



Public Notice

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING FUND LOAN

The Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) in Sections 445A.6758 to 445A.67612, inclusive, outlines the environmental review procedures to be followed by the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP) to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. In accordance with these procedures, NDEP intends to issue a categorical exclusion for the Silver Peak water project. The project will utilize funds from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF).

Project Name: System Rehabilitation – Phase 2

Project No.: 67 - Year 2018 Priority List

Applicant: Esmeralda County

Total Estimated Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Assistance: \$399,508

Silver Peak is an unincorporated town in Esmeralda County on State Route 265, 20 miles south of US Route 6 and 30 miles west of Goldfield in Sections 15, 22, and 23 of Township 2S, Range 39N. The water system was originally constructed in the 1970's and upgraded in the 1980's and early 2000. Esmeralda County recently completed an amendment to the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) prepared in November 2000. The amendment was to 1) update the project costs for any projects that were included in the PER but not yet constructed, 2) identify and prepare costs estimates for other projects needed to correct deficiencies that have surfaced since the PER was completed, 3) rank the projects, and 4) evaluate the pressure settings in the existing hydraulic pressure zones.

The soils in the Silver Peak area are corrosive to ferrous system components. Fittings, valves, fire hydrants, and water service saddles installed in 1983 were not wrapped in plastic or were not otherwise protected from corrosion and are now corroding and leaking and require replacement. This project is the second phase of a two phase project to replace water system assets that are corroded and leaking including service saddles and fire hydrants.

The NACs allow NDEP to utilize an environmental review conducted by another agency as long as the review complies with NDEP's environmental review requirements. Many NEPA-like environmental reviews have been conducted in the past 15 years that cover the current project area and areas nearby:

- November 2000 environmental review as a part of a system wide PER. No potential for human or environmental adverse impacts were identified at that time, and federal, state, and local cross-cutters were consulted.
- BLM environmental assessment – NV065-2001-0039 – for a new well, water storage tank, and transmission line for the Town of Silver Peak with a Finding of No Significant Impact.
- June 2008 environmental review as a part of the replacement well project funded by the EPA for the Silver Peak water system. No potential for human or environmental adverse impacts were identified at that time, and federal, state, and local cross-cutters were consulted.
- September 2010 Environmental Assessment conducted by DOE as funder of a pond expansion and facility rehabilitation at Chemetall's lithium brine production and processing plant. Potential adverse impacts identified at that time were related to migratory birds and the need to keep them off the brine ponds. Federal, state, and local cross-cutters were consulted.

Pursuant to NAC 445A.753 (3) which states: "In any case in which an environmental assessment or categorical exclusion is 5 or more years old, the Division shall reevaluate the project, environmental conditions and public views and, before awarding financial assistance: (a) Issue a public notice reaffirming its decision to proceed with the project without revising the environmental assessment..." NDEP has reviewed the findings and cross-cutter consultations for these reviews and has determined that a categorical exclusion is appropriate for these project elements, and no further environmental review is recommended. The project is also eligible for a categorical exclusion based upon the regulations of the DWSRF – NAC 445A.67583 2. (b) & (e). The project will have a beneficial effect by ensuring the customers receive water that is safe to drink. Best management practices will be utilized during construction.

Documentation to support these conclusions is available for public examination at the office of the Division of Environmental Protection, 901 S. Stewart St., Suite 4001, Carson City, Nevada. Comments for consideration on this proposed decision must be submitted by February 28, 2018 to: Michelle Stamates, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Program, 901 S. Stewart St., Suite 4001, Carson City, NV 89701-5405. Comments may also be submitted by FAX to (775) 687-9510 or by e-mail to mstamate@ndep.nv.gov. Questions regarding this notice may be directed to Michelle Stamates at (775) 687-9331. The process of environmental review shall be deemed to be complete if no comments that the NDEP determines to be significant are received within the time allowed for public comment.