

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

DROUGHT EMERGENCY WATER WELL FOR CARSLBAD, NEW MEXICO

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Albuquerque Area Office
Albuquerque, New Mexico

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Mission Statements

The mission of the Department of the Interior is to protect and provide access to our Nation's natural and cultural heritage and honor our trust responsibilities to Indian Tribes and our commitments to island communities.

The mission of the Bureau of Reclamation is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public.

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**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Albuquerque Area Office
Albuquerque, New Mexico**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**Drought Emergency Water Well
Eddy County, New Mexico**

Manager, Environment Division

Date

Area Manager, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Date

FONSI Number: AAO-08-006

Summary of the Proposed Action

Reclamation will provide funding to drill an approximately 750-foot deep water well into the Capitan Limestone geologic formation to tap into the subsurface Capitan Aquifer. The well will be drilled on a site prepared by the City of Carlsbad, within the Sheep's Draw groundwater well field. A supplemental water supply source will help the City of Carlsbad maintain a municipal water supply during drought. The city has obtained a permit for a supplemental well from the Office of New Mexico State Engineer to divert its existing water rights.

Water produced by the well will be pumped into the existing city water system pipeline and transported to the existing water treatment facility. The distribution line is already established near the proposed well site and will require a one-mile pipeline to connect it to the well.

Background

Record drought in the southwestern United States continues to threaten municipal water supplies with severe shortages. The City of Carlsbad, New Mexico, is dependent on a groundwater well field for its municipal water. Approximately 98 percent of Carlsbad's water is supplied by groundwater pumped from 9 wells located about 7 miles southwest of the City in an area called Sheep's Draw.

These wells range in depth from 590 to 1,000 feet and pull water from the Capitan Aquifer. Long, prolonged periods of drought such as the current event have a negative impact on groundwater levels, often requiring the need for deeper and more expensive wells. The drought is forecast to continue and may be very long, based on the historic record. Support for drought emergency well drilling was authorized by the U.S. Congress in Title 1 of the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991.

Environmental Impacts

The following resources and socioeconomic factors were evaluated in detail in the Environmental Assessment for anticipated impacts from implementation of the drought emergency water well and associated water pipeline: water resources, Federal and state-listed species, vegetation and wildlife, noxious weeds, soil erosion, air quality, cultural and archaeological resources, Indian trusts assets, socioeconomic, environmental justice, and visual resources. The following resources are discussed further:

Water Resources

There is no information available that indicates the proposed well would impact any wells in the surrounding area. Information provided by City of Carlsbad indicates the existing city well (which is not properly functioning) and the currently proposed well tap into the same water source. New impacts would be less likely anticipated since a new groundwater source will not be developed.

No significant impacts to surface water, water quality or ground water from this action are expected.

Federal and State Listed Species

No impact would occur to endangered, threatened, or sensitive plant species on the pipeline route or well site.

Temporary displacement of wildlife species due to increased human presence and noise from the construction activities would occur in the immediate area. Wildlife would temporarily leave the area but should return in a short period of time. No significant impact is expected.

Vegetation and Wildlife

Soils and vegetation disturbance will be kept to a minimum, vegetation cover left undisturbed whenever possible and areas reseeded with native species if temporarily disturbed.

Temporary displacement of wildlife species due to increased human presence and noise from the construct activities would occur in the immediate area. Wildlife would temporarily leave the area but should return in a short period of time. No significant impact is expected.

Noxious Weeds

During construction, there would be temporary increases in suspended dust (sediment transfer), resulting from activities such as vehicle traffic. No equipment or facilities requiring permitting through the New Mexico Environment Department Air Quality Bureau (NMAQB) are proposed for the action.

Soils Erosion

Soils and vegetation disturbance will be kept to a minimum, vegetation cover left undisturbed whenever possible and areas reseeded with native species if temporarily disturbed.

Air Quality

During construction, there would be temporary increases in suspended dust (sediment transfer), resulting from activities such as vehicle traffic. No equipment or facilities requiring permitting through the New Mexico Environment Department Air Quality Bureau (NMAQB) are proposed for the action.

Cultural and Archaeological Resources

The outfall on the southern pipeline, which is located between two habitat or wildlife mitigation areas that Reclamation created and is required to maintain for Interior Least Tern nesting, and other nearby construction activities should be completed prior to the onset of the tern nesting season which begins approximately mid-May.

Indian Trust Assets

No Indian Trust Assets have been documented in the project area. Therefore, Reclamation anticipates no impact to Indian Trust Assets resulting from the proposed action.

Socioeconomics

The proposed action would result in the creation of a small number of jobs for dirt and drilling contractors during the construction and drilling phases of the project.

Environmental Justice

Implementation of the proposed action would not disproportionately (unequally) affect any low-income or minority communities within the project area.

Visual Resources

Visual quality impacts of the proposed action would result from temporary construction activities such as the generation of fugitive dust, increased traffic at the site, and the visual effects of the drill rig and construction equipment. None of these temporary visual quality impacts are significant on a local or regional scale.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts as a result of the proposed action are expected to be low. It is anticipated that land along the proposed route as well as adjacent land, will continue to be used for a variety of minor right-of-way facilities, therefore, the cumulative effects of the project on the identified resources are not significant.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis present in the EA, Reclamation's assessment of Indian Trust Assets and Environmental Justice, and agency comment on the draft EA Reclamation finds that there would be no

significant impacts associated with the proposed action. Reclamation makes this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the Council on Environmental Quality implementing regulations (40 CFR 1500). Reclamation has determined that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action that would significantly affect the human environment. Therefore, no environmental impact statement will be prepared for this proposal.

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Chapter 1. Purpose of and Need for Action

1.2 Introduction

Record drought in the southwestern United States continues to threaten municipal water supplies with severe shortages. The City of Carlsbad, New Mexico, is dependent on a groundwater well field for its municipal water. Approximately 98 percent of Carlsbad's water is supplied by groundwater pumped from 9 wells located about 7 miles southwest of the City in an area called Sheep's Draw (Figure 1). These wells range in depth from 590 to 1,000 feet and pull water from the Capitan Aquifer. Long, prolonged periods of drought such as the current event have a negative impact on groundwater levels, often requiring the need for deeper and more expensive wells. The drought is forecast to continue and may be very long, based on the historic record. Support for drought emergency well drilling was authorized by the U.S. Congress in Title 1 of the Reclamation States Emergency Drought Relief Act of 1991.

