



Rural Development

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Anchorage Office

Rural Development

510 L Street
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Anchorage, AK
99501

City of Bethel: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

Agency: Rural Utilities Service, USDA

Voice 907.271.2424
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Action: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact.

Summary: The USDA Rural Utilities Service has made a finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to the City of Bethel for the construction of a piped water and sewer system in the Avenues area in Bethel, Alaska.

Further Information: To obtain copies of the EA and FONSI, or for further information contact: Robert Chambers, WEP Program Specialist, Rural Development at 510 L Street, Suite 410, Anchorage, AK 99501. Robert.chambers@ak.usda.gov or (907) 271-2424 extension 101.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the following newspaper(s): Delta Discovery on July 18 and 25. A 15-day comment period was announced in the newspaper notice(s). The EA was also available for public review at the USDA Rural Development office and website as well as Bethel City Hall office. There have been no responses to date.

Based on its EA, commitments made by the City of Bethel, and public comments received, Rural Utilities Service has concluded that the project would have no significant impact (or no impacts) to water quality, wetlands, floodplains, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

The City of Bethel intends to seek financial assistance from USDA, Rural Utilities Service (RUS)] for construction and infrastructure improvements. The proposed action consists of replacing individual water and sewer flush and haul tanks by constructing an above ground piped water and sewer system tying into existing water and sewer mains. The proposed project is located in 'the Avenues' neighborhood, generally located between 3rd Avenue and 7th Avenue between Ridgcrest Drive and Main Street. RUS has assessed the environmental impacts of this proposal and determined that the location of construction activity will convert or effect a floodplain or critical action floodplain. In accordance with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management and USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy, the Agency is notifying the interested public of this land conversion. It has been determined that there is no practicable alternative to avoiding this conversion or effect and that there is a significant need for the proposal.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (PDF), found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

The City of Bethel intends to seek financial assistance from USDA, Rural Utilities Service (RUS)] for construction and infrastructure improvements. The proposed action consists of replacing individual water and sewer flush and haul tanks by constructing an above ground piped water and sewer system tying into existing water and sewer mains. The proposed project is located in 'the Avenues' neighborhood, generally located between 3rd Avenue and 7th Avenue between Ridgecrest Drive and Main Street. RUS has assessed the environmental impacts of this proposal and determined that the location of the Avenues will convert or effect a wetland(s). In accordance with Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and USDA Departmental Regulation 9500-3, Land Use Policy, the Agency is notifying the interested public of this land conversion. It has been determined that there is no practicable alternative to avoiding this conversion or effect and that there is a significant need for the proposal.

The proposed project will have no adverse effect on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof. The proposed project would not disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations.

For information regarding this notice, contact Robert Chambers, WEP Program Specialist, Rural Development at 510 L Street, Suite 410, Anchorage, AK 99501 or (907) 271-2424 extension 101. Any person interested in commenting on this decision should submit comments to the address above by August 7, 2018.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed project have been identified. Therefore, RUS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), and USDA Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the project.

RUS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been adequately addressed. RUS's federal action would not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.

Dated: July 30, 2018