



## CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM (CWSRF)

### FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FNSI)

TO: All Interested Citizens, Government Agencies and Public Groups

In accordance with the Nebraska Clean Water State Revolving Fund environmental review process, which is based on the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the proposed agency action below.

This information reviews the environmental impact likely from a project. This project is planned to be federally funded through your tax dollars; therefore, you are entitled to take part in its review. If you have concerns about the environmental impact of this project, please provide them at this time. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality encourages public input in this decision-making process.

PROJECT NAME:	Wastewater Treatment Facilities Improvements Benkelman, Nebraska
APPLICANT:	City of Benkelman
COUNTY:	Dundy County
POPULATION:	953
CWSRF PROJECT NUMBER:	C318002
TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT:	\$1,400,000
POTENTIAL CWSRF LOAN AMOUNT:	\$1,000,000
POTENTIAL CWSRF PRINCIPAL FORGIVENESS:	\$150,000
POTENTIAL NDEQ SMALL TOWN GRANT:	\$250,000

The City of Benkelman is located in the south-central portion of Dundy County in the extreme southwest portion of Nebraska and is located approximately four miles north of the Kansas State line on Highway 34. The 2010 census population was 953 and the design population for the year 2037 is 953.

The Benkelman wastewater collection and treatment system includes one lift station, gravity sewers and a three-cell lagoon system. The wastewater collection system consists of mostly 8-inch vitrified clay pipe. The collection system drains by gravity to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and "E" Street East, then crosses beneath the railroad tracks and continues south to the lift station that is located at the existing wastewater treatment facility.

The original 2-cell lagoon facility and lift station were constructed in 1964 and a third cell was added in 1987. The 3-cell lagoon system which has a total surface area of 17.6 acres was designed as a controlled discharge system. The City's lagoon system is unable to consistently meet NPDES discharge limits for

BOD, TSS and ammonia and on occasion E Coli. The City and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality entered into a consent decree on January 12, 2016 that requires the City to undertake and complete upgrades and improvements to the wastewater treatment facility by April 30, 2020 that will bring the facility into compliance with permit conditions and Nebraska Title 119.

The City has collected extensive influent flow recording data from the past several years. A design flow of 90,000 gallons/day or 95 gallons per capita per day is based on a design population of 953. The proposed project consists of replacement of the existing lift station with a new lift station with a generator and new controls that will connect the proposed lift station to the existing water treatment plant SCADA system. A fourth lagoon cell with a surface area of 6.5 acres will be added to the existing 3-cell lagoon system. The 4-cell lagoon system will have a total surface area of 24.1 acres and is designed as a complete retention lagoon wastewater treatment facility. Expansion of the existing facility to a complete retention facility will eliminate the need to discharge, therefore an NPDES permit and regular monitoring will not be necessary.

The project is eligible for financing through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and is included in the funding list of FY2019 Intended Use Plan. The City of Benkelman is eligible for a 20-year loan at an interest rate of 1.50%. In addition to principal and interest payments, an administrative fee of 1.0 percent of the loan balance will be assessed each year. Benkelman is eligible for a small town grant and principal forgiveness.

Sewer use fees will be pledged to repay the loan. The sewer rate for residential customers in Benkelman is \$16.50 per month (for 5,000 gallons of potable water use in the winter quarter). Sewer rates will need to be increased to \$27.38/month in order to pay for the operation & maintenance of the sewer utility, and the estimated debt service due to the proposed project.

A number of Federal, State and local agencies were asked to review the project. At the request of the Nebraska State Historic Society, a survey was conducted by a qualified archaeologist. The survey concluded that there are no known historical or archaeological resources at the proposed construction site. The Corps of Engineers (COE) determined that there may be "waters of the U.S." located at the project site which would be subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The COE indicated that the need for a 404 permit would be determined once design of the proposed project is complete. The Nebraska Department of Natural Resources determined that the project is located in the floodplain. The top of the dike of the proposed lagoon will be constructed one foot above the 100-year floodplain elevation. Temporary impacts that may be caused by construction include noise and dust and a limited potential for soil erosion and fuel and oil spills. No wastewater bypasses are expected during construction.

A public hearing to discuss the project was held on May 21, 2018. There was no opposition expressed at the public hearing. The project will have a positive impact on the environment.

The review did not indicate a significant negative environmental impact would result from the proposed action. No threatened or endangered species or

recorded historical or archaeological sites will be affected by construction. The construction documents will specify storm water pollution controls and protection of nesting migratory birds. A floodplain development permit will be obtained from the local floodplain administrator. The project is expected to reduce potential odor problems. No segment of the community's population will be impacted disproportionately by the project.

This action is taken on the basis of a careful review of the facility plan, the environmental information document, the environmental assessment, and other supporting data, which are on file in the office of the NDEQ. These are available for public review upon request. A copy of the environmental assessment is attached. The NDEQ will not take any administrative action on the project for at least 30 calendar days from the date shown below. Persons disagreeing with the above environmental decision may submit comments to the NDEQ during this period.

Signed this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of July, 2018.

Sincerely,



Jim Macy  
Director

JM/gmb

Attachments:      Environmental Assessment  
                             Distribution List  
                             Map