



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 9

75 Hawthorne Street

San Francisco, California 94105-3901

Mail Code: WTR-4

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**Expansion of Wastewater Collection and Treatment Systems
San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora, Mexico**

PROJECTS 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 City of San Luis Rio Colorado, for construction of wastewater collection lines and expansion of the community's wastewater treatment plant to serve existing residents that lack adequate wastewater treatment and disposal. San Luis Rio Colorado, a municipality comprised of more than 150,000 people, is located in the northwestern part of the State of Sonora, Mexico, on the U.S./Mexico border, adjacent to the town of San Luis, Arizona.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

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 and treatment to approximately 45 thousand residents that now rely on cesspools or open ditches for wastewater disposal. The proposed action consists of the installation of approximately 65 thousand linear meters of laterals and subcollectors, a lift station and force main with a capacity of 410 lps and a 200 lps (4.6 MGD) expansion of the wastewater treatment plant. The expansion of services will result in the collection and treatment of around 140 lps (3.2 MGD) of raw wastewater that would otherwise be discharged untreated to the environment. The wastewater treatment plant expansion will consist of the addition of a third lagoon system module to the facility. The treatment plant's effluent will be directed to infiltration basins for aquifer recharge instead of the current process, which discharges to a local irrigation canal. The proposed action will significantly reduce the use of inadequate wastewater disposal practices in San Luis Rio Colorado by expanding collection, conveyance and treatment services from 49% to 73% of the community, resulting in improved environmental and sanitation conditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES AND CONDITIONS

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), EPA has prepared a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) that supplements the *Environmental Assessment of the Effect on San Luis, Arizona by the Proposed Construction of a Wastewater Treatment Plant and Improvements to the Wastewater Collection System for San Luis Rio Colorado* (EA), which was prepared by EPA

in January, 2000. The purpose and scope of the SEA is limited to cataloging the changes that have been made in the project's design since the original assessment was written and detailing the potential impacts that may occur as a result of those changes. After considering a wide range of regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors, the SEA did not identify any significant impacts to the environment that would result from the implementation of the modified wastewater collection system and treatment plant improvements.

A separate *Manifestación de Impacto Ambiental* (MIA) document prepared for this project evaluates the environmental impacts of proposed federal action in Mexico.

PUBLIC REVIEW

The SEA is on file, along with other project materials (including the January, 2000 EA), and is available for public inspection at the EPA Region 9 office in San Francisco, California. This SEA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) can also be viewed on-line on the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/region9/border> 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 office of the San Luis, AZ City Clerk, 765 N. First Ave., San Luis, AZ 85349 ph. 928-341-8520. 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, which ends June 3, 2007. Comments, via letter, fax or email, should be sent to Thomas Konner at the address listed below:

Thomas Konner (WTR-4)
U.S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
Telephone (415) 972-3408
Fax (415) 947-3537
Email konner.thomas@epa.gov

After EPA assesses any comments received, those comments, EPA responses, and this 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 SEA and any comments received, EPA has determined that the proposed wastewater collection and treatment improvements project for San Luis Rio Colorado will not have a significant impact on the environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared for this project.

Wayne Natri
Regional Administrator

Date