

Sonoyta, Sonora, Mexico: Improvements to the Wastewater Collection and Treatment Systems

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Project Location and Description

EPA is considering authorizing the award of a Border Environment Infrastructure Fund (BEIF) grant to the City of Sonoyta, for expansion of wastewater collection lines and the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant to serve existing residents that lack adequate wastewater treatment and disposal. Sonoyta, a municipality comprised of more than 11,000 people, is located in the northwestern part of the State of Sonora, Mexico, on the U.S./Mexico border, adjacent to the town of Lukeville, Arizona.

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to address the environmental and public health risks associated with inadequate collection, treatment and disposal of wastewater. The proposed action will protect public health by providing appropriate wastewater collection and treatment to approximately 3,800 residents that now rely on cesspools or open ditches for wastewater disposal. The proposed action consists of the installation of approximately 100,000 linear feet of 8-inch laterals and 6-inch service connections, and replacement of the existing, overloaded 16 lps (0.37 MGD) wastewater treatment facility with a new 27 lps (0.6MGD) plant. In addition to providing wastewater treatment in compliance with Mexican state and federal regulations, the expansion of services will result in the collection and treatment of around 7 lps (0.16 MGD) of raw wastewater that would otherwise be discharged untreated to the environment. The new wastewater treatment plant will consist of a system of facultative lagoons in series. The treatment plant's effluent will be discharged to the Sonoyta River but may also be utilized for agricultural reuse. The proposed action will significantly reduce the use of inadequate wastewater disposal practices in Sonoyta by expanding collection, conveyance and treatment services from 65% to 90% of the community, resulting in improved environmental and sanitation conditions.

EPA's involvement in the Sonoyta, Sonora project is part of a national commitment to improve environmental conditions along the U.S.-Mexico border. EPA participates in the development and implementation of drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects in coordination with the [Border Environment Cooperation Commission](#) (BECC) and the [North American Development Bank](#) (NADBank) [EXIT Disclaimer](#). BECC is responsible for certifying projects so that they comply with sound technical, environmental, financial, and public participation principles. NADBank administers the BEIF grants for projects that have been certified by BECC and approved by EPA.

Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), EPA has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) that analyzes the potential transboundary 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 wastewater collection system and treatment plant improvements.

The EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) are being made available for public review for a 30-day comment period that ends on July 25, 2008. Interested persons, including those who disagree with this proposal, may submit written comments to EPA Region 9.

To view the EA or FNSI, please click on the links below.

- [Environmental Assessment \(PDF\)](#)
- [Finding of No Significant Impact \(PDF\)](#)

Contact Information

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