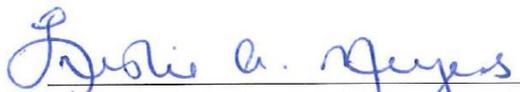


United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Lower Colorado Region
Phoenix Area Office

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

EXCHANGE OF CENTRAL ARIZONA PROJECT WATER
BETWEEN
THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY
AND
MARICOPA-STANFIELD IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT, HOHOKAM
IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT, CENTRAL ARIZONA IRRIGATION AND
DRAINAGE DISTRICT, NEW MAGMA IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT AND
THE SALT RIVER VALLEY WATER USER'S ASSOCIATION
MARICOPA COUNTY, ARIZONA

Approved:



Leslie A. Meyers, Area Manager

Phoenix Area Office
Bureau of Reclamation

Date:

5/23/19

FONSI No.: PXAO 19-03

Introduction

The U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the potential environmental effects of the Gila River Indian Community's (Community) plans to store water at any one or a combination of the following Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) permitted Groundwater Savings Facilities (GSFs): Maricopa-Stanfield Irrigation and Drainage District (MSIDD), Hohokam Irrigation and Drainage District (HIDD), Central Arizona Irrigation and Drainage District (CAIDD), New Magma Irrigation and Drainage District (NMIDD) and the Salt River Valley Water Users Association (SRVWUA). These GSFs seek to use the Community's Central Arizona Project water in lieu of pumping groundwater and the Community desires to obtain Long-Term Storage Credits. The final EA for the proposed project is incorporated by reference in this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Community could choose delivery amounts up to 25,000 acre-feet annually of CAP water for each delivery agreement. Pursuant to Arizona state law, the Community would receive pumping credits for the groundwater "saved" (not pumped) as a result of the agreement. Those credits can then be sold or "recovered" later.

Review by Reclamation is needed to ensure the proposed action complies with appropriate Federal environmental requirements.

Public Involvement

Reclamation solicited input from the public on the proposed project to assist in identifying key issues and defining the scope of the project and environmental analysis. Reclamation conducted scoping via mail and internet publication. A 30-day comment period was initiated June 21, 2018 and closed on July 23, 2018. No comments were received. A Notice of Availability for the draft EA was issued on April 4, 2019, with comments due on May 4, 2019. No comment letters were received.

Major Considerations

The following issues were addressed in the EA and have been taken into consideration in Reclamation's determination of whether a FONSI is appropriate, or an environmental impact statement should be prepared.

1. No land disturbing activities will occur as a result of the proposed action. Therefore, there will be no direct adverse impacts resulting from the proposed action. CAP water would be delivered through existing infrastructure to Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) permitted GSF's. The exchange would not cause additional growth and development beyond what was described in the no action alternative. Indirect and cumulative impacts from the proposed action, mostly related to urbanization of non-developed land, will be identical to the no action alternative.
2. The proposed action will not result in any negative effects to public health or safety. The recharge of the leased CAP water is not anticipated to result in substantial changes to the current local groundwater quality.

3. No direct adverse impacts will occur from the proposed action to unique characteristics of the geographic area such as park lands, prime and unique farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas. Land development would be subject to compliance with local, state, and Federal laws and ordinances protecting environmental resources.
4. No adverse effect on the quality of the human environment is anticipated. No disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and/or low-income populations would result from the proposed action.
5. The proposed action does not have highly uncertain and potentially significant effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.
6. The proposed action does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration.
7. Significant adverse cumulative effects are not predicted. A complete disclosure of the effects of the project is contained in Chapter 2 of the EA.
8. The proposed project would not result in additional ground disturbance beyond what would occur under the no action alternative. Therefore, the proposed action would not cause any adverse effects to cultural resources, including historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
9. The proposed action would have no adverse effect on federally-listed threatened or endangered wildlife species or critical habitat.
10. The project does not threaten to violate any known Federal, State, or local law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment.
11. The Community's right to CAP water is an Indian Trust Asset per Section 204(a)(2) of the Gila River Indian Community Water Rights Settlement Act. The proposed action would not adversely affect Indian trust assets or limit access to, or ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the attached Final EA, Reclamation has determined that the proposed plans for the Community to reach agreements to store water up to 25,000 acre-feet per annum at any one or a combination of the following ADWR permitted GSFs: MSIDD, HIDD, CAIDD, NMIDD and/or SRVWU would not have a significant adverse effect on the human environment, and an environmental impact statement is not warranted.