

DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Yuma County 8th Street Realignment and Paving Project

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Yuma Area Office

Introduction

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and based on the following, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) has determined that implementation of the Proposed Action to issue the Yuma County Department of Development Services (YCDDS) a license granting them permission to realign and pave County 8th Street on Reclamation lands would not result in a significant impact on the quality of human health and the environment. The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) provides details on the Proposed Action and an analysis of potential impacts and should be used as a companion document to this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Proposed Action

The purpose of this project is to increase the safety of vehicular traffic travelling along County 8th Street between Mohawk Valley Road to approximately Avenue 36 ³/₄ E. The YCDDS considers the roadway unsafe because of two sharp curves and the gravel-based covering. In addition, the roadway does not meet current American Association of State Highway and Transportation Official standards

Under the Proposed Action, Reclamation would grant a License to YCDDS for the proposed improvements and future maintenance to County 8th street located on Reclamation lands. The proposed project would include widening, realigning (straightening two curves), and paving this stretch of road.

Resource Analysis

The EA focused on those resource areas identified as potentially impacted by the alternatives considered, including the No Action Alternative. Based on the location and nature of the Proposed Action no negative impacts are anticipated to land use, energy policy, environmental justice and socio-economic conditions, floodplain, and geology and soils. Potential negative effects of the Proposed Action were identified for air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, Indian trust assets, hazardous or solid waste, and surface and groundwater quality.

1. Air quality would be impacted during the construction phase of the project as soils would be disturbed, and the road would be graded and contoured. These activities would generate sporadic, temporary, and localized emissions of particulate matter (dust) and gaseous exhaust from vehicle and heavy equipment operation. During the construction phase, YCDDS will minimize potential effects on ambient air quality by spraying the roadway and construction areas with water and covering hauling trucks with tarps.
2. Biological resources may be impacted as a result of the Proposed Action. There will be no impacts to wildlife, endangered species and/or critical habitat. To minimize impacts to vegetation in the vicinity, project work area shall be clearly flagged or similarly marked at the outer boundaries to define the limit of work activities. All workers shall be instructed that their activities are restricted to flagged and cleared areas. Certain portions of the old alignment that are not part of the new road shall be seeded with native plant species.
3. To protect and minimize impacts to cultural resources and Indian trust assets in the project area during the proposed action, mitigation measures were formalized in a Memorandum of Agreement between Reclamation, the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, and YCDDS. These measures include presence of an archaeological monitor during construction on the northern two-thirds of the proposed alignment. To minimize trespassing and further vandalism of the Antelope Hill Station of the Butterfield Overland Mail, post and cable barriers will be installed to the east on the north side of the hill. Also, a post-and-cable barrier will be installed around the historic-period cemetery to prevent vehicles and entering during and after construction. Site stewards will continue to monitor the site. Because the concentration of surface artifacts may indicate the presence of buried artifacts at the Mendoza homestead site, data recovery will be conducted in all areas of the site affected by project activities. In addition, construction personnel will be instructed to stay clear of the Antelope Hill Bridge on its southern extent.
4. Hazardous materials anticipated to be used during construction of the project are small quantities of fuels, lubricants, and/or petroleum products. Should an accident or spill occur, YCDDS or its contractor would implement a Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasures Plan (SPCCP) to contain and/or remove contamination to soils. Also, areas for refueling of equipment would be chosen so as to prevent any accidental fuel leakage from contaminating surface water, groundwater, or soils.
5. An increase in noise from the Proposed Action is anticipated only during the construction phase; however the noise is consistent with existing activities and is therefore not significant. Additionally, no sensitive noise receptors are located near the Proposed Action; therefore impacts will not be significant.
6. To minimize impacts to groundwater, should an accident or spills occur, YCDDS would implement a SPCCP to contain and/or remove contamination to groundwater.

NEPA Finding

Based on the analysis of the environmental impacts, mitigation measures and other conservation commitments, as presented in the EA, Reclamation finds no significant impact and recommends implementation of the Proposed Action.

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Date