1.2 Background

The City of Carlsbad drilled its Well Number 10 as part of an expansion of the municipal water system in the mid 1950's. However, Well Number 10 has never been equipped for pumping. Although water from this well has been shown to be suitable for municipal use, the borehole deviated significantly during drilling operations, thus restricting the installation of a turbine pump at the recommended well depth (Geohydrology Associates 2005). A water well borehole must be relatively straight and plumb in order to accommodate casing and pumping equipment. As such, Well Number 10 is not usable. In addition, none of the current water wells within the Sheep's Draw well field are equipped with a back-up power source.

1.3 Proposed Action

The Federal action addressed in this Environmental Assessment (EA) would be the funding and development of a municipal groundwater well for the City of Carlsbad. The proposed drought emergency water well would be drilled by a private contractor, licensed to drill water wells in the State of New Mexico, for the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation). The City of Carlsbad has obtained the necessary permit to drill a supplemental water well from the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer (NMOSE). The proposed project is located on city-owned land near the intersection of Hidalgo Road and Dark Canyon Road, Eddy County, New Mexico. The legal description of the well site is: SE 1/4 of SW 1/4 of NE 1/4 of Section 24, Township 23 South, Range 25 East, N.M.P.M. The project site is located on the Cueva Escarpment above Sheep Draw. The project elevation is about 3550 feet above sea level. The proposed well would tie into the existing municipal water system with a short pipeline (see Figure 1).

1.4 Purpose of and Need for Proposed Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a supplemental source of municipal water for the City of Carlsbad to fully utilize their existing water rights by providing additional capacity and operational flexibility within the Sheep's Draw well field during a drought emergency. The project is needed due to the severe drought now gripping the southwest U. S. and the potential for the drought to continue for the indeterminate future. In addition, the proposed well would be outfitted with a secondary power source (e.g., natural gas or diesel powered generator) that can be used during a power outage to maintain the City's municipal water supply during an emergency.

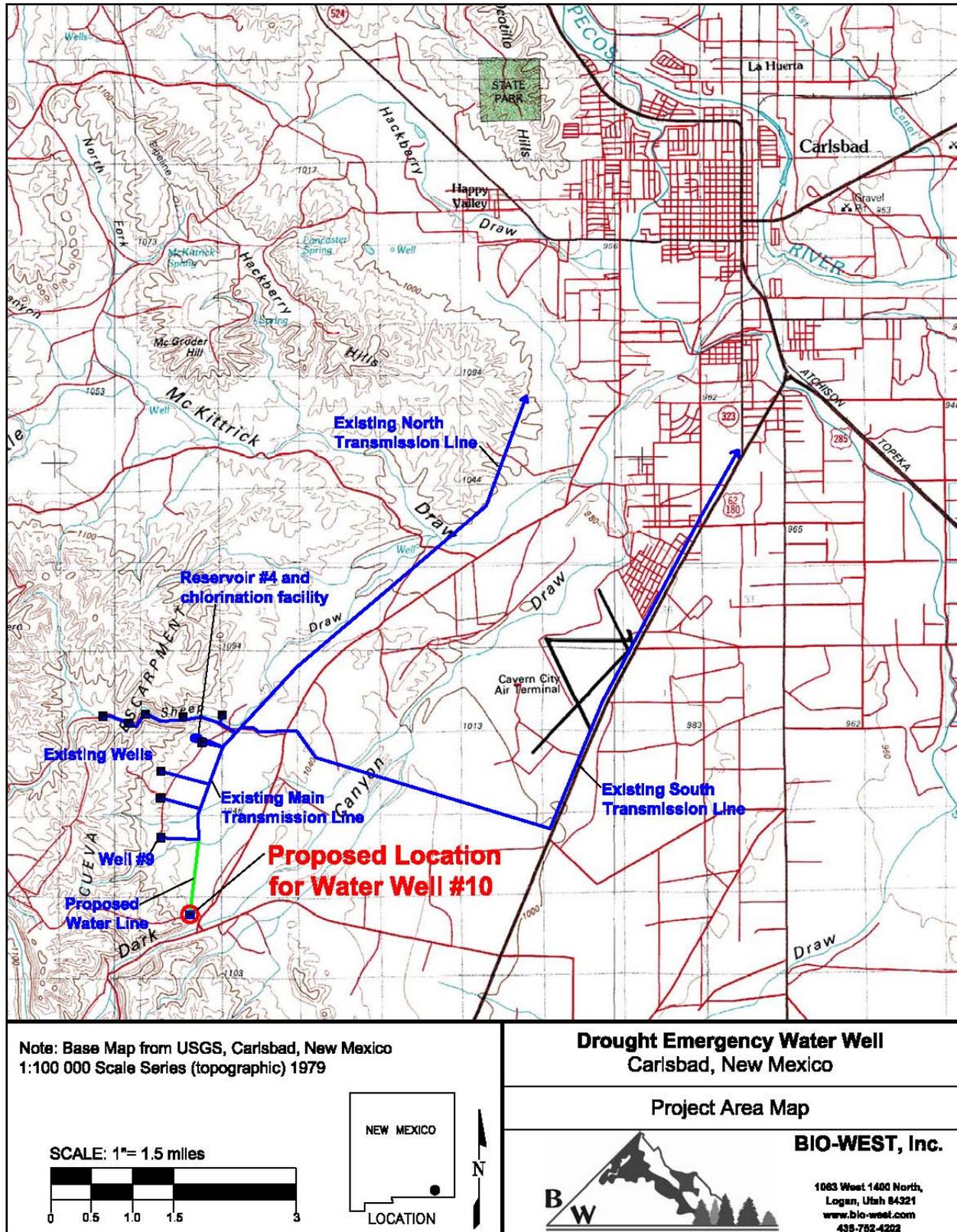


Figure 1. Carlsbad Drought Emergency Water Well Project Area Location Map.

Chapter 2. Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

2.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the two alternatives analyzed in this EA. Alternative A is the No Action Alternative. Alternative B is the Proposed Action Alternative. Following the alternative descriptions section, the decision making process for advancing or eliminating alternatives is described.

