

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Coastal Tijuana Wastewater Collection Improvement Projects

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering authorizing the award of a Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF) grant to the Comisión Estatal de Servicios Públicos de Tijuana (CESPT), the local utility for the cities of Tijuana and Playas de Rosarito, for construction of wastewater collection lines to serve existing communities in southwestern Tijuana that lack adequate wastewater disposal. Tijuana, a municipality comprised of more than 1.5 million people, is located adjacent to the U.S.-Mexican border on the Pacific coast south of the City of San Diego, CA.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

The purpose of the proposed action is to address the environmental and public health risks associated with inadequate collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater. The proposed action will protect public health by providing appropriate wastewater collection to some 2,700 residents that currently lack access to this service. Residents in the communities currently use latrines or open ditches for wastewater disposal. The proposed action will significantly reduce or eliminate the use of inadequate wastewater disposal practices by providing collection service and conveying the wastewater flows to wastewater treatment plants. This will result in improved environmental and sanitation conditions.

The proposed action will extend the wastewater collection systems to communities within the municipality of Tijuana that currently lack access to these services. The proposed action consists of installing about 8 miles (nearly 13,300 meters) of wastewater collection (sewer) lines ranging from 8 to 15 inches (20 to 38 centimeters) in diameter. Raw wastewater generated by these communities is estimated at 0.12 million gallons per day (5.5 liters per second). All wastewater collected by the new sewer lines will receive secondary treatment prior to discharge in Mexico to the Pacific Ocean. Treatment will be provided at the existing San Antonio de los Buenos wastewater treatment plant and the Tecolote La Gloria wastewater treatment plant currently under construction.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND CONDITIONS

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), EPA has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzes the potential transboundary environmental impacts of the proposed action. After considering a wide range of regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors, the EA did not identify any significant impacts to the environment that would result from the implementation of the proposed wastewater collection system improvements.

Environmental impacts in Mexico are addressed in the *Manifestación de Impacto Ambiental*, which was prepared in accordance with the environmental impact review process of the Secretaría de Protección al Ambiente de Baja California. This analysis

supports a determination that the proposed infrastructure project will not have a significant adverse impact on human health and the environment in Mexico.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The EA is on file, along with other project materials, and is available for public inspection at the EPA Region 9 office in San Francisco, California. This EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) can also be viewed on-line on the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder/infrastructure> and on the Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) website at www.cocef.org. Copies of the EA are also available for public review at the EPA San Diego Border Office, 610 West Ash Street, Suite 905, San Diego (telephone: (619) 235-4765).

Interested persons, including those who disagree with this proposal, may submit comments to EPA Region 9 within 30 calendar days from the day this document is issued. No administrative action will be taken on this proposed project prior to the expiration date of this comment period. Comments, via letter, fax or email, should be sent to Susan Cox at the address listed below:

Susan Cox (WTR-4)
U.S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
Telephone (415) 972-3555
Fax (415) 947-3537
Email cox.susan@epa.gov

After EPA assesses any comments received, those comments, EPA responses, and this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) will be forwarded to the Regional Administrator for review and signature. If this FNSI is signed by the Regional Administrator, it will not be re-circulated for review but will be available to any individual upon request.

FINDING

After review of the EA and any comments received, EPA has determined that the proposed Coastal Tijuana wastewater collection improvement projects will not have a significant impact on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared for this project.

Wayne Nastri
Regional Administrator

Date