



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Fagaima Well Field Filtration System for the American Samoa Power Authority, Pago Pago, American Samoa, United States

September 2018

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering authorizing the award of a grant to the American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) for the construction of drinking water treatment system on the Island of American Samoa.

EPA Region 9's award of a grant for the proposed project is a federal action requiring compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 USC §§4321-4370f. In accordance with NEPA, Council of Environmental Quality Regulations at 40 CFR §§1500.1–1508.28, and EPA NEPA regulations at 40 CFR Part 6, EPA Region 9 has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) describing the potential environmental impacts associated with, and the alternatives to, the proposed project. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) documents EPA Region 9's decision that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Project Location and Description

The Island of American Samoa is an unincorporated and organized territory of the United States, located 1000 miles south of the Equator in the central Pacific Ocean. As part of a relatively isolated island chain, American Samoa is the United States only territory south of the equator, situated about 2,600 mi southwest of Hawaii and 2,000 miles northeast of New Zealand. It comprises an area of only 75 square miles with a population of less than 60,000 people. ASPA water distribution system consists of nearly 300 miles of piping, ranging in diameter from less than 1 to 24 inches. The proposed project is located on Tutuila island in the heavily populated Tafuna plains. The Fagaima Well Field was originally commissioned in the early 1970's to supply water to the community and the Tuna Canneries located about 10 miles east of the well field.

Purpose and Need for Proposed Project

The purpose of this project is to provide a filtration system to filter the Fagaima GUDI wells to meet EPA requirements in order to lift the long standing BWN in the Central Water System. The BWN was issued in 2010 and it is one of the longest standing BWN in the USA. A feasibility study was conducted in 2012 comparing alternatives for lifting the BWN and the most feasible option was to drill new wells and reduce NRW to below 33%. ASPA has since spent over \$5M on drilling new wells and aggressively pursued its leak detection and repair program. However, these efforts have not been successful due to aging and deteriorated leaking water lines which requires large-scale

replacement instead of repair and insufficient water yield from other aquifers to replace the Fagaima Wells.

ASPA's original plan was to lift the BWN from the entire system by the end of 2019. In order to meet this target, ASPA is opting now to pursue the second most feasible option of treating the GUDI wells in the Fagaima Well Field. The proposed filtration system includes the following infrastructure:

1. New waterline to replace the aging and deteriorated leaking AC pipes in the system
2. New booster pumps to provide the required pressure through the filters
3. New water storage tank to store water after filtration and chlorination
4. New booster pumps to provide adequate pressure from the tank to the distribution system
5. New building to house the pumps, filters, and control room
6. Fence around the property for system security and safety

Environmental Consequences

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), ASPA has prepared an EA on behalf of the EPA that analyzes the environmental impacts of the proposed action. After considering a wide range of regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors, the EA did not identify any significant impacts to the environment that would result from the implementation of the proposed project.

EPA requested a list of species that are or may be present in the project area from USFWS on August 17, 2018. In its September 13, 2018 response, USFWS stated that there is no federally designated critical habitat within the immediate vicinity of the proposed project. Data from USFWS indicate that there are no federally listed species that may occur or transit through the vicinity of the proposed project area.

In addition, a cultural resources survey was also conducted for the proposed project. No historic properties or archaeological resources were identified as being impacted. EPA's determination of no effect was confirmed by the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office on September 4, 2018.

After carefully considering the regulatory, environmental (both natural and human) and socio-economic factors as described in the EA, EPA Region 9 has not identified any significant impacts to the environment that would result from implementation of the proposed project.

Public Review

The EA is on file and available for public review at the EPA Region 9 Office at 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, California 94105 by contacting D. Isaiah Larsen at (415) 972-3182. These documents are also available for review at the ASPA office at P.O. Box PPB, 1st Airport Road, Pago Pago, American Samoa, 96799 by contacting Will Spitzenberg at (684) 699-7430.

The EA and FONSI will also be posted on the ASPA website at www.aspower.com. Comments on the EA and FONSI may be submitted to the EPA until October 31, 2018 and can be sent via letter, fax or email to:

EPA Region 9 WTR-3-3
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EPA Region 9 will not take administrative action on the proposed project prior to the close of the comment period. If, after considering public comments, EPA Region 9 concludes the proposed project will not have significant environmental impacts, EPA Region 9 will revise this FONSI by adding a summary of the comments received and EPA Region 9's responses. The revised FONSI will be forwarded to the Water Division Director for review and signature. The FONSI will be final upon signature. EPA Region 9 will not recirculate the signed FONSI for public review, but will make it available to any individual upon request.