2.2 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative includes not drilling a supplemental well and continued reliance on existing water sources for municipal water supply for the City of Carlsbad. Water supplies will likely continue to decline through the drought period. Municipal water supply may fall below projected water demand, resulting in potential water shortages. Water shortages may affect public health and safety, including water for sanitation and fire-fighting. The lack of adequate water could affect the City of Carlsbad's primary industry: tourism, and may result in economic decline for the City.

2.3 Proposed Action Alternative

Reclamation contractors would drill an approximately 750-foot deep water well into the Capitan Limestone geologic formation to tap into the Capitan subsurface aquifer. A supplemental water supply source would provide additional capacity and operational flexibility for the City of Carlsbad and would help maintain a municipal water supply during drought. The city has obtained a permit for a supplemental water well from the NMOSE.

Water produced by the proposed well would be pumped into the existing city water system pipeline and transported to the existing water treatment facility. The primary collection and distribution lines are already established, although a short segment of pipeline to connect the existing water system to the proposed well would be required (see Figure 1). This related action includes the construction of approximately 1 mile of 30-inch collector line within an existing pipeline easement to connect the proposed well to the existing infrastructure.

The well site is located on City-owned land outside of its municipal boundaries in Eddy County. The well site has been previously disturbed by construction of Well Number 10 in the mid 1950's. Because the well site is not within 5 miles of an incorporated area, no County zoning ordinance applies. A secondary power source in the form of a natural gas or diesel-powered generator would be provided as an emergency back-up in case of any future power outages.

The well would be placed on an existing well pad prepared by the City of Carlsbad. The well pad would be approximately 1 to 2 acres in size and would be accessed by an existing 12-foot wide native surface road. All drilling fluids and pumped test waters would be contained on the site. No water or drilling fluids would be allowed to flow into Sheep Draw. A storm water pollution prevention plan would be prepared and implemented by the drilling contractor. Any temporary retention structures would be built on previously disturbed land.

The proposed well would be 16 inches in diameter. The well would be carefully cased and sealed in the near-surface geology (e.g., the top 150-250 feet) with a 24-inch diameter casing to prevent any alteration of the near-surface water table.

2.4 Alternatives Considered But Eliminated from Detailed Analysis

Congressional authorization and funding for the Proposed Action Alternative is specifically for drought emergency municipal water wells. Therefore, no other alternatives are considered.

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Chapter 3. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences

3.1 Introduction

A review of the two alternatives presented in Chapter 2, in addition to a site visit by resource specialists, resulted in the identification of eleven environmental resources that either must be reviewed by law or that could be affected by either the Proposed Action Alternative or No Action Alternative. This chapter describes the existing conditions of the eleven environmental resources, as well as the potential effects of each alternative on those resources. Cumulative impacts and environmental commitments are also presented in this chapter. A summary of impacts by resource issue for each alternative is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Environmental Impacts by Resource for Each Alternative.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPONENT	ALTERNATIVE		DISCUSSION
	NO ACTION	PROPOSED ACTION	
Air Quality	No	No	Project area is not in a non-attainment zone.
Cultural and Archaeological Resources	No	No	Previously disturbed project location; no cultural resources are known to be present.
Environmental Justice	Yes	No	The "No action" would disproportionately affect poorer components of the community, who have fewer alternatives if water is scarce.
Farmlands, Prime/Unique	No	No	None present.
Federal and State listed threatened and endangered species or critical habitat	No	No	No suitable habitat. Species not present.
Floodplains	No	No	None present.
Hazardous Materials	No	No	None present.
Indian Trust Assets	No	No	None present.
Noxious Weeds	No	No	None present.
Soil Erosion	Yes	No	Previously disturbed project location.
Vegetation and Wildlife	No	No	No effect to important vegetation or wildlife species.
Visual Resources	No	Yes	Temporary construction impacts.
Water Resources	No	No	No effect to existing surface or groundwater resources.
Wetlands-Riparian Zones	No	No	None present.

3.2 Water Resources

There are no perennial, intermittent, or ephemeral drainages within the project area that would be affected. There are no jurisdictional wetlands located within the project area.

There are currently ten groundwater wells, owned by Carlsbad City, located within the surrounding area. No additional groundwater wells are located within the surrounding area. Currently nine of the ten wells are used to provide the municipal water supply for Carlsbad City under their existing water rights. The other existing city well is not properly functioning, and does not contribute to the Carlsbad City municipal water supply. The static groundwater level in this well is approximately 400 feet below surface grade. Water from the wells is pumped from the Capitan subsurface aquifer. The Capitan aquifer is a recharging aquifer and is of good quality in the Carlsbad Area (Uliana 2001).

No Action Alternative

There would be no effects on surface water resources under the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative the nine existing, functioning city wells would continue to pump groundwater from the area to supply water to Carlsbad City under their existing water rights.

Proposed Action Alternative

There would be no effects on surface water resources under the Proposed Action Alternative. The currently proposed well will be drilled to approximately 750 feet below the existing land surface into the Capitan aquifer. The proposed well will be used to replace the existing, non-functioning city well and will be used in conjunction with the functioning wells to supply water to Carlsbad City. No new impacts on groundwater resources in the area would be anticipated since the proposed well will withdraw water from the same aquifer as the existing wells. The proposed well will be used to supplement the Carlsbad City municipal water supply infrastructure. No additional water will be removed from the Capitan aquifer beyond what is currently being removed to supply Carlsbad City under their existing water rights.

3.3 Federal and State-Listed Species

Eleven Federally protected and 43 State protected species were identified for Eddy County (Appendix A, BISON-M 2008, NMNHP 2008). Based on specific habitat requirements for these species, the highly disturbed nature of the project area, and the lack of suitable and/or potentially suitable habitat, no State or Federally protected species are known to occur within the approximately 2-acre project area.

No Action Alternative

There would be no change to the existing conditions and no effects to State or Federally listed species under the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action Alternative

No suitable or potentially suitable habitat exists for any State or Federally listed species within the project area. A “no effect” determination for listed species has been made by a qualified wildlife biologist for the Proposed Action Alternative.

