

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Wastewater Collection Rehabilitation for Main Lines in Tijuana, Mexico

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 intends to authorize the award of Border Environment Infrastructure Funds (BEIF) to the Comisión Estatal de Servicios Públicos de Tijuana (CESPT). EPA Region 9's authorization of a grant award for the proposed project is a federal action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 USC §§4321-4370(f). In accordance with NEPA; Council of Environmental Quality Regulations, 40 CFR §§1500.1-1508.28; and EPA NEPA regulations, 40 CFR Part 6, EPA Region 9 has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) describing the transboundary environmental impacts to the United States associated with the proposed project, and which is available upon request. Based upon the analysis in the EA, EPA has prepared this finding of no significant impact (FONSI) which documents EPA Region 9's decision that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Project Location and Description

The proposed project is located in the City of Tijuana, in the state of Baja California in northwestern Mexico. The City of Tijuana is within the larger municipality of Tijuana, which has a population of 1,650,351 people, an area of approximately 538 square miles (1,393 square kilometers), and contains the municipal delegations of San Antonio de los Buenos, Playas de Tijuana, Centro, Sánchez Taboada, La Mesa de Tijuana, Cerro Colorado, La Presa, Centenario, and Mesa de Otay.

The proposed action would rehabilitate or replace 5.5 miles (8.9 kilometers) of collector lines with diameters ranging from 8 to 42 inches (20 to 107 centimeters) and rehabilitate approximately 37 manholes and construct an additional 10. The proposed project would occur on Tijuana's *Industrial* Collector, *Las Américas* Collector, *Techite* Collector, *Sánchez Taboada* Collector and *Artículo 123* Collector. The first four collectors discharge to the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) or the San Antonio de los Buenos Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), depending on the volume of sewage within the Tijuana wastewater collection system. The fifth collector discharges to the San Antonio de los Buenos WWTP.

The project is needed to address the deteriorated condition of existing major sewer collector lines and manholes within the City which result in raw sewage leaks to ground and surface water within the Tijuana River watershed and potentially impacting the Tijuana River. Thus, on those days when Tijuana River flows reach the U.S., the implementation of the proposed project would reduce the potential adverse impacts to U.S. surface water. The proposed project will improve public health and water quality concerns by eliminating the discharge of raw sewage to Tijuana streets. Public safety concerns will also be addressed by reducing the risk and potential for collapse of major sewer collectors and manholes and associated ground subsidence. The lack of reliable wastewater collection lines has had consequences for the environment of Tijuana, as well

as for the quality of life of its inhabitants. All of the collection lines that are part of the proposed action have shown evidence of damage, often in the form of leaks and collapses

Environmental Consequences and Conditions

After carefully considering the regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors as described in the EA, EPA Region 9 has not identified any significant impacts to the environment that would result from the implementation of the proposed project.

Public Review

The Draft EA is on file and available for public review at the EPA Region 9 office. To make an appointment to review the EA, contact Elizabeth Borowiec at the address given below. The Draft EA is also available at:

<http://www.epa.gov/region9/nepa/epa-generated/tijuana-ww/index.html>

Interested parties may submit comments on the EA and this unsigned FONSI to EPA Region 9 by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on March 12, 2014. Comments via letter, fax, or email should be sent to Elizabeth Borowiec at the following address:

EPA Region 9 (Mail Code WTR-4)
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901
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fax: 415-947-3537
email: borowiec.elizabeth@epa.gov

EPA Region 9 will not take administrative action on the proposed project prior to the close of the comment period. If, after considering public comments, EPA Region 9 concludes the proposed project will not have significant environmental impacts, EPA Region 9 will revise this FONSI by adding a summary of the comments received and EPA Region 9's responses. The revised FONSI will be forwarded to the Water Division Director for review and signature. The FONSI will be final upon signature. EPA Region 9 will not recirculate the signed FONSI for public review, but will make it available to any individual upon request.