



— BUREAU OF —  
RECLAMATION

# Dry-Redwater Rural Water Project

Public Meetings for Environmental Assessment |  
October 15 - 16, 2024

# Why are we here?

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## Our Responsibilities

- Describe the Dry-Redwater Rural Water Project and this stage of the federal approval process
- Describe the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) impact analysis results
- Listen to and document comments

## Your Opportunities

- Learn about the proposed project
- Learn about environmental impact assessment results and prescribed environmental commitments/mitigation resources
- Provide comments to the project team, either now or later



# Public Meeting Agenda

**Billings, Montana**

October 15, 2024

4:00 p.m.	Welcome and Introductions
4:10 p.m.	Dry-Redwater Rural Water Feasibility Study Project Presentation
4:40 p.m.	Questions and Answers
5:00 p.m.	Open Stations and Comment Opportunity
6:00 p.m.	Adjourn

*Thank you for participating!*



# Public Meeting Agenda

Jordan, Montana

October 16, 2024

10:00 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions
10:10 a.m.	Dry-Redwater Rural Water Feasibility Study Project Presentation
10:40 a.m.	Questions and Answers
11:00 a.m.	Open Stations and Comment Opportunity
12:00 p.m.	Adjourn

*Thank you for participating!*





# Public Meeting Agenda

Circle, Montana

October 16, 2024

4:00 p.m.	Welcome and Introductions
4:10 p.m.	Dry-Redwater Rural Water Feasibility Study Project Presentation
4:40 p.m.	Questions and Answers
5:00 p.m.	Open Stations and Comment Opportunity
6:00 p.m.	Adjourn