3.4 Vegetation and Wildlife

As reported by Bailey (1995), the project area lies within the Southwest Plateau/Plains Dry Steppe and Shrub province, which is generally characterized by arid grasslands in which shrubs and low trees grow. In New Mexico, this province is best described by xerophytic grasses such as blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) and buffalo grass (*Bouteloua dactyloides*); however, mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*) also grows in open stands among the grasses.

Mammal species common to the Southwest Plateau/Plains Dry Steppe and Shrub province include the Mexican ground squirrel (*Spermophilus mexicanus*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*), coyote (*Canis letrans*), skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), and various species of mice, rats, bats, rabbits, and other small mammals.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, existing vegetation, including native and non-native species, would remain in place and would not provide suitable habitat for most wildlife. Disturbance related vegetation species would likely persist and areas void of vegetation would likely be susceptible to erosion from wind and water.

Proposed Action Alternative

Activities associated with implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would not disturb portions of the landscape that are not currently highly disturbed. Native grasses and wildflowers would be seeded in areas disturbed by construction that are not needed for well operation to re-establish an appropriate vegetative cover. Although construction activities may displace existing wildlife temporarily, most animal species in the project area would be able to return after project completion. Some mortality of less mobile species would be expected as a result of construction, but not in quantities that would damage local populations.

3.5 Noxious Weeds

No populations of State-listed noxious weeds were observed in the project area during a recent site visit.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, no additional ground-disturbing activities would be undertaken. Therefore, there would be no effect on existing noxious weed infestations.

Proposed Action Alternative

Whenever land is disturbed, the potential exists for the intrusion and establishment of noxious weeds. The Proposed Action Alternative could disturb up to 2 acres of land, depending upon how much space is ultimately needed for construction and staging activities. To minimize the potential for the continued establishment and spread of State-listed and other noxious weeds, a revegetation plan would be implemented. In addition to re-seeding areas disturbed during construction, the introduction of noxious weed seeds would be minimized by a requirement that all equipment used on the project be pressure washed before arriving and leaving the site. As such, the potential for noxious weeds becoming established in the project area over time would be minimal.

3.6 Soil Erosion

Any activities that reduce or eliminate vegetation have the potential to result in soil erosion until vegetation is re-established. The project area has been disturbed as a result of past water well development and is currently surrounded by a region of ranching activities. Ranching (e.g., livestock grazing) and development (e.g., housing and infrastructure) activities often eliminate or reduce vegetation cover, even if only temporarily, and thus become a potential cause of soil erosion during periods of precipitation runoff. Some limited soil erosion at the project area was observed during recent site visits.

No Action Alternative

Erosion of existing soils within the project area would continue under the No Action Alternative until such time as the vegetation becomes re-established naturally.

Proposed Action Alternative

During construction, the removal of vegetation and disturbance of soil could result in localized soil erosion at the project area. However, standard construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be implemented to minimize runoff during construction. Consequently, most runoff would be contained within the active construction site. The re-establishment of native vegetation in the project area following construction would ultimately reduce soil erosion. Because the proposed project could result in the disturbance of more than 1 acre of land, a notice of intent (NOI) would be submitted by the contractor under the New Mexico Construction General Permit and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPP) would be prepared and implemented.

3.7 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act of 1970, as amended, established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) (40 CFR 1 Section 81.332) to protect the public from exposure to dangerous levels of several air pollutants. Eddy County is in Air Quality Control Region (AQCR) 155, also known as the Pecos-Permian Basin AQCR (NMED 2008). The AQCR 155 has been classified as an attainment area for all air pollutants identified in the NAAQS (eCFR 2008). Because of this classification, the proposed project is not subject to Environmental Protection Agency requirements for ambient monitoring. The project area is occasionally used by people driving utility vehicles, which results in the generation of a small amount of exhaust and fugitive dust during dry conditions.

No Action Alternative

There would be no effects to air quality under the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action Alternative

Fugitive dust generation from drilling and grading activities in the project area, along with exhaust emissions from heavy equipment and vehicles working on the project, are the only anticipated effects to air quality during construction. These temporary effects would not be expected to be significantly adverse. Fugitive dust would be suppressed by spreading water over disturbed areas where heavy equipment is working during dry conditions. Exhaust emissions from heavy equipment and vehicles working on the project would dissipate rapidly before leaving the project area. There would be no effects to air quality following completion of construction activities and re-establishment of vegetation in disturbed areas.

3.8 Cultural and Archaeological Resources

Reclamation conducted a check in the Archaeological Records Management Section (ARMS) and found no recorded sites within the proposed project site. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) also produced a report dated October 2, 2002. The proposed well pad site was previously surveyed and no cultural resources were identified.

A cultural resource survey and data recovery excavations were performed near the project area in 2001 and 2002, respectively, (Mesa Field Services 2002) as part of the environmental evaluation for installing the 30-inch collector line to service the City of Carlsbad's well Number 10. Four sites that represent significant cultural properties and are eligible for nomination into the National Register of Historical Properties (NRHP) were identified. The purpose of the data recovery excavations was to record and mitigate the portions of the sites to be affected by the proposed pipeline. The mitigation was completed by the BLM and Mesa Field Services in 2002.

No Action Alternative

There would be no effects to cultural or archaeological resources, or sacred sites, under the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action Alternative

There are no structures or sites eligible for the NRHP that would be affected by the Proposed Action Alternative. It has been determined that the Proposed Action Alternative would have no effect to cultural or archaeological resources due to the previous surveys and mitigation on the site. If cultural or archaeological resources are encountered during site construction or drilling activities, work will stop and the Reclamation Area Archaeologist will be notified immediately.

In addition, no sacred sites or traditional cultural properties are known to exist in the project area. However should consultation with Tribes result in the identification of any such sites or properties, then Reclamation would consult with the Tribes concerned to ensure no adverse effects result from the Proposed Action Alternative.

3.9 Indian Trust Assets (ITAs)

Indian Trust Assets or resources are defined as legal interests in assets held in trust by the U.S. Government for Native American Indian tribes or individual tribal members. Examples of ITAs are lands, minerals, water rights, other natural resources, money, or claims. An ITA cannot be sold, leased, or otherwise alienated without approval of the Federal government. Reclamation consultation with potentially affected Tribes and the Bureau of Indian Affairs has yielded no known ITAs within the project area.

