BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
and
DECISION RECORD
for
WELLSVILLE-MENDON UPPER CANAL PIPELINE PROJECT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PRO-EA-FY25-044

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 analyzing the awarding of funding to Wellsville Mendon Conservation District (WMCD) to enclose and pressurize 2.1 miles of the Wellsville-Mendon Upper Canal. The Proposed Action seeks to address seepage losses in the remaining 2.1 miles of the Upper Canal and facilitate more efficient sprinkler irrigation by pressurizing the pipeline and installing other associated improvements. The WMCD operates two canals with Hyrum Dam project water provided by Reclamation water right #25-1945.

Reclamation 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 to implement the Proposed Action of piping and pressurizing 2.1 miles of the Wellsville Mendon Upper Canal.
- Under the Proposed Action Alternative, Reclamation would provide WaterSmart WEEG funding to WMCD for designing and constructing improvements to the Wellsville Mendon Upper Canal, as summarized below.

Proposed Action Alternative Summary:

- Enclosing 2.1 miles of the Wellsville Mendon Upper Canal in plastic irrigation pipe, ranging from 8 to 26-inches in diameter, within a 5-10-ft construction corridor. Installation of one flow meter at each turnout location along the entire canal alignment would also take place, for a total of 32 meters.
- Construct a booster pump station to pressurize the piped canal. The booster pump station would be built on a concrete pad that measures ~25 ft by ~23 ft. The booster pump station would be configured with three vertical turbine pumps and magnetic meters downstream of each to measure flow. *Note:* The pump station would be temporarily powered by a propane fueled generator until the Hyrum Dam Spillway project is complete; at which time, a permanent power line, described below, would be installed.
- Install three-phase power from Hyrum City to power the Booster Pump Station. Hyrum City would construct a buried electrical line within the existing access road, which is approximately 25-ft in width. Only the junction box would be located off the road and would be the only portion of the electrical conduit area that would need to be reclaimed.
- Install a buried 15-inch diameter drain line to carry overflow water from the pump station 750 ft to the north and into the Wellsville Mendon Lower Canal. The drain line would have a capacity of up to 15 cfs. After installation, the drain line area will be reclaimed. *Note:* The drain line cannot be constructed using the south access road until the Hyrum Dam Spillway project is complete. However, construction of the drain line may take place if access to the site is provided, without reliance upon the south access road.

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:

Archaeological Resources

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.14(b)(1)(i) the "Programmatic Agreement Between the Bureau of Reclamation and the Utah State Historic Preservation Officer Regarding National Historic Preservation Act Mitigation for Adverse Effects to Irrigation infrastructure" will be used to mitigate the adverse effects to the Wellsville-Mendon Upper Canal. The objective of the Utah Historic Irrigation Project is to mitigate the loss of historic properties associated with irrigation infrastructure by researching and documenting the history of water management and the use of irrigation, its infrastructure, and agricultural practices in Utah. It also aims to create widely available products to educate the public about this history.

Under the provisions of the Programmatic Agreement, Reclamation will contribute 1 percent of the WaterSMART grant awarded, (up to $10,000), to Utah State University's Utah Historic Irrigation Project for additional investigation into historic irrigation systems. The Utah State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with Reclamation's proposed mitigation on October 22, 2025 (see Appendix B of the EA).

Invasive plants and noxious weeds, soils, vegetation

Federal, State, and County standard weed control Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented to mitigate and reduce negative impacts during and after construction, including the use of flagging construction limits, limiting ground disturbance to the extent practicable, and performing decontamination of equipment before and after construction. Specifically, the following measures will be implemented as recommended by the Cache County Vegetation Management Division:

1. Make sure all equipment and materials are clean from noxious weed seeds before entering the project site.
2. Don't haul any dirt or excess material away from construction site area.
3. Clean all equipment before exiting the construction site.
4. Choose a certified weed free seed mix. Check with the local NRCS office on recommended seed mix varieties for the project area.
5. Monitor construction site for five years after project is complete for any new noxious weed infestations.

Prior to constructing the drain line, reclamation will involve salvaging and stockpiling topsoil. Then, once the drain line is constructed, the stockpiled topsoil will be re-spread, fertilized, with a seed mix applied. Seed will be raked in, lightly compacted, and mulched.

Weed controls will be applied throughout reclamation by regular monitoring, targeted herbicide application, and reseeding of any bare areas. The seed mix will consist of bluebunch wheatgrass, Great Basin wildrye, Sandberg's bluegrass, streambank wheatgrass, and western wheatgrass. The

junction box, which is not located within the roadway would be reclaimed using the same seed mix described above and utilizing the same methods.

Hazardous and solid waste

The following mitigation measures would be employed to ensure the proper management and disposal of waste generated by construction:

1. Concrete used for the pump station would be hauled to an offsite location for disposal (i.e., a landfill).
2. Refueling of equipment would occur onsite. However, there would be no on-site fuel storage.
3. Other debris would be hauled to an offsite location for disposal.

Streams, Wetlands, Riparian Areas, and Floodplains

Prior to construction, the project proponent will obtain all necessary federal, state, and local authorizations. This includes securing any Clean Water Act Section 404 documentation deemed to be required, including obtaining a Nationwide Permit.

Wildlife: Fish and Migratory birds

The project proponent will implement standard guidelines to mitigate impacts to Bald Eagles and other migratory birds that may be present in the project area. These include the following:

1. Maintain recommended spatial buffers for construction activity near active nest sites.
2. Noise suppression devices such as mufflers will be maintained on all equipment.
3. Prior to any woody vegetation removal, a nest clearance survey will be conducted by a qualified biologist. If nests are located, the proponent will notify Reclamation and halt any removal of vegetation.
4. Removal or alteration of Bald Eagle nests is prohibited.

3.0 Finding of No Significant Impact Determination

Based upon the review of the analysis in PRO-EA-FY25-044, 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. None of these effects are determined to be significant.

The EA analysis identified that the Proposed Action would have adverse effects on Archaeological Resources. These adverse effects will be mitigated using the Mitigation PA.

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 WMCD provide a more reliable conveyance system for their service area.

Economic effects
The project is intended to update water delivery infrastructure to convey irrigation water more reliably and efficiently to the serviced communities. The act of implementing the project would not result in adverse economic impacts, but likely make the communities served more drought resilient, as described in the EA. The proposed project is not expected to cause any impact (positive or negative) on employment or make any appreciable changes to area populations.

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 of the canal aims to improve conservation of water in the WMCD by reducing seepage loss in the canal, improve operations and management, and improve water use efficiency in the Upper Canal.

4.0 Decision Record

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 the EA Number PRO-EA-FY25-044, 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.

Digitally signed by RICK BAXTER
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Rick Baxter
Area Manager