*Thank you for participating!*



# Key Environmental Assessment Team Present Today

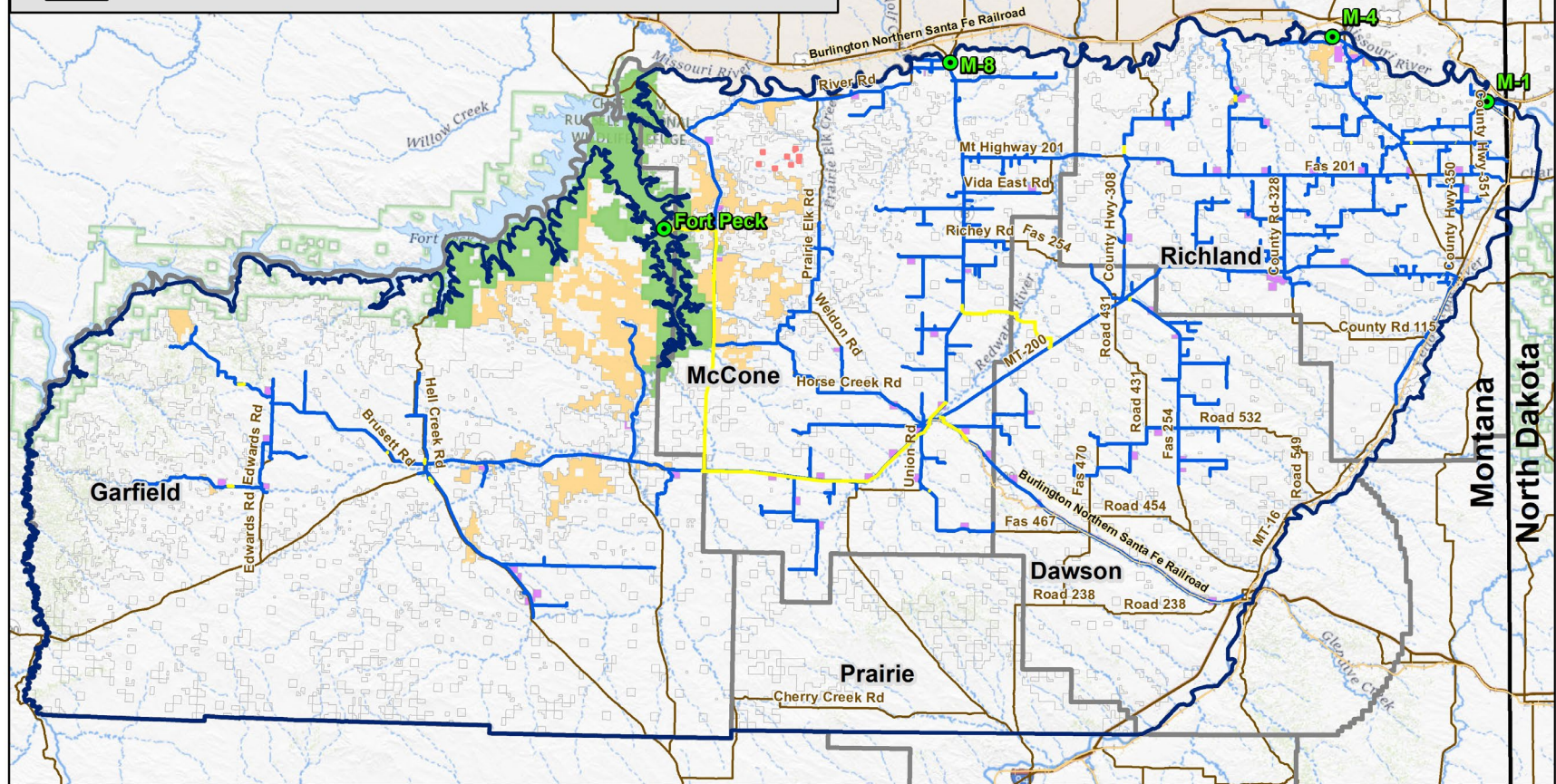
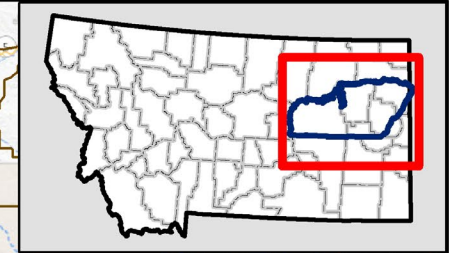
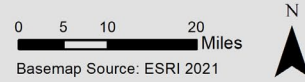
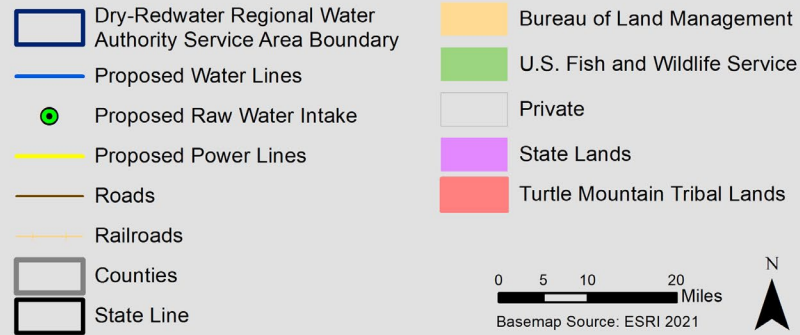
<b>Lead Agency</b> <b>Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation</b>	<b>Third Party Consulting Team</b> <b>Stantec Consulting Services Inc.</b>	<b>Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority (DRWA) Team</b>
Ryan Colloton Project Manager	Josh Cowden Feasibility Study	Mandi Nay Emilee Burbidge DRWA
Cody Hendrix NEPA Process Manager	Steve Towers NEPA Study	Jordan Mayer Interstate Engineering



# Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority Service Area



## Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority Service Area Public, Tribal and Private Lands



# Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority Timeline

## Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority (DRWA )

- Inception, 2005
- Rural Water Supply Act (PL 109-451), 2006

## Early Rural Water Supply Studies

- Initial Studies/Addendums, 2006, 2007
- Feasibility Report, 2012
- Reclamation Concluding Report, 2016

## Early DRWA Projects

- South Sidney Extension, 2014
- East Yellowstone Extension, 2017
- Sidney Circle Improvements, 2019, 2022

## Current Project Studies

- Clean Water for Rural Communities Act (PL 116-260), 2020
- Reclamation Statement of Work, Oct 2022
- Predesign Report, May 2023
- NEPA Scoping, November 2023
- Draft EA, October 2024
- Feasibility Report, Winter 2025





# National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Process

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Public Scoping (30 days)