No Action Alternative

There would be no effects to ITAs under the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action Alternative

Because there are no known ITAs within the project area, there would be no effects to ITAs under the Proposed Action Alternative.

3.10 Socioeconomics

According to the most recent data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Accounts (2008), the annual per capita income for the State of New Mexico in 2006 was \$29,725. The 2005 annual per capita income for Eddy County was \$29,132. According to the most recent data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2008), 38.8 percent of the residents of Eddy County were Hispanic or Latino, 1.6 percent were Black or African American, and 1.3 percent were American Indian or Alaska Native in the year 2000. There are no residences located in proximity to the project area.

No Action Alternative

There would be no effects to socioeconomics under the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action Alternative

Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would result in the creation of a small number of jobs for contractors during site construction and drilling activities. Construction and drilling activities are anticipated to take approximately 30 days to complete and would employ 2 to 3 individuals during that time period. Assuming materials would be purchased and workers would be employed from the Carlsbad City area, the Proposed Action Alternative would result in minor beneficial effects on the local economy.

3.11 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, requires that the effects on minority and low-income populations within a project area be given special consideration to determine if the proposed action would result in disproportionate adverse effects to their communities.

No Action Alternative

A water shortage can be expected to have an impact on the poorest members of a community first; those least able to afford alternative water sources or unable to relocate to areas without shortage. The No Action Alternative could lead to insufficient water for some members of the community during an emergency situation, and would likely impact those with the lowest incomes. Insufficient water may affect health, safety and welfare of the community's poor through lack of water for bathing, clothes washing, cleaning and fire-fighting.

Proposed Action Alternative

No adverse effects to low-income or minority populations are anticipated under the Proposed Action Alternative. Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would provide a supplemental water supply for the City of Carlsbad in times of drought, as well as an emergency water source during power outages.

3.12 Visual Resources

Visual quality in this portion of Eddy County varies somewhat, depending on the specific site in question and the viewer. In general, the regional landscape near the project area is well vegetated with upland plant species. Human-made features within this portion of the landscape are visible, such as roads, utility corridors, water tanks, and ranch houses. However, most of these features do not dominate the natural landscape. At a more site-specific level, a well house building, fencing, and ground disturbance from well pad development are visually prominent at the project area.

No Action Alternative

There would be no effects to visual resources under the No Action Alternative.

Proposed Action Alternative

Impacts of the proposed project include temporary construction effects: dust, noise, increased vehicle traffic to and from the site, and visual impacts of the drill rig and equipment. Once completed, the well and associated equipment would be housed in a small shed, and would blend with the surrounding area. None of these temporary impacts are significant on a local or regional scale.

3.13 Cumulative Impacts

No cumulative impacts from the proposed project are anticipated. This project, in combination with other planned projects in the area (e.g., one mile of 30-inch collector pipeline construction), would not be expected to result in any long-term adverse cumulative effects to identified resources. The short-term cumulative effects of construction activities would be small in the overall regional context and would be temporary in nature.

Permanent impacts include the effects on the Capitan Aquifer tapped by the well; the water produced from the proposed well would not be available to others. These effects were considered by the NMOSE in issuing a permit. The water produced would enter the city water system, and ultimately be released as effluent. There would be few, if any, operational impacts of the well on the natural environment. Because

the well supplements the existing City of Carlsbad water supply and is limited in volume by the NMOSE permit, it is unlikely to contribute to additional population growth in the area.

3.14 Environmental Commitments

- Should evidence of possible scientific, prehistoric, historic, or archeological data be discovered during the course of this action, work will cease at that location and the Reclamation archaeologist will be notified by phone (505-462-3644) immediately, with the location and nature of the findings. Care will be exercised so as not to disturb or damage artifacts uncovered during operations, and the proponents will provide such cooperation and assistance as may be necessary to preserve the findings for removal or other disposition by the Government. Any person who knows or has reason to know that he or she has inadvertently discovered human remains on Federal or tribal lands, must provide immediate telephone notification of the inadvertent discovery, with written confirmation, to the responsible Federal agency official with respect to Federal lands, and, with respect to tribal lands, to the responsible Indian tribe official. The requirement is prescribed under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (P.L. 101-601; 104 Stat. 3042) of November 1990 and National Historic Preservation Act, Section 110(a)(2)(E)(iii) (P.L. 102-575, 106 Stat. 4753) of October 1992.
- Native grasses and wildflowers will be seeded in areas disturbed by construction to re-establish vegetation. Only the amount of the proposed staging and drilling areas needed would be used or disturbed. Upon completion of stabilization activities, all work areas would be cleaned up and all materials and equipment removed.
- To minimize the potential for the establishment of State-listed and other noxious weeds, an aggressive revegetation plan will be implemented. In addition to seeding, the introduction of noxious weed seeds would be minimized by requiring that all project equipment be pressure washed before arriving and leaving the project area.
- To minimize soil erosion during rain storms, standard construction BMPs will be utilized to minimize runoff during construction activities.
- Fugitive dust will be suppressed by spreading water over disturbed areas where heavy equipment is working during dry conditions.

Chapter 4. Consultation and Coordination

This chapter presents the persons and agencies consulted as part of developing this EA. Copies of public and agency correspondence are contained in Appendix B.

4.1 Persons and Agencies Consulted

- Luis R. Camero, Director of Utilities Public Works, City of Carlsbad
- Ivan M. Abell, Water Department Superintendent, City of Carlsbad
- Jeff Sedberry, La Paloma Land & Cattle Company
- Bobby Jay, Tribal Administrator, Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Johnny Wauqua, Chairman, Comanche Tribal Business Committee
- Leigh Kuwanwisiwma, Director, Hopi Tribe Cultural Preservation Office
- John Sorrell, Hydrology, Pueblo of Isleta
- Levi Pesata, President, Jicarilla Apache Nation
- Billy Evans Horse, Chairman, Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma
- Carlton Palmer, President, Mescalero Apache Tribe
- Joe Shirley, President, Navajo Nation
- Frank Paiz, Governor, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
- Wallace Coffey, Chairman, Comanche Indian Tribe
- Jeff Houser, Chairman, Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Wayne Taylor, Jr., Chairman, Hopi Tribe
- Robert J. Benavides, Governor, Pueblo of Isleta
- George Daingkau, Kiowa NAGPRA Coordinator
- Earl Yeahquo, Chairman, Kiowa Business Committee
- Lawrence Morgan, Speaker, Navajo Nation Council
- Rick Casada, Cultural Resources Coordinator, Pueblo of Ysleta del Sur
- Donna Stern-McFadden, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Mescalero Apache Tribe

