

PECOS RIVER SUPPLEMENTAL WATER EA NEPA PROCESS FACT SHEET

What is NEPA?

- The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 establishes a basic framework for encouraging environmental protection in the United States.
- There are two primary objectives of NEPA:
 1. Ensure that agencies consider every significant aspect of a proposed project's environmental impact.
 2. Inform and involve the public of potential impacts and alternatives.
- The NEPA process is a set of activities to gather information on, analyze, and document the potential environmental effects of the proposed project.

When is the NEPA Process Required?

- NEPA is required when a Federal action is taken that may have impacts on the human and natural environment. Federal actions are those that require Federal funding, permits, policy decisions, facilities, equipment, or employees.

Lead and Cooperating Agencies

- The Bureau of Reclamation is the lead federal agency for the action and will make the final decision on the action.
- Cooperating agency include the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NM Department of Game and Fish, and Fort Sumner Irrigation District. The US Army Corps of Engineers and Carlsbad Irrigation District were also invited to be cooperating agencies.

What environmental documentation will be prepared?

- The Bureau of Reclamation will prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) addressing the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts from the proposed action. To ensure consistency and to avoid duplication of efforts, the EA will be tiered to the Carlsbad Project Water Operations and Water Supply Conservation EIS, June 2006.

How will the public be involved in the NEPA Process for this project?

- Two major opportunities for the public to become involved in the Pecos River Supplemental Water EA are: (1) at the beginning of the NEPA process during the public scoping period, and (2) after the Draft EA has been prepared.
- During the scoping period, two public meetings will be conducted: November 15th in Carlsbad, New Mexico, and on November 16th in Fort Sumner, New Mexico.
- Written comments, including letters, faxes, or e-mails, will be accepted throughout the process; however, the scoping period officially ends on December 1, 2006.
- The Draft EA will be available for a 30-day public review and comment period, likely beginning in February or March of 2007.

Where do we send comments?

- Written comments should be addressed to:
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