Identify Issues and Planning Criteria

Develop Alternatives/Analyze Effects

*We are at this stage* →



Public Review Period (30 days) of the  
Draft Environmental Assessment

Review and Incorporate Comments,  
Revise Assessment

Environmental Assessment, Finding of  
No Significant impacts, Decision Record



# NEPA Scoping - November 2023

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- Public meetings held in Billings, Jordan and Circle to explain project and solicit comments
- 17 individuals or agency representatives participated, 10 via a virtual web-based meeting
- Seven comments were submitted to Reclamation during the scoping period, no additional comments have been submitted to-date
- Four cooperating agencies were identified through the scoping process



# Cooperating Agencies

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- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – potential source of federal funding for elements related to water intake and raw water delivery
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Real Estate, Clean Water Act, Rivers and Harbors Act
- Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) – Load interconnection authorization for McCone Electric
- Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) – compliance with Montana Environmental Policy Act



# Dry-Redwater Service Area Groundwater Quality

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# Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

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- Consistent and reliable good quality water for residents and customers served by DRWA including:
  - The Towns of Circle, Richey and Jordan
  - The unincorporated towns of Lambert, Savage, Bloomfield, Brockway, Brusett, Cohagen, Lindsay and Vida
  - The water districts of Highland Park, Forrest Park and Whispering Tree
  - Rural residents throughout the DRWA service area



# Benefits of the Proposed Action

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- Utilize available DRWA water rights to provide viable water supplies sufficient to supply the DRWA service area
- Will have a positive effect on public health and safety
- Will meet present and future water demands
- Provides environmental benefits, including source water protection



# Alternatives to Proposed Action

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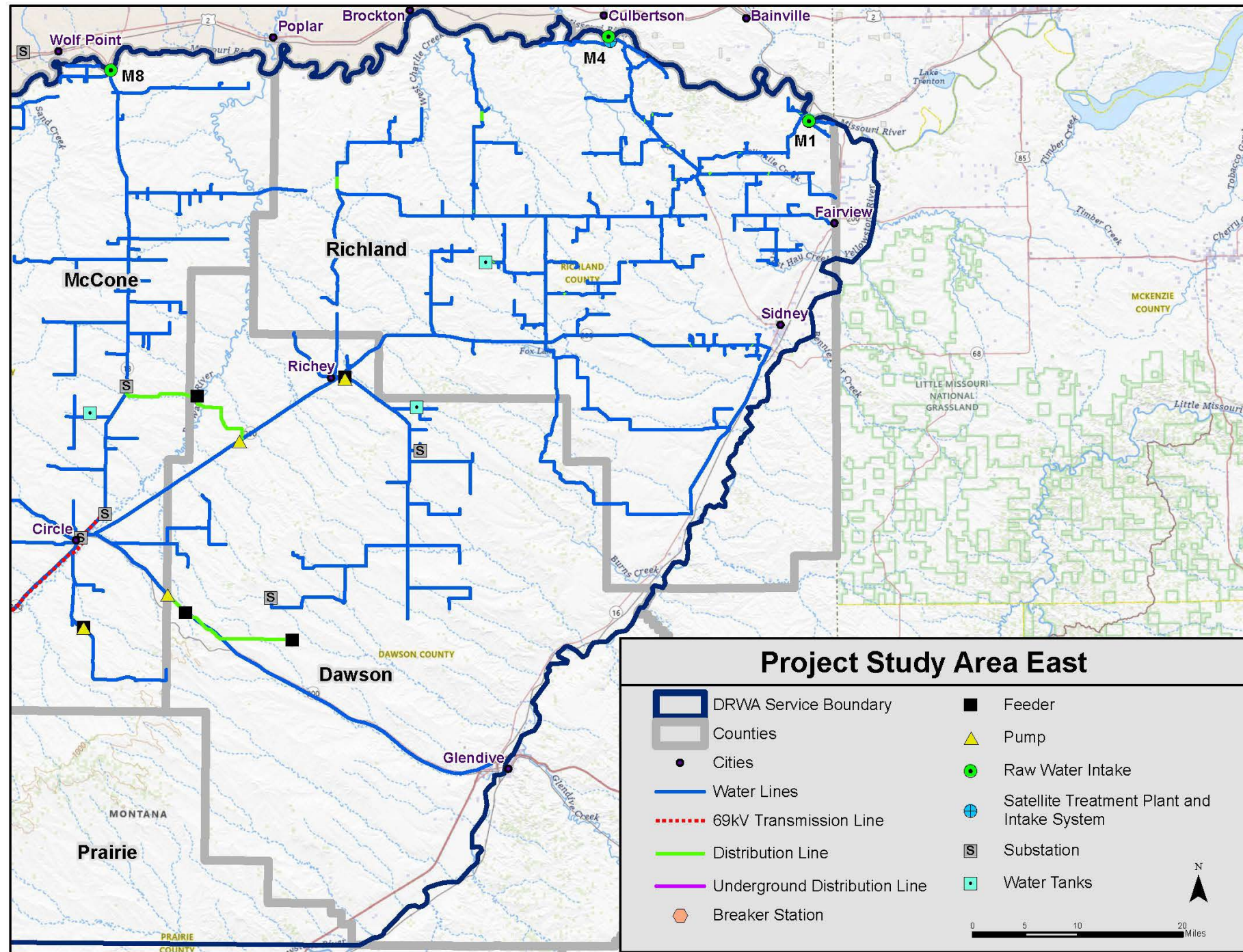
- A wide array of alternatives were considered through Reclamation's Feasibility Study process and excluded from consideration
- Scoping did not identify any issues that merited development or consideration of an alternative to the Proposed Action
- The No-Action Alternative (existing condition) was analyzed as required by NEPA







