



**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR  
DRY PRAIRIE RURAL WATER AUTHORITY  
OPHEIM MAINLINE PROJECT – SCHEDULE 1**

**TO: ALL INTERESTED PERSONS**

Date: May 3, 2021  
Action: Water System Improvements Project  
Location of Project: Valley and Daniels Counties, Montana  
DEQ/DWSRF Funding: To Be Determined  
Total Project Cost: Approximately \$5,900,000

An environmental review has been conducted by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regarding construction of a drinking water distribution system by the Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority (DPRWA) in Valley and Daniels Counties.

The proposed action consists of the installation of approximately 62 miles of buried pipelines that are 2 to 8 inches in diameter. Installation of the pipeline will begin at St. Marie, MT and continue to Opheim, MT both located in Valley County. From there, the pipeline installation will continue east passing through Glentana, MT and Richland, MT to Peerless, MT in Daniels County. This infrastructure is part of the Dry Prairie Rural Water System and is intended to bring high quality drinking water to communities and individual rural residents. The project construction specifications note the potential to encounter petroleum contaminated soil or water within the project site and include language on the procedures to follow if this were to occur.

Based on the Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment (EA), including environmental commitments detailed in the EA, the project is not expected to have any significant adverse impacts upon terrestrial and aquatic life or habitat, including endangered species, water quality or quantity, air quality, geological features, cultural or historical features, or social quality.

The DEQ utilized the following references in completing its environmental review of this project: (1) the Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment for the Fort Peck Reservation Rural Water System, Fort Peck Reservation and Dry Prairie Service Areas, dated October 2002. The lead agency for the EA was the United States Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation (The Montana Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Natural Resources and Conservation were cooperating agencies in preparation of the EA); (2) a Design Report for the Opheim Mainline and Branch Lines Project prepared by DeWild Grant Reckert and Associates Company dated February 2021; (3) Contract Legal Documents, Specifications and Drawings for the Opheim Mainlines and Branch Lines Project prepared by DeWild Grant Reckert and Associates Company dated March 2021; and (4) Review of potential contaminant sources completed by the source water protection section of DEQ in April 2021. These references are available for review upon request by contacting:

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Department of Environmental Quality  
P.O. Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901  
Phone (406) 444-6770  
Email: sandie.koenig@mt.gov

Or:

Joni Sherman  
Dry Prairie Rural Water Authority  
P.O. Box 577  
Culbertson, MT 59218  
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Comments on this finding or on the EA may be submitted to DEQ at the above address. Comments must be postmarked no later than 30 days after the date of publication of this FONSI in the newspaper. After evaluating substantive comments received, DEQ will revise the EA or determine if an Environmental Impact Statement is necessary. Otherwise, this finding of no significant impact will stand if no substantive comments are received during the comment period or if substantive comments are received and evaluated and the environmental impacts are still determined to be non-significant.

Signed,



Mark Smith, DWSRF Engineering Manager  
Engineering Bureau

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