Chapter 5. List of Preparers

This chapter presents the individuals who contributed to the technical content of this EA. The document was produced by BIO-WEST, Inc., located in Logan, Utah, with project management and oversight provided by Reclamation staff from the Albuquerque Area Offices located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

5.1 BIO-WEST Staff Contributors

NAME	RESPONSIBILITY	QUALIFICATIONS	PARTICIPATION
Aaron Crookston	Planner and CAD Specialist	B.L.A. Landscape Architecture; 2 years professional experience.	Mapping and construction drawings, air quality analysis.
Chris Sands	Project Manager	B.L.A. Landscape Architecture, M.L.A. Landscape Architecture; 19 years professional experience.	Project management, document development, and visual analysis.
Mike Sipos	Wildlife Biologist	B.S. Wildlife Science, M.S. Wildlife Science; 9 years professional experience.	Threatened and Endangered species, wildlife, and vegetation analysis.
Wes Thompson	Hydro-geologist	A.S. Geology, B.S. Composite Sciences; 20 years professional experience.	Water resources analysis.
Sandra Turner	Chief Editor	B.S. English; 15 years professional experience.	Editorial oversight, proofreading, document design, and document formatting.

5.2 Bureau of Reclamation Staff Contributors

- Marsha Carra, Environmental Protection Specialist and NEPA Project Manager
- Chris Gorbach, Supervisory Civil Engineer
- Mark Hungerford, Archaeologist

Chapter 6. References

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APPENDIX A: THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES LISTS



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Database Query

Your **search terms** were as follows:

County Name

Eddy

Status

Federal: Endangered
Federal: Threatened
Federal: T & E by Similar Appearance
Federal: Warranted/Precluded
Federal: Proposed
Federal: Candidate
Federal: FWS Species of Concern
State NM: Endangered
State NM: Threatened

Habitat

'Select all'

53 species returned.

Taxonomic Group	# Species	Taxonomic Group	# Species
Fish	10	Molluscs	3
Reptiles	6	Coleoptera; beetles	1
Birds	25	Lepidoptera; moths and butterflies	1
Mammals	7		

Click the up- or down-arrows next to the column headers to sort the results.

Common Name ▲▼	Scientific Name ▲▼	County	Status
Catfish, Headwater	<i>Ictalurus lupus</i>	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Darter, Greenthroat	<i>Etheostoma lepidum</i>	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Gambusia, Pecos	<i>Gambusia nobilis</i>	Eddy	Federal: Endangered State NM: Endangered
Logperch, Bigscale	<i>Percina macrolepida</i> (Native pop.)	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Pupfish, Pecos	<i>Cyprinodon pecosensis</i>	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened

Redhorse, Gray	Moxostoma congestum	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Shiner, Bluntnose, Pecos	Notropis simus pecosensis (NM)	Eddy	Federal: Threatened State NM: Endangered
Shiner, Rio Grande	Notropis jemezianus	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Sucker, Blue	Cycleptus elongatus	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Endangered
Tetra, Mexican	Astyanax mexicanus	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Cooter, River, Western	Pseudemys gorzugi	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Lizard, Sand Dune	Sceloporus arenicolus	Eddy	Federal: Candidate State NM: Endangered
Rattlesnake, Rock, Mottled	Crotalus lepidus lepidus (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Kingsnake, Gray-banded	Lampropeltis alterna	Eddy	State NM: Endangered
Snake, Ribbon, Western	Thamnophis proximus diabolicus (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Snake, Water, Plainbelly	Nerodia erythrogaster transversa (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Endangered
Tyrannulet, Beardless, N.	Camptostoma imberbe ridgwayi (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Endangered
Black-Hawk, Common	Buteogallus anthracinus anthracinus (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Bunting, Varied	Passerina versicolor versicolor (NM); dickeyae (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Cormorant, Neotropic	Phalacrocorax brasilianus	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Cuckoo, Yellow-billed	Coccyzus americanus occidentalis (eastern pop)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Eagle, Bald	Haliaeetus leucocephalus alascanus (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Threatened

Falcon, Aplomado	Falco femoralis septentrionalis (NM)	Eddy	Federal: Endangered State NM: Endangered
Falcon, Peregrine	Falco peregrinus anatum	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Falcon, Peregrine, Arctic	Falco peregrinus tundrius	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Flycatcher, Willow, SW.	Empidonax traillii extimus	Eddy	Federal: Endangered State NM: Endangered
Goshawk, Northern	Accipiter gentilis atricapillus (NM,AZ); apache (NM,AZ)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Ground-dove, Common	Columbina passerina pallescens (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Endangered
Hummingbird, Broad-billed	Cyananthus latirostris magicus (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Hummingbird, Lucifer	Calothorax lucifer	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Kingbird, Thick-billed	Tyrannus crassirostris	Eddy	State NM: Endangered
Owl, Burrowing	Athene cunicularia hypugaea (NM,AZ)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Owl, Spotted, Mexican	Strix occidentalis lucida (NM,AZ)	Eddy	Federal: Threatened
Pelican, Brown	Pelecanus occidentalis carolinensis (NM)	Eddy	State NM: Endangered
Plover, Mountain	Charadrius montanus	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Plover, Piping	Charadrius melodus circumcinctus (NM)	Eddy	Federal: Threatened State NM: Threatened
Sparrow, Baird's	Ammodramus bairdii	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Tern, Black	Chlidonias niger surinamensis (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern

