

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Firebaugh Canal Water District 1st Lift Canal Lining Project Phase II – Shaw Avenue to Delta-Mendota Canal and Check 2 Modernization Project

FONSI 13-12-MP

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Introduction

The United States Department of Interior (DOI) Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) will provide DOI's Bay-Delta Restoration Program: CalFed Water Use Efficiency grant and Agricultural Water Conservation and Efficiency grant to the Firebaugh Canal Water District (FCWD) to construct the 1st Lift Canal Lining Project – Phase II and the Check 2 Modernization Project (Proposed Action). The Proposed Action/Project lies within the Grassland Drainage Area and the CalFed Solution Area, most of which are underlain with a saline perched water table that collects approximately 278 acre-feet per year of seepage from the unlined portions of the district's 1st Lift Canal.

The need for the Proposed Action, consistent with the purpose of Reclamation's Bay-Delta Restoration Program, is to improve California's water supply and the ecological health of the San Francisco Bay/ Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta by emphasizing on-farm water conservation and water use efficiency.

Reclamation prepared the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) to evaluate the effects of the Proposed Action. The EA was available for public review from September 26, 2013 to October 8, 2013. No comments were received.

No Action

Reclamation would not provide grant funds to the District to support construction of the Proposed Action. The irrigation system currently in place would continue to operate. The FCWD would continue to provide irrigation service to its users via the unlined 1st Lift Canal. Deep percolation from irrigation and seepage from the unlined canal would continue to be collected by the tile systems and regional drains, managed and eventually discharged into the San Joaquin River. There would be no increase in water conservation and management.

Proposed Action

The Proposed Action consists of Reclamation providing grant funds to the FCWD to support the construction of the 1st Lift Canal Lining Project – Phase II and Check 2 Modernization Project. The Proposed Action would involve lining approximately two miles of FCWD's unlined, earthen 1st Lift Canal with concrete from the Shaw Avenue crossing to the Delta-Mendota Canal. In addition to the lining, Check 2 on the 1st Lift Canal, an antiquated, obsolete timber weir, would be modernized into a reinforced concrete check structure automated with stainless steel sluice gates and motorized operators that would be integrated into the District's SCADA system. This structure would be relocated approximately 0.8 miles downstream of its current location.

Findings

Based on the attached EA, Reclamation finds that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action that will significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EA describes the existing environmental resources in the Proposed Action area, evaluates the effects of the No

Action and Proposed Action alternatives on the resources, and proposes measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects. The EA was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508), and DOI Regulations (43 CFR Part 46). The analysis provided in the attached EA is incorporated by reference.

Following are the reasons why the impacts of the Proposed Action are not significant:

1. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect air quality or increase greenhouse gas emissions.
2. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect water resources.
3. The Proposed Action will not significantly affect threatened or endangered species.
4. The Proposed Action will not affect historic properties.
5. The Proposed Action will not affect Indian Trust Assets.
6. The Proposed Action will not affect Indian sacred sites.
7. The Proposed Action will not disproportionately affect minorities and low income populations and communities.
8. The Proposed Action will not result in adverse cumulative effects.
9. There is no potential for the effects to be considered highly controversial.