

Chapter 1. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1 Introduction:

The Greater Chimayó Mutual Domestic Water Consumers Association (GCMDWCA) of Chimayó, New Mexico (Rio Arriba and Santa Fe Counties) proposes to develop a community drinking water supply system. The project is a community water system consisting of water production facilities, water distribution, and storage facilities (storage tanks and associated pipe lines). A majority of the funding for the project will come from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Since funding is being provided by EPA, the proposed project is considered a federal action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Consequently, EPA prepared an Environmental Information Document (EID), dated September 2004, and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), dated August 4, 2005. The EID addresses the environmental conditions associated with supply wells, storage tanks, and distribution water lines that would be installed along existing roads in the public right-of-way.

Reclamation funds would also be provided by Public Law 108-354 for a portion of GCMDWCA's community water system. These funds would be considered a federal action for Reclamation requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Part 516 of the Department of the Interior's Departmental Manual (DM) pertains to NEPA compliance. 516 DM 3.6 states that an Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by another agency may be adopted if, upon independent evaluation by the responsible official, it is found to comply with the DM and relevant provisions of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) National Environmental Policy Act implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508.

Reclamation has reviewed EPA's EID and FONSI and has found that a section on Indian Trust Assets (ITA) has not been included. The Department of Interior's policy in 516 DM 3.13.5 requires an ITA section in the EID. As a result, this supplement to the EID has been prepared prior to the preparation of this FONSI.

1.2 Proposed Action

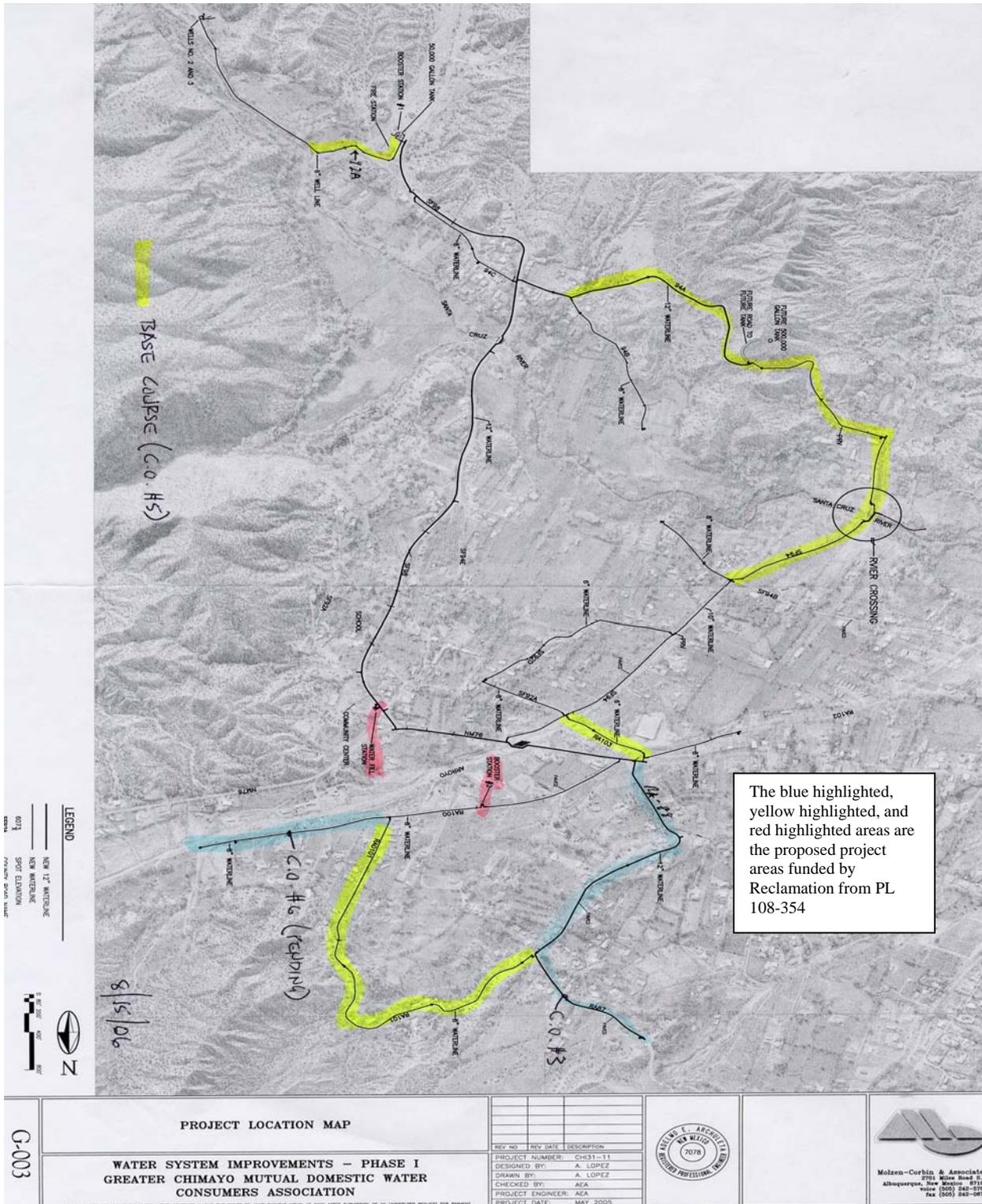
The Bureau of Reclamation, Albuquerque Area Office, proposes to provide funds for the following features of the proposed water development for GCMDWCA (All of the proposed features are identified on the map on page 2.):

- Water Loading Station (referred to as Emergency Storage in the EID).
- Booster Station No. 2 (referred to in the EID as part of the distribution system).
- 1450 feet of 8-inch water lines on road number RA 100.
- 4050 feet of 12-inch water lines on road numbers RA 88, 87, and 101.
- Apply base course on gravel roads numbered SF94, 94A, SF 92A, RA 101, and RA 103.

The following map shows the general location of the City of Chimayó New Mexico.



The following map/aerial photo shows the total layout of the Community of Chimayó (Chimayó) proposed water distribution system project analyzed in the EID.



1.3 Need for the Action

The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) consistently detected bacterial and nitrate contamination in drinking water supplies in Chimayó. In addition, Chimayó needs a water system for fire control. The EID prepared by Taschek Environmental Consulting for EPA describes in more detail the need for the proposed project.

1.4 Purpose of the Action

The objective of the proposed action would be to develop and construct a community water system that will provide safe and reliable drinking water for the current and future residents of Chimayó. Development of deeper and more reliable wells will improve the quality of water now and in the future. Reclamation would provide funds for a portion of this community water system described in Chapter 2 in more detail as the proposed action.

1.5 Relevant Statutes, Regulations, and other Plans

Reference is made to Public Law 108-354 attached in Appendix A.

1.6 Issues, Public Scoping

A public information meeting was held Tuesday, December 9, 2003, at the Holy Family Church in Chimayó. Information regarding this public meeting is found in the EID.

Chapter 2. ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Description of the No Action Alternative

If no funding would be provided for the construction of a water system, no additional impacts to the environment would take place.

2.2 Description of the Proposed Action Alternative

GCMDWCA would construct the following portions of the community water system with Reclamation funds (refer to the map on page 2):

- Water Loading Station (referred to as Emergency Storage referred to here in the EID)

Chimayó would construct a twelve foot square concrete block building inside a locked six foot high chain link fence. This station would allow residents without water to access a source of potable water.

The station would be located in the Benny Chavez Community Center parking lot adjacent to County Road SF 98 (refer to Appendix B).