal agency “to identify and assess environmental health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children” and “ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that result from environmental health risks or safety risks.” This EO was prompted by the recognition that children, still undergoing physiological growth and development, are more sensitive to adverse environmental health and safety risks than adults. The potential for impacts on the health and safety of children is greater where projects are located near residential areas.

Service provided by the Town of Camden on Gauley waterline extensions would serve approximately 208 existing customers and additional customers would be added to the system as a result of the proposed waterline installations included in the PAA. Implementation of the PAA would provide residents, including children, with a potable water service, thereby improving the living conditions in the service area. No homes or buildings would be adversely impacted by the proposed project; therefore the PAA meets the directive of EO 12989 and EO 13045 by avoiding any disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effects on minority or low income populations or children.

Under the NAA, residents would continue to experience poor water quality and unreliable access to safe drinking water sources; perpetuating health and safety concerns.

### **3.16 Aesthetics**

The project area is a rural community consisting primarily of residential properties. Temporary disturbance of the local aesthetics would be anticipated during construction of the PAA wastewater improvements; however after construction the excavated areas would be restored to original conditions.

Neither the PAA nor NAA would significantly impact local aesthetics.

### **3.17 Transportation and Traffic**

The proposed waterlines and booster station would be within the WVDOH rights-of-way. Road crossings during the installation of the waterline would be completed utilizing bore and jack



construction methods. Construction of the PAA in and along WVDOH rights-of-way would involve some delays and potential detours in the normal traffic flow. If detours would occur, they would be relatively minor and temporary in nature. Construction on or near road surfaces would be in compliance with standard traffic controls to minimize traffic disruptions and avoid public safety problems. Impacts anticipated to occur from the PAA would be minimal and temporary in nature.

No impacts to transportation and traffic are anticipated to occur from the NAA.

### **3.18 Health and Safety**

The PAA has been designed to provide a safe, reliable public waterline system to serve residents in the project area that are currently utilizing privately owned wells and cisterns. Providing improvements and extending service to new customers is necessary to provide a safe and reliable public water service to the community. Therefore, the PAA is anticipated to have a long-term beneficial impact on health and safety of the residents in the project area.

Under the NAA, residents would continue to rely on inadequate individual water systems, which pose health and safety concerns that could cause minor to potentially significant negative impacts to the community.

### **3.19 Cumulative Effects**

The Corps must consider the cumulative effects of the proposed project on the environment as stipulated by NEPA. Cumulative effects are “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (Federal or Non-Federal) or person undertakes such actions”. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time (40 CFR Part 1508.7 Council on Environmental Quality [CEQ] Regulations).

The cumulative effects analysis is based on potential effects of the proposed project when added to similar impacts from other projects in the region. An inherent part of the cumulative effects analysis is the uncertainty surrounding actions that have not yet been fully developed. The CEQ regulations provide for the inclusion of uncertainties in the analysis and states that “when an agency is evaluating reasonably foreseeable significant adverse effects on the human environment... and there is incomplete or unavailable information, the agency shall always make clear that such information is lacking” (40 CFR 1502.22).

Temporal and geographical limits for this project must be established in order to frame the analysis. These limits can vary by resources that are affected. The construction of a waterline extension project would have minimal and insignificant negative impacts on the environment. Long-term, beneficial effects would result from the project and would include improved health and safety living conditions and improved operations of an existing water distribution system.



The temporal limits for assessment of this impact would initiate in 1972 with the passage of the Clean Water Act and end 50 years after completion of this project. The geographical extent would be broadened to consider effects beyond the PAA. The geographical extent considered is the Gauley River Watershed.

The Gauley River Watershed is listed in the West Virginia DEP's Water Quality Status Assessment 2000 Report as a "Coldwater" and "Warmwater Habitat" and a recreational designation of "Primary Contact". The report identifies "pH", "siltation", and "metals" as the causes of impairment and "atmospheric deposition", "abandoned mining", and "unknown source" as the sources of impairment. Thirty-eight streams within the watershed are listed as impaired. In the past, other villages within the watershed have performed upgrades to existing water distribution systems. These past actions had similar temporary impacts but no significant cumulative impact. The West Virginia Land Trust works with local communities and private landowners to identify land that is important to the protection of local waterways; inform them about available tools and resources for land protection; and help acquire properties or develop voluntary conservation easements that provide benefits for local waterways. The WV Land Trust has undertaken numerous efforts and projects including restoration within the watershed. Impairment of the Gauley River Watershed is expected to continue but as communities continue to eliminate failing on-site septic systems and improve existing public wastewater systems, a cleaner, healthier watershed would be possible. Water quality standards and regulations are expected to remain as stringent in the future as today.