Tern, Least	<i>Sterna antillarum athalassos</i> (NM)	Eddy	Federal: Endangered State NM: Endangered
Vireo, Bell's	<i>Vireo bellii arizonae</i> (NM,AZ); <i>medius</i> (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Vireo, Gray	<i>Vireo vicinior</i>	Eddy	State NM: Threatened
Bat, Big-eared, Townsend's, Pale	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens</i> (NM,AZ)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Prairie Dog, Black-tailed	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus ludovicianus</i> (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Prairie Dog, Black-tailed, AZ	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus arizonensis</i> (NM,AZ)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Fox, Swift	<i>Vulpes velox velox</i> (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Gopher, Pocket, Guadalupe	<i>Thomomys bottae guadalupensis</i> (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Muskrat, Pecos River	<i>Ondatra zibethicus ripensis</i> (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Rat, Wood, White Sands	<i>Neotoma micropus leucophaea</i>	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
Hornshell, Texas	<i>Popenaias popeii</i>	Eddy	Federal: Candidate State NM: Endangered
Springsnail, Pecos	<i>Pyrgulopsis pecosensis</i>	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern Federal: Warranted/Precluded State NM: Threatened
Snail, Vertigo, Ovate	<i>Vertigo ovata</i>	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern State NM: Threatened
Beetle, Tiger, Guadalupe Mountains	<i>Cicindela politula petrophila</i> (NM)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern

Butterfly, Viceroy, Obsolete	Basilarchia archippus obsoleta (NM,AZ)	Eddy	Federal: FWS Species of Concern
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[Close Window](#)

NHNM Vegetation Species information

Common Name	Scientific Name	Fed Status	State Status
	<i>Castilleja laxa</i>		D
	<i>Aquilegia chrysantha</i> var. <i>chaplainei</i>		S
A Milk-vetch	<i>Astragalus waterfallii</i>		S
Berland Grape	<i>Vitis berlandieri</i>		D
Copper Zephyr Lily	<i>Zephyranthes longifolia</i>		D
Dune Unicorn-plant	<i>Proboscidea sabulosa</i>		S
Five-flower Rockdaisy	<i>Perityle quinqueflora</i>		D
Glass Mountain Coral-root	<i>Hexalectris nitida</i>		E
Great Sage	<i>Salvia summa</i>		S
Guadalupe Cliffdaisy	<i>Chaetopappa hersheyi</i>		S
Guadalupe Mescalbean	<i>Sophora gypsophila</i> var. <i>guadalupensis</i>		S
Guadalupe Needle Grass	<i>Stipa curvifolia</i>		D
Guadalupe Valerian	<i>Valeriana texana</i>		S
Gyp Ground Plum	<i>Astragalus gypsodes</i>		S
Gypsogenus Ringstem	<i>Anulocaulis gypsogenus</i>		D
Gypsum Gramma	<i>Bouteloua breviseta</i>		D
Gypsum Wild-buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum gypsophilum</i>	LT	E
Horse Crippler	<i>Echinocactus texensis</i>		D
Kuenzler's Hedgehog Cactus	<i>Echinocereus fendleri</i> var. <i>kuenzleri</i>	LE	E
Lee Pincushion Cactus	<i>Escobaria sneedii</i> var. <i>leei</i>	LT	E
Little Nipple-cactus	<i>Mammillaria heyderi</i>		D
Lyre-leaved Twistflower	<i>Streptanthus carinatus</i>		D
Marble Canyon Rockcress	<i>Sibara grisea</i>		S
Marsh Seedbox	<i>Ludwigia palustris</i>		D
Mckittrick Pennyroyal	<i>Hedeoma apiculata</i>		S
Ping-pong Ball Button-cactus	<i>Epithelantha micromeris</i>		D
Resurrection Plant	<i>Selaginella pilifera</i>		R
Riverbank Grape	<i>Vitis riparia</i>		D
Rock Crevice Milkwort	<i>Polygala rimulicola</i> var. <i>rimulicola</i>		S
Royal Red Penstemon	<i>Penstemon cardinalis</i> ssp. <i>regalis</i>		S
Saw-leaf Buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus serrata</i>		D
Scheer's Pincushion Cactus	<i>Coryphantha scheeri</i> var. <i>valida</i>		D
Scheer's Pincushion Cactus	<i>Coryphantha scheeri</i> var. <i>scheeri</i>		E
Silver Mock-orange	<i>Philadelphus argenteus</i>		D
Smooth Blue Aster	<i>Symphotrichum laeve</i>		D
Sneed Pincushion Cactus	<i>Escobaria sneedii</i> var. <i>sneedii</i>	LE	E
South Texas Globeberry	<i>Ibervillea tripartita</i>		D
Sparsely-flowered Jewelflower	<i>Streptanthus sparsiflorus</i>		S
Steyermark's Milkwort	<i>Polygala rimulicola</i>		S
Tall Prairie-gentian	<i>Eustoma exaltatum</i>		S
Texas Globeberry	<i>Ibervillea tenuisecta</i>		D
Texas Gourd	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i> var. <i>texana</i>		R
Tharp's Blue-star	<i>Amsonia tharpii</i>		E
Trans Pecos False Mountain-parsley	<i>Pseudocymopterus longiradiatus</i>		S
Trans-pecos Aletes	<i>Aletes filifolius</i>		D
Wright's Marsh Thistle	<i>Cirsium wrightii</i>		
Wright's Water-willow	<i>Justicia wrightii</i>		S
Yellowseed Fiddleleaf	<i>Nama xylopodum</i>		D

APPENDIX B: PUBLIC AND AGENCY CORRESPONDENCE

APR 03 2008

ALB-186
ENV-1.10

Honorable Paul Chinana
Governor, Pueblo of Jemez
P.O. Box 100
Jemez Pueblo, NM 87024

Subject: Consultation Invitation Regarding the Bureau of Reclamation's Drought Emergency Water Wells for Carlsbad, Eunice, and Hagerman, New Mexico

Dear Governor Chinana:

Reclamation is preparing three Environmental Assessments (EAs) for the funding of drought wells for the Cities of Carlsbad and Eunice, and the Town of Hagerman. The purpose of the drought well for the City of Carlsbad is to provide a supplemental source of municipal water for the city to fully utilize their existing water rights by providing additional capacity and operational flexibility within the Sheep's Draw well field during a drought emergency. In addition, the proposed well would be outfitted with a secondary power source (e.g. natural gas or diesel powered generator) that could be used during a power outage to maintain the City's municipal water supply during an emergency.

The emergency drought water wells will also provide the City of Eunice and the Town of Hagerman a supplemental source of municipal water. These projects are needed due to the severe drought now gripping the southwest United States and the potential for the drought to continue for the indeterminate future.

