

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West


Finding of No Significant Impact

Horsefly Irrigation District WaterSMART Grant: Dairy and Yonna Canals Piping Project

Klamath County, Oregon

2017-FONSI-008

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Date: 11-10-2016

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Background

In accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* (NEPA), as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to the affected environment associated with Horsefly Irrigation District's (HID) Dairy and Yonna Canals Piping Project that is being funded through Reclamation's WaterSMART Program. After analysis, the attached EA resulted in a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

This proposed project includes the conversion of open canal to subterranean piping at three distinct sites within HID in an effort to conserve water by eliminating seepage and evaporation. As shown in Figures 1 – 4 of the attached EA, pipe would be installed in approximately 3,700 feet of the Yonna Canal, 1,000 feet of the Dairy Canal southern segment, and 580 feet of the Dairy Canal northern segment. Branching off of the Dairy Canal northern segment, an additional 1,160 feet of pipe would be installed under a cultivated field. Pipe materials include 24" polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and 30" high density polyethylene (HDPE). HID has previously discovered that after piping 5 miles of their open canal system, they have conserved approximately 30% of the water which is delivered through these systems. The District anticipates an estimated water savings of 720 acre-feet per year as a result of this proposed project.

Alternatives Including the Proposed Action

No Action Alternative:

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not provide \$185,800.00 under the WaterSMART Grant program to HID to complete the proposed project as designed. Irrigation water would continue to seep through the existing canal bottoms, evaporation from open canals would continue, and overall net loss of Project water would continue. This Alternative does not meet the purpose and need of the project.

Proposed Action Alternative:

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, Reclamation would provide \$185,800.00 to HID for the installation of pipe at three distinct sites: Yonna Canal, Dairy Canal southern segment, and Dairy Canal northern segment. Pipe would be installed along approximately 5,280 feet of open canal and approximately 1,160 feet across a cultivated field. The Yonna Canal installation includes approximately 3,700 feet of 30" HDPE pipe; the Dairy Canal southern segment includes roughly 1,000 feet of 30" HDPE pipe; the Dairy Canal northern segment consists of a total of approximately 1,740 feet of 24" PVC pipe in which 580 feet would be installed within the open ditch and 1,160 feet would be installed under a cultivated field rather than within an existing ditch. The proposed project activities would be performed by HID staff and would occur during the non-irrigation season between the months of October and March. Upon completion, HID

would experience an annual savings of roughly 720 acre-feet of water as seepage and evaporation processes would be eliminated.

Findings

Based on the attached EA (including the environmental commitments listed in item 11 below), Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action Alternative is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The attached EA describes the existing environmental resources in the Proposed Action area and evaluates the effects of the No Action and Proposed Action alternatives on the specified resources. Effects on several environmental resources were examined and found to be absent or minor. That analysis is provided in the attached EA, and the analysis in the EA is hereby incorporated by reference.

This FONSI is based on the following:

1. Indian Trust Assets

There are no Indian reservations, Rancherias or allotments in the project areas. The nearest Indian Trust Asset is the Klamath Tribal Designated Statistical Area approximately 10.6 miles west of the nearest project site. Based on this fact, it is reasonable to assume that the Proposed Action Alternative will not have a potential to affect Indian Trust Assets.

2. Indian Sacred Sites

There are no identified Indian Sacred Sites within the action areas of the proposed project and therefore this project would not inhibit use or access to any Indian Sacred Sites.

3. Environmental Justice

No significant changes in agricultural communities or practices would result from the Proposed Action Alternative. Accordingly, the Proposed Action would not have any significant or disproportionately negative impact on low-income or minority individuals within the project area.

4. Climate Change and Green House Gases

Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would result in insignificant impacts to climate change or increases in greenhouse gases due to the size and scope of the project, the small change from current conditions, and the duration of the project that is limited to the project construction period.

5. Noise

Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would result in construction activities that would temporarily exaggerate the inherent noise in and nearby the rural environment in the project area. Construction noise would be minimized by limiting the construction work hours between 7:00 am and 7:00 pm Monday through Sunday. Noise impacts resulting from the Proposed Action Alternative would be temporary and insignificant.

6. Socioeconomics

The Proposed Action would create a short term demand for construction related products and services that would support local vendors and may create short term employment opportunities. In general, the project would have an insignificant impact on socioeconomic conditions in the project region.

7. Water Resources

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, impacts to surface water quality would be negligible and temporary as the Proposed Action Alternative construction activities would take place during the non-irrigation season when no water is present in the HID water conveyance system. Additionally, implementation of the project has the potential to conserve approximately 720 acre-feet annually as evaporation and seepage from the open canals would be eliminated. As a result, the Proposed Action Alternative would not result in significant impacts to water quality, and it is anticipated to increase the quantity of water available in the Lost River system and the Klamath Project.

