



— BUREAU OF —  
RECLAMATION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
*and*  
DECISION RECORD  
*for*  
NORTH CREEK IRRIGATION COMPANY CANAL PIPING PROJECT  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
PRO-EA-FY25-068

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF RECLAMATION – UPPER COLORADO REGION  
PROVO AREA OFFICE; PROVO, UTAH

## **1.0 Background and Introduction**

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is considering funding the North Creek Irrigation Company (NCIC) Canal Piping and Hydro Project located in Sanpete County, Utah. The Proposed Action includes enclosing and pressurizing approximately 7.2 miles of the existing NCIC irrigation ditch system and installing hydropower generation facilities.

The Proposed Action is intended to improve irrigation water delivery reliability and efficiency for NCIC shareholders by reducing conveyance losses currently estimated at approximately 45 percent (1,611 acre-feet per year), while also generating renewable hydropower.

Reclamation has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the environmental impacts from implementing one of the two alternatives:

- Under the No Action Alternative, Reclamation would not authorize the funding, and the existing irrigation system would continue to operate under current conditions, including ongoing water losses and maintenance challenges.
- Under the Proposed Action Alternative, Reclamation would provide WaterSMART Water Efficiency Grants (WEEG) funding to NCIC to implement irrigation system improvements and hydropower development.

### **Proposed Action Alternative Summary:**

- Piping and pressurizing approximately 7.2 miles of existing open irrigation canals within the existing ditch prism using high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe.
- Installation of one diversion meter and approximately 39 turnout meters.
- Upgrades to the existing diversion/headworks structure.
- Construction of two 200-kilowatt (kW) hydropower units and associated pressure reducing valves (PRVs), producing approximately 198,000 kilowatt-hours annually.
- Temporary construction disturbance within an approximately 83.6-acre project area, including staging areas and a limited temporary crossing of North Creek.
- Construction activities occurring outside of the irrigation season (October–April).

## **2.0 Environmental Commitments**

Environmental commitments, also known as mitigating measures, are typically outlined in Section 3 of the final EA. The environmental commitments must be implemented as outlined in the final EA and include:

### **Invasive plants and noxious weeds, soils, vegetation**

Standard Best Management Practices (BMPs) established by federal, state, and county agencies will be implemented to mitigate and minimize adverse impacts during and after construction. These measures include limiting construction to the smallest practicable area, minimizing exposed soils, identifying and protecting undisturbed vegetation, and decontaminating equipment before and after use at the site.

Following construction, disturbed areas will be reseeded with an approved seed mix and monitored for invasive species. If noxious weeds are identified, appropriate control measures, including mechanical removal or herbicide application, will be implemented.

#### Water resources (streams, riparian areas, and WOTUS)

BMPs will be implemented to minimize disturbance to streams and riparian areas. Temporarily disturbed areas will be restored following construction, and erosion and sediment control measures will be used to prevent sedimentation.

#### Wildlife (including migratory birds)

Construction activities will be conducted to minimize impacts to wildlife, including avoiding impacts to active nests.

#### Hazardous and solid waste

The following mitigation measures will be employed to ensure proper management and disposal of waste:

- Construction activities will comply with applicable federal, state, and local regulations regarding hazardous materials.
- The contractor will obtain coverage under a Utah Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (UPDES) Construction Stormwater General Permit and implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) plan.
- Construction-generated waste, including fuels, oils, lubricants, and other materials, will be properly stored, handled, and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations.
- Construction debris and waste materials will be collected and transported to an approved off-site disposal facility.
- Spill response materials will be maintained on-site, and any spills will be contained and cleaned up immediately.

### **3.0 Finding of No Significant Impact Determination**

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Based upon the review of the analysis in PRO-EA-FY25-068, and in accordance with 42 U.S. Code § 4336 (e) (7), under NEPA, Reclamation has determined that an environmental impact statement is not needed for this Proposed Action. The selected Proposed Action Alternative will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment as defined in NEPA. This determination has been made by considering factors outlined in 516 DM 1 – U.S. Department of the Interior Handbook of NEPA implementing procedures, namely:

#### *Both short-and long-term effects*

The referenced EA includes analysis of short and long-term effects of the identified issues and discussion of reasonably foreseeable environmental trends and planned actions in relation to those issues. None of the impacts from the Proposed Action are expected to rise to the level of significance.

Both beneficial and adverse effects

Potentially beneficial and adverse impacts related to the Proposed Action are disclosed and analyzed in Section 3 of the EA in the Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences sections, by each resource topic. Minor adverse effects associated with construction activities, including temporary disturbance to vegetation, soils, and riparian areas, would be minimized through implementation of BMPs and mitigation measures. Beneficial effects include improved water delivery efficiency, reduced water loss, and renewable energy generation. None of these effects are determined to be significant.

Effects on public health and safety

Effects on public health and safety are discussed in the EA and have not been found to be significant based on the nature of the Proposed Action Alternative analysis. It is expected that public health and safety will likely improve as NCIC provides a more reliable irrigation conveyance system.

Economic effects

The project is intended to improve irrigation efficiency and reliability for existing water users. Implementation of the project would not result in adverse economic impacts and would likely result in minor beneficial economic effects through improved agricultural productivity and reduced operational costs. The proposed project is not expected to cause any impact (positive or negative) on employment or make any appreciable changes to the area's population.

Effects on the quality of life of the American people.

The quality of life of the American people in the Project Area would continue as is currently. The piping and pressurization of the irrigation system would improve water conservation, operational efficiency, and reliability of water delivery.

**4.0 Decision Record**

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The NEPA process is intended to help public officials make decisions that are based on an understanding of environmental consequences and take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment. Reclamation has considered all relevant information raised in the NEPA process and that the NEPA process is now closed. Therefore, based on the information contained in Environmental Assessment PRO-EA-FY25-068, and all other information available to me at this time, it is my decision to approve the implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative and mitigation measures as described in the subject EA and consistent with the above Finding of No Significant Impact determination.

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Rick Baxter  
Area Manager