Section 3.0 documents the existing environment and potential environmental effects of the PAA and NAA with respect to existing conditions. The effects of the PAA, as discussed beforehand, are localized and minor. Past actions that may have resulted in similar effects may include wastewater or water infrastructure improvement actions. Future projects that would have similar impacts would be the proposed construction of a new wastewater treatment facility, force mainline construction and demolition of the existing wastewater treatment facility. This future project is to be funded by the USDA, Rural Development. All required environmental reviews for this proposed project have been completed, which identified no adverse cumulative effects. In scoping cumulative effects issues, no resources were identified as having a potential to be significantly affected with the completion of the PAA. Only minor and temporary impacts to ecological resources would be sustained with the implementation of the PAA. These resources would be reestablished upon completion of construction.

The availability of Federal funds through programs, such as the 340 Program, to assist communities with installation and construction of water-related environmental infrastructure and resource protection and development projects in southern West Virginia is an additional benefit to the area. The significance of this action on health, safety, and water quality would be positive. Given that the current program remains in place for the foreseeable future and the overall beneficial effect from implementation of the PAA, there is expected to be a positive, though small, cumulative effect on health and safety based on past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions.



#### 4.0 Status of Environmental Compliance

The PAA will be in full compliance with all local, state, and Federal statutes as well as Executive Orders prior to the issuance of a FONSI. Compliance is documented below in Table 2.

<b>Table 2 - Environmental Compliance Status</b>			
<b>Statute/Executive Order</b>	<b>Full</b>	<b>Partial</b>	<b>N/A</b>
National Environmental Policy Act (considered partial until the FONSI is signed)*	X		
Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act*	X		
Endangered Species Act*		X	
Clean Water Act		X	
Wild and Scenic Rivers Act	X		
Clean Air Act	X		
National Historic Preservation Act	X		
Archeological Resources Protection Act			N/A
Comprehensive, Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act	X		
Resource Conservation and Recovery Act	X		
Toxic Substances Control Act	X		
Quiet Communities Act	X		
Farmland Protection Act		X	
Executive Order 11988 Floodplain Management		X	
Executive Order 11990 Protection of Wetlands	X		
Executive Order 12898 Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations	X		
Executive Order 13045 Protection of Children	X		

#### 5.0 REQUIRED COORDINATION

##### 5.1 Agencies Contacted

Direct coordination with the Corps' Regulatory Division and SHPO was completed. Direct coordination with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, NRCS, USFWS and Webster County Floodplain Coordinator is ongoing and will be completed prior to issuance of a FONSI. Agency correspondence is included in Appendix B.

##### 5.2 Public Review and Comments

The EA and FONSI will be made available for public review and comment for a period of 30 days, as required under NEPA. A Notice of Availability will be published in the local newspaper, The Webster Echo, advising the public of this document's availability for review and comment. A copy of the EA will also be placed in the Webster-Addison Public Library and made available on-line at <http://www.lrh.Corps.army.mil/Missions/PublicReview.aspx>. The mailing list for the EA is located in Appendix C.



## 6.0 CONCLUSION

The Camden on Gauley Water Works is proposing to improve existing, deteriorating water distribution infrastructure as well as extend water service to areas that are currently utilizing privately owned wells and cisterns. The current water distribution system services approximately 208 customers and will add additional customers as a result of waterline extensions to the areas of Cranberry Ridge and Gauley Mills. The NAA was considered unacceptable due to the continued failure of private infrastructure and potential health hazards resulting from these failures. By providing a safe and reliable water distribution system, the proposed project is anticipated to have long-term beneficial impacts on health and safety for residents in the project area and surrounding area by eliminating unpredictable well water systems, which pose health and safety issues. No significant, adverse, short-term or long-term impacts have been identified as a result of implementation of the proposed extension project.

The proposed project would take place on previously disturbed land. Health and safety would be realized immediately with project implementation. Effects associated with construction would be minor and temporary. BMPs would be implemented during construction to minimize impacts to residents and the environment. Therefore, the PAA would not be expected to have significant impacts on the human or natural environment.

## 7.0 LIST OF INFORMATION PROVIDERS AND PREPARERS

The following agencies were involved in preparation of the EA.

The Thrasher Group Inc.  
330 Association Drive  
Charleston, WV 25311

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Huntington District  
Planning Branch  
502 Eighth Street  
Huntington, WV 25701

## 8.0 REFERENCES

Climate for Camden on Gauley, WV  
[https://www.bestplaces.net/climate/zip-code/west\\_virginia/camden\\_on\\_gauley/26208](https://www.bestplaces.net/climate/zip-code/west_virginia/camden_on_gauley/26208)

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2019 American FactFinder Website:  
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2019 National Wetlands Inventory website:  
<https://www.fws.gov/wetlands/data/mapper.html>

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
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U.S. Geological Survey  
2019 StreamStats: Streamflow Statistics and Spatial Analysis Tools for Water- Resources Application. StreamStats Application Website:  
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