8. Biological Resources

A species list of federally listed endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species potentially occurring within the area of potential effect was obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) website (Section 3.2.2 of the attached EA). The potential impacts to all species included on this list as a result of the Proposed Action Alternative have been considered, and it has been determined that the proposed construction activities would have no effect on these species or their habitats as the construction would occur in the previously disturbed context of HID's irrigation delivery system during the non-irrigation season when the conveyances are dry. After completion, the project would likely improve habitat for aquatic species within Lost River as conserved water would remain in the River for instream benefits. This decision is based on analysis of current information on the potential effects of the action, known existing populations, and habitat requirements for the species.

9. Cultural Resources

The proposed project is located within HID's jurisdiction in areas that have been previously disturbed by the original construction of HID's privately owned water conveyances and appurtenant facilities. The project includes the installation of pipe within roughly one mile (5,280 feet) of three distinct open canal segments and across roughly 0.22 miles (1,160 feet) of a cultivated field for a cumulative total of approximately 1.22 miles (6,440 feet) in length. No additional excavation to widen or deepen the open ditch segments of the canals is expected; however, excavation of a new trench, measuring roughly 1,160 feet in length, four feet in width, and five in depth, across a cultivated field would be necessary at the Dairy Canal northern segment.

In an effort to identify historic properties within the area of potential effects (APE), a cultural resources inventory was conducted by Native-X, Inc. Archaeological Services, a consultant hired by HID. A records search, background information, historic context, and field survey were completed as part of this cultural resources report. As a result of the studies, no archaeological resources were identified and one built environment resource, the HID irrigation system (and its components the Dairy and Yonna canals) was identified. Based on

information in the cultural resources report and supplemental information that Reclamation completed, Reclamation determined the HID irrigation system is not eligible for inclusion in the National Register. Reclamation identified and sent correspondence to the Klamath Tribes, as a Tribe in the area who might attach religious and cultural significance to historic properties within the APE. The Klamath Tribes responded on June 20, 2016, expressing interest in the project. Reclamation archaeologist Mr. Mark Carper spoke with Mr. Dennis Fleming, Klamath Tribes Cultural Resources Protection Specialist, on the phone on August 19, 2016, who requested final reports. Those reports were provided and no concerns were voiced for the undertaking. Reclamation consulted with the SHPO and received concurrence that the HID irrigation system is not eligible for inclusion in the National Register. The lack of historic properties within the APE results in a finding of no historic properties affected pursuant to 36 CFR §800.4(d)(1). Should cultural resources be identified during project construction, activities shall cease, and Reclamation shall be notified to discuss any such discovery and determine how to proceed.

10. Air Quality

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, construction activities would generate short-term and localized fugitive dust and fuel emissions from motorized equipment that could affect air quality. Due to the scope of this project, it is anticipated that construction activities will have an insignificant effect to air quality within the project area.

11. Environmental Commitments

The following environmental commitments would be implemented before, during, and after the action activities to prevent and reduce the impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative.

- *Environmental Permitting* – HID would be responsible for complying with all environmental requirements identified in this EA and any other applicable Federal, State, and local permits.
- *Water Resources* – HID would perform all work when the irrigation facilities are dewatered to avoid contributing to surface water quality impacts. Standard management practices would be included as necessary in the proposed project to avoid or minimize the release of sediments, pollutants, and chemicals into the environment during construction.
- *Cultural Resources* – In the case that any cultural resources, either surface or subsurface, are inadvertently discovered during construction, construction in the area of the inadvertent discovery will cease, and Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Regional Archaeologist or a member of the cultural resources staff will be notified. Reclamation's cultural resources staff will make an assessment of the resource and conduct additional consultations as required. Work will not resume at that location until notified by Reclamation to proceed.
- *Air Quality* – Reasonable precautions for air quality would be implemented by HID to control emissions during construction activities. HID would follow Federal and State requirements to control methods for aggregate storage pile emissions to minimize dust generation, including the watering of staging areas and unimproved access roads as

necessary. All loads that have the potential of leaving the bed of the truck during transportation would be covered or watered to prevent the generation of fugitive dust.

- *Access* – Construction access and staging of materials and equipment would utilize existing improved and unimproved roads and canal access roads whenever possible. HID will coordinate with local property owners as needed if such property must be traversed to access the construction sites.
- *Disturbed Areas* – Areas disturbed during construction would be graded and reseeded to as near their pre-project condition as practicable. In an effort to reduce soil erosion, seeding and planting would occur at appropriate times with weed-free seed mixes of native plants and agricultural grasses and distributed where appropriate.
- *Noise Impacts* – HID would coordinate with adjacent property owners as appropriate during construction to notify them of the temporary noise disturbances. Construction activities would be conducted from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, Monday through Sunday. Should work hours outside of this period be necessary, HID would require prior approval by Reclamation. Upon approval, HID would contact landowners prior to commencement of the adjusted work schedule to inform them of the potential change in work hours.
- *Monitoring* – Reclamation would monitor the Proposed Action activities to ensure compliance with the criteria noted within the EA.
- *Additional Analysis* – If the proposed action were to change significantly from the alternative described in this EA, additional environmental analyses would be undertaken as necessary.