# Dry-Redwater Rural Water Project Elements Details (East)



# Key Elements of the Proposed Action

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- Raw Water Intakes & Treatment Plants:
  - Fort Peck Reservoir
  - M1-176 miles below dam
  - M4-147 miles below dam
  - M8-69 Miles below dam
- 12 Pump Stations
- 6 Storage Tanks
- 1,355 miles of water distribution pipe
- 14 miles of temporary road
- 67 miles of new or upgraded 69 kV electrical transmission line
- 47 miles of new or upgraded electrical distribution line
- 3 Electrical substations
- 10-year phased construction schedule

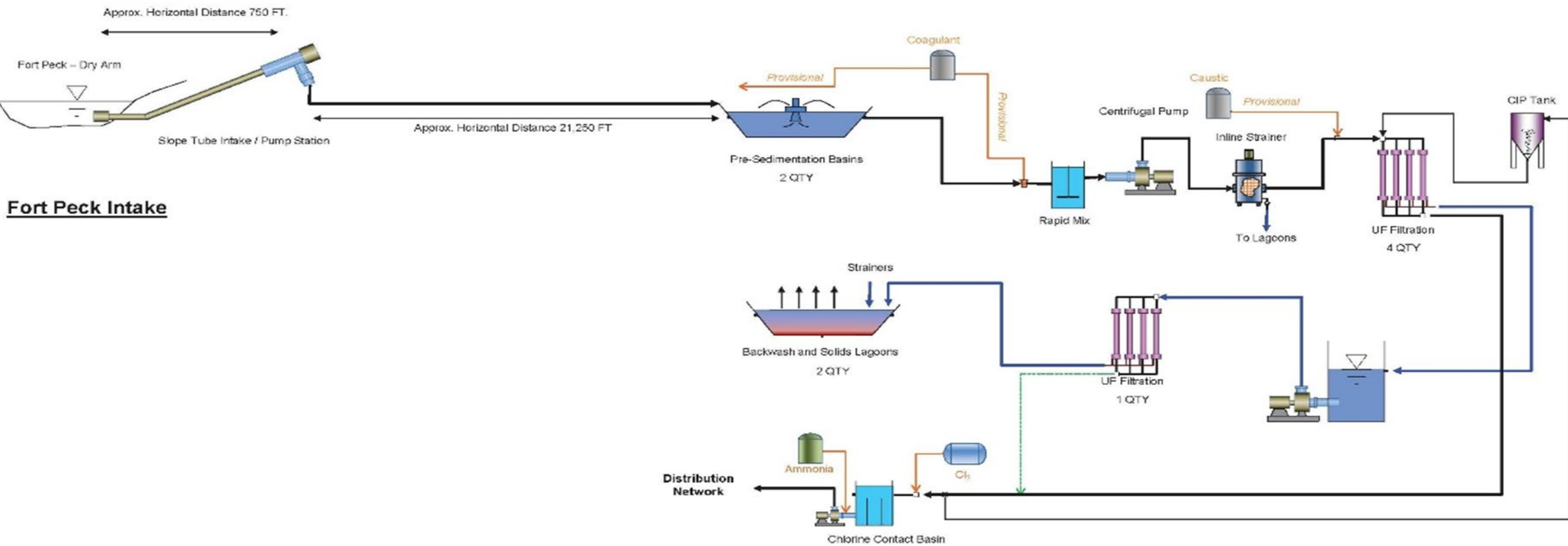




# Proposed Fort Peck Intake Location: Upstream of Fort Peck Dam

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**Fort Peck Intake**

**Fort Peck Water Treatment Plant**





# Proposed M-1 Intake: 176 miles below Fort Peck Dam

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# Proposed M-4 Intake: 147 miles below Fort Peck Dam

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# Proposed M-8 Intake: 69 miles below Fort Peck Dam

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# Representative Trench Excavation Example

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# Representative Waterline Construction

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# Representative Elevated Storage Tank

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# Representative Pump Station

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# Representative Power Pole and Powerline

