

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

Draft FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

License for Bakersfield Multi-Use Trail along the Friant-Kern Canal

FONSI-15-061



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
South-Central California Area Office

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Mission Statements

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
South-Central California Area Office, Fresno, California

FONSI-15-061

License for Bakersfield Multi-Use Trail along the Friant-Kern Canal

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Introduction

In accordance with section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has released this draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which is supported by Reclamation's Environmental Assessment (EA)-15-061, *License for Bakersfield Multi-Use Trail along the Friant-Kern Canal*, hereby incorporated by reference, for public review. No final decision shall be made on the FONSI until public review has been completed and comments, if any, considered.

Background

The Kern River Parkway (Parkway), a natural preserve in Bakersfield, California, runs from the mouth of the Kern River to Interstate 5. The Parkway has three trails; an equestrian trail north of the river, a jogging trail south of the river, and a paved multi-use path called the Parkway Trail. The Parkway Trail is a multi-use path that runs east west approximately 22 miles from Enos Lane to China Grade Loop. All but three miles are located within Bakersfield City limits. The Parkway is a major destination in Bakersfield, featuring rest stops with seating, shade, and educational signage placed periodically along the trail. There are multiple points along the trail that connect to sidewalks leading to parks, commercial centers, and schools.

The City of Bakersfield (City) has requested Reclamation's approval, to construct and maintain the 6 mile Friant-Kern Canal multi-use path which would connect to the Parkway Trail.

Alternatives Considered

No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not issue a perpetual land use authorization to the City, which would allow for the construction and maintenance of a 6-mile long multiuse path. The Kern River Multi-Use Path would not be constructed nor would it create a North South connection to the Parkway Trail.

Proposed Action

Reclamation proposes to issue a perpetual land use authorization to the City for the construction and maintenance of a 6-mile long Multi-Use Path along the Friant-Kern Canal that would connect to the Parkway Trail. The Project would be constructed over 3 phases as described in Section 2.2 of EA-15-061.

Environmental Commitments

The City shall implement the environmental protection measures listed in Table 1 of EA-15-061 to avoid environmental consequences associated with the Proposed Action. Environmental consequences for resource areas assume the measures specified would be fully implemented.

Findings

In accordance with NEPA, Reclamation has determined that the approval of the Proposed Action is not a major federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment; consequently, an environmental impact statement is not required.

The following reasons are why the impacts from the proposed action are not significant:

- The proposed action will not significantly affect public health or safety (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(2)).
- The proposed action will not significantly affect natural resources and unique geographical characteristics such as proximity to historic or cultural resources; parks, recreation, and refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order (EO) 11990); flood plains (EO 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(3) and 43 CFR 46.215(b)).
- There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(4)).
- The proposed action will not have possible effects on the human environment that are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(5)).
- The proposed action will neither establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects nor represent a decision in principle about a future consideration (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(6)).
- The proposed action will not have cumulatively significant impacts (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)).
- The proposed action will not significantly affect historic properties (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(8)).
- The proposed action will not significantly affect listed or proposed threatened or endangered species, or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(9)).
- The proposed action will not threaten a violation of Federal, State, tribal or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment (40 CFR 1508.27(b)(10)).

- The proposed action will not affect any Indian Trust Assets (512 DM 2, Policy Memorandum dated December 15, 1993).
- Implementing the proposed action will not disproportionately affect minorities or low-income populations and communities (EO 12898).
- The proposed action will not limit access to, and ceremonial use of, Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (EO 13007 and 512 DM 3).