

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

Town of Del Norte: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

AGENCY: Rural Development, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utility Service (RUS) as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, is issuing an environmental assessment (EA) in connection with possible impacts related to a project proposed by the Town of Del Norte in Del Norte, Colorado for a Water System Improvements project.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: To obtain copies of the EA, or for further information, contact: Kevin McCann, Community Programs at kevin.mccann@usda.gov. You may contact him at 720-544-2912.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Town of Del Norte proposes to a water systems improvement project consisting of distribution system improvements, and construction of a new raw water pipeline installation. Distribution system improvements include upsizing existing undersized water mains, replacement of existing cast iron and PVC pipes, installation of new fire hydrants for additional fire protection and looping to eliminate dead-ends and improve system pressures in Del Norte (Rio Grande County), Colorado. Construction of a new raw water pipeline installation is to provide the required contact time for 4-log inactivation and removal of viruses for the town's two existing groundwater wells. The ground disturbance for all construction will be contained within a 10-ft wide construction corridor, and staging areas will be confined to a maximum area of 1-acre, for a total land area disturbed of approximately 17 acres.

Element Engineering, LLC., an environmental consultant, prepared an environmental assessment for USDA Rural Development that describes the project, assesses the proposed project's environmental impacts, and summarizes as applicable any mitigation measures used to minimize environmental effects.

USDA RD has conducted an independent evaluation of the environmental assessment and believes that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed project. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction of the project.

Questions and comments should be sent to Kevin McCann at the address provided above. USDA will accept questions and comments on the environmental assessment for 14 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Any final action by USDA RD RUS, related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of environmental review procedures as prescribed by 7 CFR Part 1970, Environmental Policies and Procedures.

A general location map of the proposal is shown below.

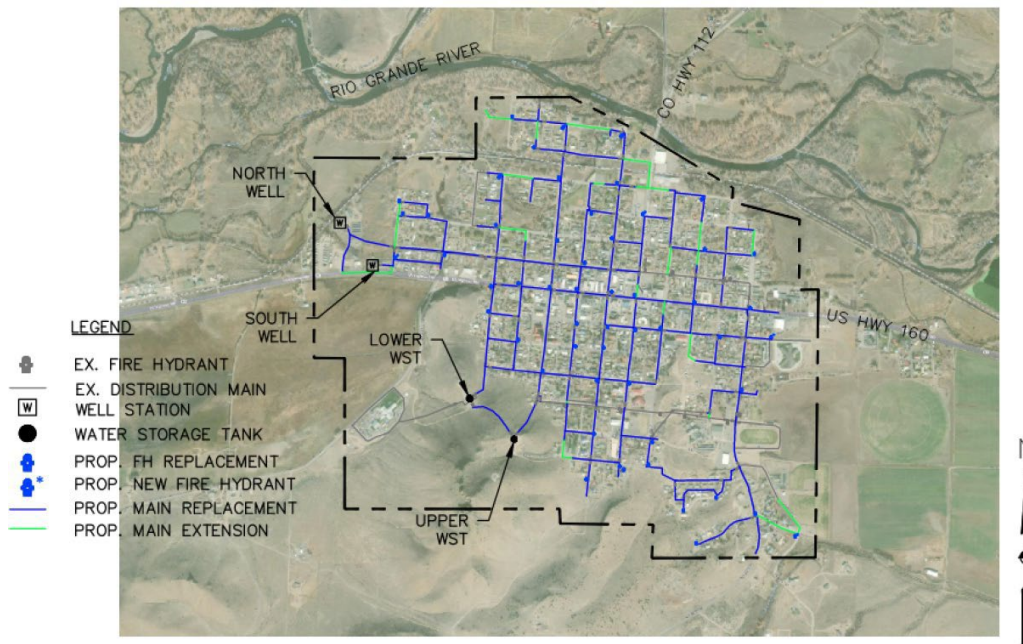


Figure 1 – Del Norte Proposed Water System Improvements