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# Environmental Commitments Included in Proposed Action

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- Soils
- Water Resources & Water Quality
- Vegetation
- Wetlands
- Fish and Wildlife
- Federally Listed Species
- Traffic
- Cultural Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Utilities
- BLM-Specific Environmental Commitments



# Environmental Effects of Alternatives

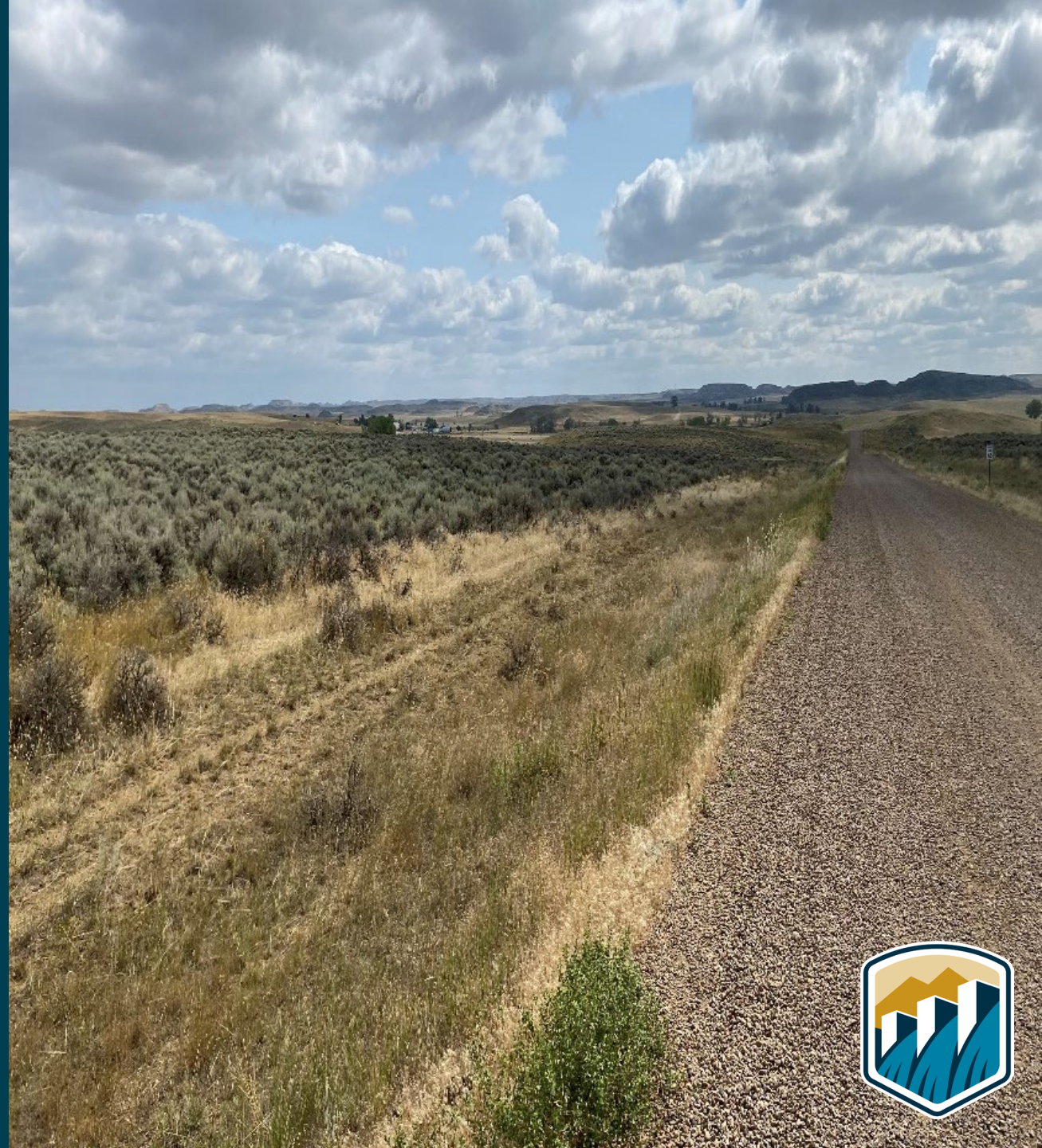
<b>Resource</b>	<b>No Action</b>	<b>Proposed Action</b>
Vegetation and riparian areas	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects with mitigation
Fish and wildlife	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects with mitigation
Climate change	No adverse effects	No adverse effects
Hydrology & water quality	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects
Geology, soils, & paleontology	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects with mitigation
Cultural resources	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects with mitigation
Socioeconomics	Minor adverse effects	Beneficial effects
Environmental justice	Minor adverse effects	Beneficial Effects
Land use	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects
Visual resources	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects with mitigation
Recreation	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects with mitigation
Traffic	No adverse effects	Minor adverse effects with mitigation