The EAs will evaluate the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts from these actions, from taking no action, and from any alternative actions that may be identified.

The purpose of this letter is to invite your tribe's involvement on a government-to-government basis to identify any concerns your tribe may have regarding the potential effects of the proposed drought wells on trust assets, cultural and biological resources, or tribal health and safety. Reclamation wants to ensure that you have an opportunity to help us identify and address any issues important to your tribe.

Reclamation will gladly provide any additional information needed by you or your staff about the proposed projects or to describe the EAs in further detail. For more information or to arrange a meeting, please contact Ms. Marsha Carra, Environmental Protection Specialist, at 505-462-3602.

Sincerely,

ARTHUR R. VALVERDE

for John R. Poland
Area Manager

Continued on next page.

(A)

Identical Letter Sent To:

Mr. Bobby Jay
Tribal Administrator, Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 1220
Anadarko, OK 73005

Honorable Wallace Coffey
Chairman, Comanche Indian Tribe
P.O. Box 908
Lawton, OK 73502

Mr. Johnny Wauqua
Chairman, Comanche Tribal Business Committee
P.O. Box 908
Lawton, OK 73502

Honorable Jeff Houser
Chairman, Fort Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
Route 2, Box 121
Apache, OK 73006

Ms. Leigh Kuwanwisiwma
Director, Hopi Tribe Cultural Preservation Office
P.O. Box 123
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039

Honorable Wayne Taylor, Jr.
Chairman, Hopi Tribe
P.O. Box 123
Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039

Mr. John Sorrell
Hydrology, Pueblo of Isleta
117ATribal Road 40
P.O. Box 1270
Isleta, NM 87022

Honorable Robert J. Benavides
Governor, Pueblo of Isleta
117ATribal Road 40
P.O. Box 1270
Isleta, NM 87022

Honorable Levi Pesata
President, Jicarilla Apache Nation
P.O. Box 507
Dulce, NM 87528

Mr. George Daingkau
Kiowa NAGPRA Coordinator
Route 2, Box 74
Ft Cobb, OK 73038

Honorable Billy Evans Horse
Chairman, Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 369
Carnegie, OK 73015

Honorable Earl Yeahquo
Chairman, Kiowa Business Committee
P.O. Box 369
Carnegie, OK 73015

Honorable Carlton Palmer
President, Mescalero Apache Tribe
P.O. Box 227
Mescalero, NM 88340

Mr. Lawrence Morgan
Speaker, Navajo Nation Council
P.O. Box 3390
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Honorable Joe Shirley
President, Navajo Nation
P.O. Box 9000
Navajo Tribal Hill
Window Rock, AZ 86515

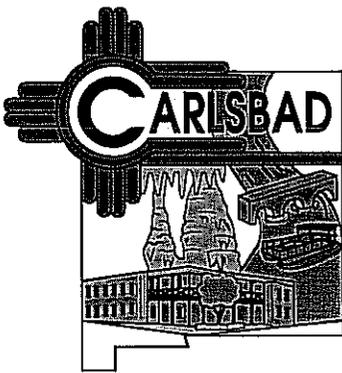
Mr. Rick Casada, Cultural Resources Coordinator
Pueblo of Ysleta del Sur
P.O. Box 17579-Ysleta Station
119 South Pueblo Road
El Paso, TX 79917

Honorable Frank Paiz
Governor, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo
P.O. Box 17579-Ysleta Station
119 South Pueblo Road
El Paso, TX 79917

Ms. Donna Stern-McFadden
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
P.O. Box 227
Mescalero, NM 88340

WBR:MCarra:ronchaga:03/26/08:505-462-3602

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BOB FORREST
MAYOR

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HARRY BURGESS
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

April 9, 2008

Mr. Jeff Sedberry
La Paloma Land & Cattle Company
9894 County Road 279
Breckenridge, TX 76424

Dear Mr. Sedberry:

This letter is to inform you of a new well being drilled for the City of Carlsbad at an existing location and on City-owned property in the Sheep Draw Wellfield. There will be artificial light and noise associated with the drilling on a 24-hour basis until the well is complete. Once the drilling begins, the expected completion time is approximately 30 days.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions concerning this project at 575/885-6313 or cell number 575/361-2304.

Sincerely,

Ivan M. Abell
Water Superintendent

COUNCILORS

Ward 1
PAUL C. AGUILAR
NICK G. SALCIDO

Ward 2
JEFF DIAMOND
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NED Z. ELKINS

Ward 4
BRAD DAY
NATHAN A. MCDONALD



THE NAVAJO NATION

ORIGINAL

JOE SHIRLEY, JR.
PRESIDENT

BEN SHELLY
VICE-PRESIDENT

April 10, 2008

Mr. John Poland, Area Manager
Bureau of Reclamation
555 Broadway Blvd. NE, Suite 100
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102-2352

Subject: Tribal Consultation Request. Proposing to construct Drought Emergency Water Wells for Carlsbad, Eunice, and Hagerman, New Mexico.

Dear Mr. Poland:

Our apology for an oversight and missing the deadline date of our response to your request, please note that in reference to your letter of April 03, 2008, the Historic Preservation Department – Traditional Culture Program (HPD-TCP) received a request for consultation regarding the above undertaking and/or project. After reviewing your consultation documents, HPD-TCP has concluded the proposed undertaking/project area **will not impact** any Navajo traditional cultural properties or historical properties.

However, if there are any inadvertent discoveries made during the course of the undertaking, your agency shall cease all operations within the project area. HPD-TCP shall be notified by telephone within 24 hours and a formal letter be sent within 72 hours. All work shall be suspended until mitigation measures/procedures have been developed in consultation with the Navajo Nation.

The HPD-TCP appreciates your agency's consultation efforts, pursuant to 36 CFR Pt. 800.1 (c)(2)(iii). Should you have additional concerns and/or questions, do not hesitate to contact me. My contact information is listed below.

Sincerely,

Mr. Tony Joe, Program Manager
Historic Preservation Department – Traditional Culture Program

Tel: 928.871.7688

Fax: 928.871.7886

E-mail: tonyjoe@navajo.org

TCP 08-575
File: Office file/chrono

7178-08

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