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CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

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 funded wholly or in part 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: New UV Disinfection System and Sewer Collection System Improvements

APPLICANT: City of Bassett, Nebraska

COUNTY: Rock

POPULATION: 619 (2010) Census)

CWSRF PROJECT NUMBER: C317561

TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT: \$850,000

ESTIMATED CWSRF LOAN AMOUNT: \$600,000

ESTIMATED CWSRF PRINCIPAL FORGIVENESS: \$250,000

The City of Bassett, Nebraska, is planning an upgrade to their wastewater treatment facility and to their wastewater collection system. The city has applied for financial assistance through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) loan program to build the project.

On July 1, 2011 Bassett's wastewater treatment facility's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit NE0112666 was issued with new effluent limits on E. coli during the annual disinfection season of May 1 to September 30. Currently, the facility has no disinfection prior to effluent being discharged to the North Fork of the Elkhorn River. This project will add a ultra violet (UV) disinfection unit prior to the discharge to the North Fork. The disinfection system will be comprised of two banks of UV modules located in series in a concrete channel. The system will be capable of disinfecting a peak flow of up to 0.678 million gallons per day. Additional collection system repairs are also included in this project.

The City of Bassett's collection system also has had a history of high infiltration and inflow. This has caused hydraulic overload at the wastewater treatment facility and may have contributed to violations of their discharge permit limitations. Inspections of the collection system identified significant areas of cracking, offsets, and root intrusion. In addition, approximately 15 blocks of

reinforced concrete pipe (RCP) exist in the sanitary collection system. These are susceptible to crown corrosion which can also allow inflows from groundwater.

The project will install approximately 5,000 linear feet of liner in the damaged sewers, which will function as a structural replacement for the existing pipe. The construction will slip line the pipe and not require excavation to replace the existing pipe. Work will be accomplished from existing manholes and existing service line connections will be cut into the new liner once the liner is in place. Only temporary interruption of service will occur for sewer users affected as the liner pipe is installed. Also approximately 2,500 linear feet of RCP will be replaced by new 8 inch PVC pipe primarily in rocked alleys where open trench construction can more easily take place.

Also included in the project is rehabilitation of existing brick manholes in the sanitary collection system. During visual inspections the brick manholes were noticed to be in poor condition particularly in low areas of the City and susceptible to infiltration. Approximately 25 brick manholes will be replaced by precast concrete manholes. In addition, manhole rings and covers with gaskets and inflow dishes will be installed on ring and covers which are susceptible to inflow.

The project is eligible for financing through the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) and is currently found on the FY2012 priority list ranked at 40 points. Eligible costs includes engineering and inspection of the project, plus system wide smoke testing is planned and installation of groundwater monitoring wells to help define which sewer lines are under the water table at wet times of the year. Bassett's median household income is \$32,361, qualifies them for 50% principal forgiveness up to a ceiling of \$250,000 and a matching 20-year loan at a program interest rate of 2.5 percent. In addition to principal and interest payments, an administrative fee of 1 percent of the loan principal balance would be assessed each year. Forgiveness funds are dependent on availability at the time of loan closing.

An advertised public hearing was held on the improvement project on June 8, 2011 at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting held at City Hall. The Engineer presented the findings of his September 2011 Facility Plan Report. The Engineer outlined the future treatment plant improvements and the collection system repairs.

Sewer use fees would be pledged to repay the loan. Current residential sewer use rates are a metered rate of \$12.00 base plus \$2.75 per month per 1,000 gallons. The City of Bassett has approximately 432 combined residential and commercial sewer connections. Sewer rates would need to be raised by \$9.40 per month to cover the debt service and 10% coverage requirement. This would equate to a average residential sewer rate of approximately \$35.00 per month for typical winter water use of 5,000 gallons per month.

The project will have a positive impact on the environment. The project will result in continued wastewater treatment of sewage flows with less infiltration and inflow and a lower risk of blockage or failure of the sewer lines, which could result in backups of untreated sewage into homes. The project will construct facilities to disinfect Bassett's wastewater discharge to North Fork of the Elkhorn River which will be operated during the recreation season.

The proposed project was reviewed for eligibility for a categorical exclusion from NEPA review specified in 40 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 6.204. The project meets all criteria described in

the above reference and was determined that this project is eligible for categorical exclusion. Consequently, a preliminary decision has been made that a Finding of No Significant Impact will not be prepared. Justification for granting the categorical exclusion includes:

1. The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect federally listed threatened or endangered species of their critical habitat. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated initial concern on net depletion to the lower Platte River system and its impact on the Pallid Sturgeon. Upon further review no net depletions could be estimated.
2. The proposed action is not know or expected to significantly affect national natural landmarks or any property with nationally significant historic, architectural, prehistoric archeological or cultural value, including but not limited to, property listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
3. The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect environmentally important natural resource areas as wetlands, floodplains, prime farmland, wild and scenic rivers, and significant fish or wildlife habitat. The project sites are not located in the designated 100-year flood plain for the City of Bassett
4. Comments from the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District stated that institu soils are very limited for shallow excavations due to shallow depth to the saturated zone and unstable excavation walls. The construction specifications will require the Contractor to be responsible for work site safety and properly dewater and shore or lay back trench walls if needed.
5. The proposed action is not known or expected to cause significant public controversy about a potential environmental impact of the proposed action.

This action is taken on the basis of careful review of the application and other supporting data, which are on file in the office of the NDEQ. These are available for public review upon request. Persons having a comment on this categorical exclusion determination are encouraged to submit such comments directly to Tom Fuenning, Review Engineer, of the Technical Assistance Section of NDEQ, who can be reached at (402) 471-4989 or email: tom.fuenning@nebraska.gov.

Signed this 21st day of February, 2012.

Sincerely,



Michael J. Linder
Director

MJL/tsf

Attachments:

Distribution List
Maps

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DISTRIBUTION LIST

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Bassett Rock Co. Leader
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Bassett, NE 68714-0488
(Public Information Only not for Public Notice)

FIGURE 10-1 SEWER CIP LINER LOCATIONS & SEWER REPLACEMENT LOCATIONS