# Effective Public Comments

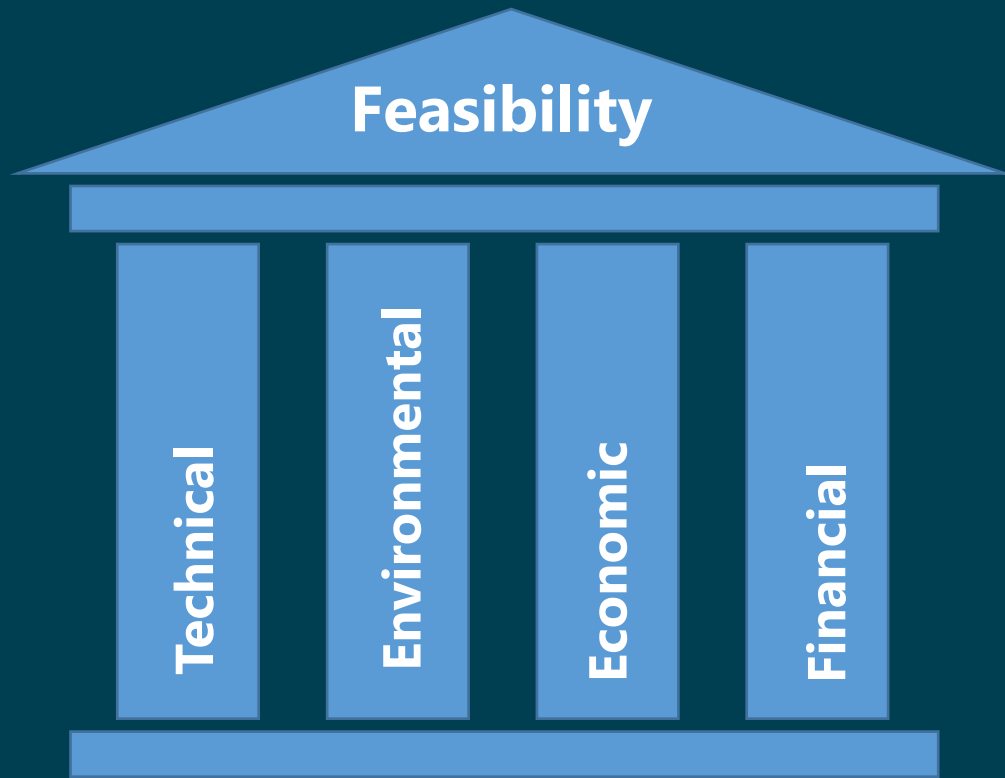
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- Tell us what chapter, section, or appendix of the Draft EA your comment is directed to and what your concern or issue is
- Did we miss something with respect to a specific resource you are concerned with?
- Do you have suggestions that that would improve the EA?





