

## **Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)**

### **DeSmet Water System Improvements Coeur d'Alene Tribe Plummer, Idaho**

Based on the DeSmet Water System Improvements Final Environmental Assessment (EA), Proposed Action Alternative for the replacement of water mains, installation of a new 200, 000-gallon water reservoir, demolition of existing reservoirs, and mitigation of all asbestos cement pipe, improvement of fire protection mains and distribution system, and reconciliation of all other necessary appurtenances will have no significant impact on the quality of the human environment. In accordance with Section 102 (2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be required.

This determination is supported by the following:

1. The EA discloses the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action Alternative. The Proposed Action is described on pg. 1 of the EA.
2. Protective measures will be levied to protect the environment. Construction activities will utilize PVC and ductile iron piping, fillers, adhesives, and solvents. No chlorinated solvents or adhesives will be used. Asbestos-containing (AC) piping within the scope of the water system improvements will be identified by individuals experienced with removing and handling asbestos-containing demolition product and trained to work with hazardous materials. Any AC piping that is dismantled will be dismantled in accordance with EPA's code of federal regulations for asbestos (40 CFR 61, Subpart M), notification provided per the Construction Contract Documents, and disposed of at a facility qualified to manage asbestos-containing material. All containers of liquid chemicals will be closed and secured when not in use for construction activities. Excavation and installation may trigger wind-blown dust due to working in trenches and vehicles track out, but particulate matter will be minimized by wetting surfaces when excessive wind-blown material is observed. All construction materials brought on-site including piping residuals and chemicals, and regulated waste generated during the project (e.g. excavated asbestos-containing pipe) will be removed from the job site prior to transfer of the project to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. Disturbed earth will be compacted to minimize wind-blown dust before a vegetated cover is established naturally. The specifications for vegetative cover and sediment erosion are included in the Construction Contract Documents (EA, pgs. 4-5).

The water system improvements will occur throughout the town including on or around residential, commercial and undeveloped part of the Village, including through and along streets and within unimproved areas vegetated with grasses and weeds. The topsoil will be stripped 2 to 3 inches below grade and surficial soil containing more than 15 percent organic matter by visual estimation are planned for use as topsoil. On-site silt and clay soil will be used as structural fill beneath the foundation of the reservoir foundation (EA, pg. 6).

Efforts will be made to enhance infiltration by discharging during the growing season where the flora on the hillside and the crops would impede the water flow. In addition, wattles can be installed as temporary erosion and sediment control barriers. Wattles consist of straw, compost,

or other material that is wrapped in netting made of natural plant fiber or similar encasing material. Wattles reduce the velocity and can spread the flow of sheet runoff, and can capture and retain sediment. Use wattles as a barrier between exposed soils and source control BMPs during the period of short construction delays as a preventative erosion control measure. Evaluate if more protection is needed prior to large storm events (EA, pg. 7). Approval of this project is contingent upon adoption of the following mitigation measures: Any hazardous materials and/or hazardous waste need to be profiled, managed, and disposed of in accordance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (40 CFR parts 239 through 282).

3. The proposed action will not jeopardize threatened or endangered species (Threatened and Endangered Species Act of 1983, as amended, 16 U.S.C et seq.). The determination is based on there being no documented instances of the Spalding's Catch Fly Silene plant being found in the project area or of its habitat. The residential area within the designated area covered by the Environmental Assessment does not include habitat types that support this species. Spalding's catchfly is primarily found within bunchgrass or sagebrush habitat types. Monarch Butterflies could conceivably be found within the project area; however, the proposed action would not jeopardize the continued existence of the species. Bald and golden eagles are regularly spotted along US95 and the Lovell Valley Road apparently hunting small mammals or looking for roadkill. No evidence of nest sites has been found. If Bald and/or golden eagle nest sites are discovered, the USFWS Bald and golden eagle disturbance, disruption, and/or seasonal restrictions would be implemented to minimize impacts to these species. All threatened and endangered species will be protected, and contractors will be advised of the protected species, and each contractor will communicate to their project superintendent and mark any areas where protected species or habitats are observed (EA, pgs. 12-13).
4. After consulting with the Coeur d'Alene Tribal Historic Property Office (THPO) on September 5, 2023, it was determined that there is No Adverse Effect on historic properties (National Historic Preservation Act, as amended 16 U.S.C 470) for the purpose of 36 CFR 800.9 (b). Should undiscovered archeological remains be encountered during project ground-disturbing activities, work will stop in the area of discovery and the stipulations of 36 CFR 800.11 will be followed.
5. The proposed action will not cause a significant effect to energy resources (Energy Policy Act of 2005), water resources, wetlands (E.O. 11990), or flood plains (E.O. 11988).
6. The proposed action will not affect unique characteristics of the geographic area such as the proximity to park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas.
7. The proposed action will not have highly controversial or uncertain effects on the human environment or involve unique or unknown risks.
8. The proposed action will not threaten a violation of Federal, State or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.

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Richard Ferguson, Superintendent  
Northern Idaho Agency  
Bureau of Indian Affairs  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Date