

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Project Name: Water System Improvement Project

Project Proponent: Walker River Paiute Tribe

The Walker River Paiute Tribe (Tribe) will receive funding from the United States (US) Department of the Interior (DOI) for improvement of the Walker River Paiute Reservation (Reservation) drinking water system. The Proposed Action to develop the Water System Improvement Project (Project) would allow the Tribe to install, operate, and maintain a new approximately 20-foot-wide, 27,570-foot-long permanent right-of-way (ROW) for a new water line and a 410,000-gallon water tank in and around the town of Schurz, Nevada on the Reservation in Mineral County, Nevada. The Project would occur across 24.8 acres in and around Schurz entirely within the Reservation, between Yerington and Walker Lake in Mineral County, Nevada. The Project would follow along existing utility and ROWs to the maximum extent feasible and within pre-disturbed areas such as existing, unpaved access roads, agricultural fields, beneath bermed and landscaped areas immediately alongside roadways, or within existing easements through residential areas. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT), and Mineral County issued encroachment permits would be required.

Based on the attached Final Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project dated September 2024, it has been determined that the Proposed Action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required (40 Code of Federal Regulation [CFR] 1508.13). This determination is supported by the following findings:

- The Final EA sufficiently analyzed all resources that would be affected in accordance with the 2012 Indian Affairs National Environmental Policy Act Guidebook (59 IAM 3-H). See Final EA Section 3.0, pages 3-19.
- The Final EA discloses the environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and No Action Alternative. See Final EA Section 3.0, pages 3-16.
- The Proposed Action was determined to have no adverse effect on cultural resources. The Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) concurred with this finding (Scott 2023). See Final EA Section 3.5, page 10 and Appendix D.
- The Proposed Action will have no effect on Endangered Species Act-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species (Stantec 2023). See Final EA Section 3.4, pages 8-10 and Appendix C.
- The Proposed Action will not have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on human health or environmental effect on minority and low-income populations (Executive Order 12898); and will not adversely affect Indian Trust Assets (Executive Order 3175). See Final EA Section 3.8, pages 11-13.
- The Proposed Action is not anticipated to adversely contribute to cumulative environmental effects. See Final EA Section 4.0, page 16-19.
- The Final EA provides references to all environmental documents related to the Project. See Final EA Section 6.0, pages 21-22. Specific references to other environmental documents used to develop the Final EA include:
Scott, L. 2023. Water Improvement Project Determination Letter. Walker River Paiute Tribe. April 20, 2023.
Stantec Consulting Services Inc. (Stantec). 2023. Biological Desktop Assessment Results. Water System Improvement Project Mineral County, Nevada. April 27, 2023

The Tribe is committed to install, operate, and maintain the Project in ways that minimize impacts to the environment. While installation, operation, and maintenance activities on the Project the Tribe and its contractors would implement the mitigation measures that are described in pages 3-19 of the Final EA.

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Colleen LaBelle, Superintendent
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Western Nevada Agency

Date