Finding of No Significant Impact

Kapulena Well Development Project

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing to award grant funds in the amount of $930,000 to the County of Hawaii Department of Water Supply (DWS), to fund the Kapulena Well Development Project. The proposed project would drill and develop a new exploratory well in the Hamakua District of the Island of Hawaii for use as a drinking water production well and would install a new 300,000-gallon water storage tank, if water quality and yield of the exploratory well are found to be sufficient.

The purpose of the project is to provide a new drinking water source for the Kukuihaele Water System. The primary drinking water source for the system has been abandoned due to damage caused by the October 2006 Kiholo Bay Earthquake. Furthermore, the Hawaii Department of Health Safe Drinking Water Branch has made a determination that the spring source is under the direct influence of surface water and subject to filtration and disinfection requirements. DWS currently provides hauled water to the community. The new well would replace the spring source and the new water tank would provide for adequate water storage for domestic and fire flow requirements.

The proposed project would be constructed in two phases; EPA funding would be used to support the second phase of the project. The initial phase of the project consists of drilling and testing a new exploratory well. If pump tests confirm that the well's yield is adequate and suitable for use as drinking water, DWS will convert the well into a production well, construct a 300,000-gallon water storage tank, and connect the tank to an existing 50,000-gallon tank already in service at the site during the second phase of the project. Included in the project are the following installations:

- A 200-gallon-per-minute, 100-horsepower submersible well pump and motor;
- A 26' x 45'4" control building;
- An 8-foot diameter and 7-feet 11-inches deep seepage pit (installed with the exploratory well);
- Chlorination equipment (to be housed in the control building);
- A 0.30 MG reinforced concrete water storage tank;
- A Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system; and
- Upgrading of an existing access way to the new facilities from Honoka'a-Waipi'o Road.

From the well pump, 6-inch-diameter Class 53 ductile iron piping with control valves and other control elements will run for a short distance above ground, and then run underground to the

existing 0.05 MG tank and the proposed 0.30 MG tank. The aboveground section of pipe will be roughly 22 feet long and will contain some of the pump control elements. The underground section of pipe will be 8-inch-diameter Class 52 ductile iron and will run roughly 300 feet to the 0.05 MG tank and about 190 feet to the 0.30 MG tank. An aboveground discharge line from the 0.30 MG tank will be 12-inch-diameter Class 52 ductile iron pipe and 64 feet long.

An existing overhead electrical line on the property provides power for the existing DWS facility and is connected to the Hawaii Electric Light Company electrical distribution line across Honoka'a-Waipi'o Road. The DWS will upgrade this existing single-phase electrical line to a three-phase circuit for the new facilities.

The project may be partially funded through the State of Hawaii's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program. The project's Environmental Assessment (EA) includes all of the environmental information required for compliance with the DWSRF program.

The EPA has completed an EA, dated July 2010, to evaluate the environmental consequences of the proposed action and alternatives along with the no action alternative. As a result of the EA, as well as public discussion of the proposed project and alternative, the EPA has determined the action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.

The following discussion supports the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI):

Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that the following listed species may be present in the proposed project area: the Hawaiian hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus semotus*). A review of biological impacts found that trees located in the project site are potentially suitable roosting habitat for the Hawaiian hoary bat. If bats roost in the dense vegetation in the project site, the removal of the trees could affect individual bats by eliminating potential roosting sites. During the pupping season (May 15 - August 15), females carrying pups may be less able to rapidly vacate a roost site as the vegetation is cleared; additionally, adult female bats may leave their pups in the roost tree while they themselves forage, leaving young bats unable to flee a tree that is being felled. A minimal amount of vegetation clearing will result from the construction of this project. In addition, to minimize potential impacts to Hawaiian hoary bats, woody vegetation taller than 15 ft (4.6 m) will not be cleared between April 15 and August 15. After a review of biological impacts and based on the project design criteria, the EPA has concluded that the proposed project is not likely to adversely affect the Hawaiian hoary bat.

The context and intensity of potential impacts on cultural resources were considered to determine whether the project would impact historic properties under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The EPA conducted a Cultural Resource Assessment and has consulted with the Hawaii State Historic Preservation Division. The consultation concluded with a determination that the proposed undertaking would have no adverse effect in the proposed Area of Potential Effects.

Public Review

The EA is available for public review at the offices of EPA, Region IX, 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA. To make an appointment to review the EA at this location, contact Sara Ziff at (415) 972-3536. Copies of the EA are also available at the County of Hawaii Department of Water Supply, 345 Kekuanaoa St., Hilo, HI by contacting Jason Killam at (808) 961-8070, ext. 249.

EPA must receive comments on the FONSI within 30 calendar days from the date of publication of the legal Notice of Decision. EPA will take no administrative action on the above-described project prior to expiration of this comment period. Comments should be mailed to Sara Ziff, U.S. EPA, Region IX, 75 Hawthorne St. (WTR-6), San Francisco, CA 94015.

Public comments, EPA's response to comments and this FONSI will be forwarded to the EPA, Region 9 Water Division Director for review and signature. If this FONSI is signed by the division director, it will not be re-circulated for review, but will be available to any individual upon request.