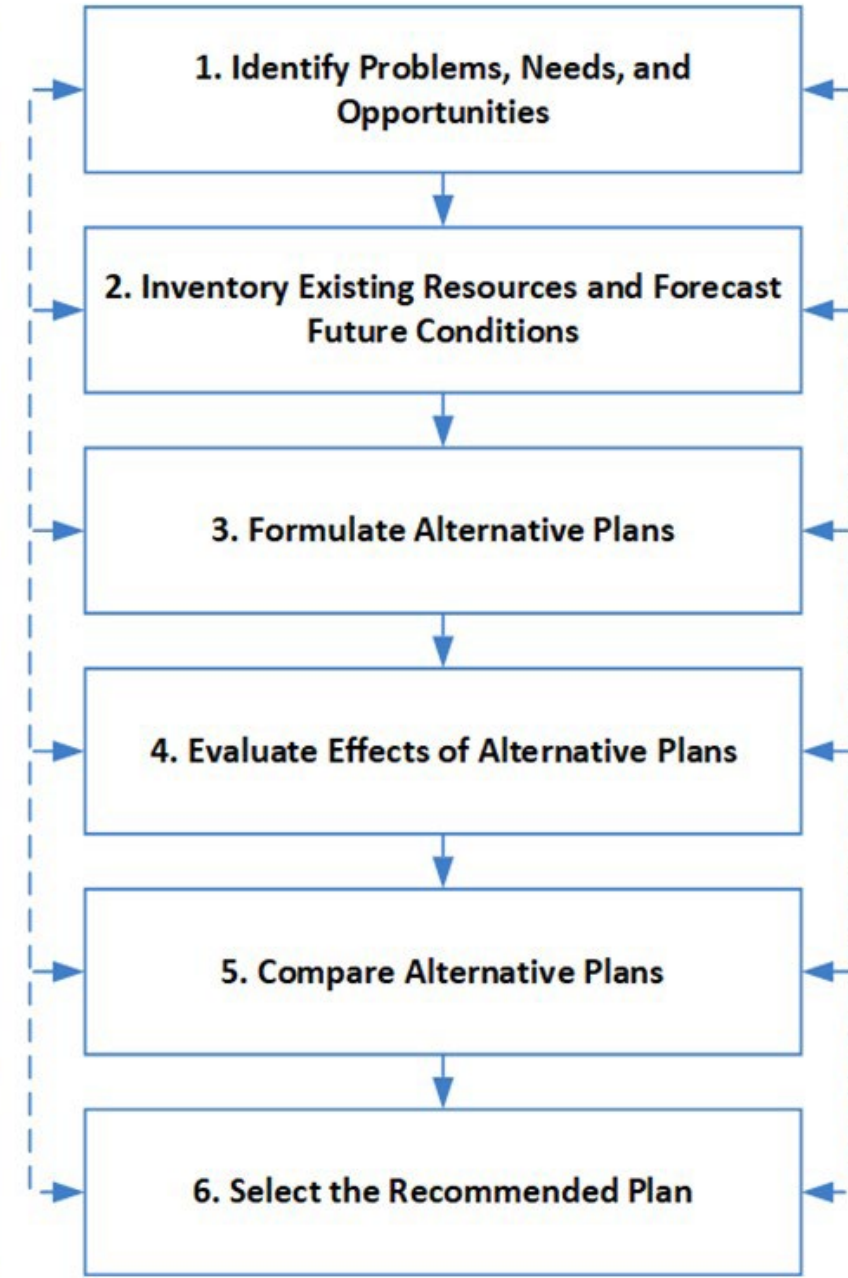
# Status of Reclamation Feasibility Study



## NEPA PROCESS



## PLANNING PROCESS



# Next Steps for Reclamation and DRWA

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- EA Public Comment Period ends November 9, 2024
- Final EA published January 2025
- Draft Feasibility Study published 2025





Cody Hendrix

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<https://www.usbr.gov/gp/mtao/dry-redwater/>



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