

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: City of Weston Test Well Drilling, Section 595 Water System Improvements Project, Franklin County, Idaho. PPL-C-2019-0005

1. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Walla Walla District (Corps), proposes to assist the City of Weston, Idaho (City) with phased improvements to their drinking water system under the authority of Section 595 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1999. The City has requested design and/or construction assistance from the Corps. Although Section 595 funds would not be used to complete the City's entire proposed project, these funds would be used to design and/or construct the following project features in two phases:

- **Phase 1 – Test Wells.** Based on current hydrologic reports, the City would drill a test well in the downtown city park. If that test well fails, the City would drill a test well near the chlorination building.
- **Phase 2 – Production Well Construction.** If a test well drilled during Phase 1 is determined to be a viable production well, the City would complete the production well and construct a well house for the pumps and pumping equipment.
- **Water System Improvements Design.** If neither test well drilled during Phase 1 is determined to be a viable production well, Section 595 funds would be used to complete the design of project features such as transmission lines and/or plumbing the production well.

2. This Memorandum for Record (MFR) documents the Environmental Compliance Section (EC) review of the Corps plan to approve the Phase 1 preliminary drilling of test wells within the Weston city limits. The most likely method of drilling would be direct-mud rotary drilling which employs a rotating drill bit that grinds/pulverizes the soil/rock as the drill bit advances and then uses a medium, in this case, drilling mud, to transport the drill cuttings up to the ground surface. This mud then flows out of the bore hole and into mud pits that are used to remove the cuttings from the mud so that the mud can then be placed back down the well. The mud pits would be dug in the ground onsite and would be lined to prevent leakage. Based on the anticipated size of the test well, ground disturbance associated with the mud pits would be less than a ½ acre. The contractor would be required to restore the construction area to its prior condition, to include grass re-seeding. Test well drilling would take place as soon as environmental approval from the Corps is granted, most likely in early November 2018 and it would last approximately 35 to 45 days.

3. EC reviewed the proposed action for site-specific compliance and determined all required environmental compliance for the test well drilling in Weston, Idaho is complete:

a. Endangered Species Act (ESA): On October 26, 2018 an ESA species list (Consultation Code: 01EIFW00-2019-SLI-0128) was obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The species list includes one species, which is proposed as threatened: North American wolverine (*Gulo gulo luscus*). This species is not found within the City. The proposed action of drilling test wells would have no effect on North American wolverine.

b. National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA): The Corps determined that the proposed action (drilling test wells) would result in no historic properties affected, consistent with the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office’s concurrence. Please see Attachment B, the Corps’ “Cultural Resources Record of Internal Review” prepared by archaeologist Chris Wernick, dated October 15, 2018.

4. To address environmental compliance with the planned Phase 2 activities, the Corps will perform an independent review of the Weston City Culinary Water Facilities Plan prepared by Sunrise Engineering, and, if applicable, accept it and prepare a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The draft FONSI will be made available for a 30-day public/agency/tribal review period. After the review period, the Corps will take into consideration the technical aspects of the proposed action, best scientific information available, public comments, and the information contained in the Water Facilities Plan. If it is determined that the proposed action would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an environmental impact statement is not required, the Corps will sign the FONSI and proceed to fund the Phase 2 activities under the authority of Section 595 of the Water Resources Development Act, when funds are made available for that purpose.

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Date