

September 15, 2021

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

Consistent with the environmental review process adopted by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) for projects funded through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Program, specifically 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 371.42, and with the terms and conditions of the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S. Code § 4321, *et seq.*, the Executive Administrator of the TWDB has determined the specific project elements identified below may be exempted from further pre-design environmental review:

Gordon, Palo Pinto County, Texas
TWDB DWSRF Project Number 62862
Water System Improvement Project
Total Financial Assistance: \$901,323 (L1001150, LF1001149)

Pursuant to the environmental review requirements of 31 TAC Chapter 371, Subchapter E, the staff of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) conducted an initial review of the water system improvements project proposed by the City of Gordon (City), Palo Pinto County, north-central Texas. The City provides potable water service to customers throughout the community. The City's population is 470 and is projected to grow to 527 by 2040, a 12 percent increase.

The City has been cited by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for deficiencies in its water system and is currently operating under an enforcement action for not maintaining the required minimum water treatment capacity of 0.6 gallon per minute per connection. The City also has been cited for failing to maintain sufficient pressure throughout the water system and not providing adequate metering and sampling of the backwash from the filters at the water treatment plant. In addition, the City's water system is experiencing significant water losses related in part to a deteriorated and inefficient metering system.

To address these issues, the City plans to; replace 5,300 feet of existing water transmission pipelines with new 6- to 8-inch diameter pipes in the same easements; and install radio-read meters at customer connections. In addition, the City would implement plumbing, electrical, and control improvements at the treatment facility to utilize microfiltration equipment from a companion TWDB-funded project, 62724. Completion of these projects would increase system capacity and performance, correct operational deficiencies, reduce water losses, and improve metering and customer billing.

The City applied to the TWDB for funding from the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund for project planning, design, and construction, in the amount of \$901,323. The TWDB

Gordon, Palo Pinto County
TWDB Project Number 62862
Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
Water System Improvements Project

committed the funds on September 3, 2020, and the City closed the loans on December 10, 2020.

The City used some of the planning funds to conduct an initial assessment of the project's environmental impact and determined the project was eligible for categorical exclusion from a full environmental review. All construction would occur in areas disturbed previously by comparable construction and maintenance activities. There are no known critical habitats or local occurrences of threatened or endangered species, Waters of the United States including wetlands, archeological sites, or other environmentally sensitive resources, or permitting issues that would preclude completion of this project. The City is a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program and none of the proposed construction sites are in Special Flood Hazard Areas (100-year floodplains).

After reviewing the information provided by the City and other pertinent records, the staff of the TWDB concurred with the City's conclusions and recommended issuance of a Categorical Exclusion for this project. The Director of Regional Water Project Development of the TWDB hereby issues this finding of Categorical Exclusion, which shall be revoked if it is found that:

- (1) the project no longer meets the requirements for a Categorical Exclusion as a result of changes in scope, design, or location;
- (2) the project involves extraordinary circumstances as described in 31 TAC § 371.42; or
- (3) the project may violate or has violated federal, state, local, or tribal laws.

The project must comply with the following environmental conditions:

- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of cultural resources; and
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of threatened and endangered species.

Records supporting this finding are on file in the offices of the TWDB and are available for public examination upon request. Comments regarding this determination may be submitted to Director, Regional Water Project Development, Texas Water Development Board, P.O. Box 13231, Austin, Texas 78711-3231; or via email to RWPD-Environmental@twdb.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

T. Clay Schultz, Ph.D., Director
Regional Water Project Development

Attachments

TCS/SCC/