



## DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO: All Interested Citizens, Government Agencies and Public Groups

In accordance with the Nebraska Drinking Water State Revolving Fund environmental review process, which is based on the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the proposed agency action below:

This information reviews the environmental impact likely from a project. This project is planned to be federally funded wholly or in part through your tax dollars; therefore, you are entitled to take part in its review. If you have concerns about the environmental impact of this project, please provide them at this time. The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) encourages public input in this decision-making process.

PROJECT NAME: Water Main and Appurtenances Replacement  
APPLICANT: Village of Fairmont  
COUNTY: Fillmore  
POPULATION: 560  
DWSRF PROJECT NUMBER: D311663  
TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT: \$395,000  
PROPOSED DWSRF LOAN FORGIVENESS AMOUNT: \$79,000  
PROPOSED DWSRF LOAN AMOUNT: \$316,000

The Village of Fairmont has applied for funding, through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program jointly administered by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services-Division of Public Health (DHHS) and the NDEE, to replace water mains and appropriate appurtenances along E Street from 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue to 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue from E Street to I Street.

This project was listed on the Planning List in the State Fiscal Year 2021 Intended Use Plan (IUP) and ranked at 60 points. The project can be funded in accordance with the IUP's listed bypass criteria, as the bypass date of October 1, 2020 has passed. Based on supporting documentation on file with the NDEE, this project was determined to be eligible for a 30-year loan at an interest rate of 0.5% on 80% of the estimated project costs (i.e., 20% will be forgiven), per the criteria listed in the IUP. In addition to principal and interest, an administrative fee of 0.5% of the loan balance will be assessed. The current residential water rate is \$25 per month, with an added consumption charge of \$0.25 for every 100 gallons of water used. The typical long-term annual DWSRF Debt Service (including 10% coverage) is \$14,216. Based upon the 319 active service connections,

residential water rates may need to be raised approximately \$4 per month to address the new debt service.

The proposed project was reviewed for eligibility for a categorical exclusion from a National Environmental Policy Act review specified in 40 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 6.204. The project meets all criteria described in the above reference, and the Department has determined that this project is eligible for a categorical exclusion. Consequently, a preliminary decision has been made that a Finding of No Significant Impact will not be prepared. The project as proposed is solely the replacement of existing infrastructure. Justification for categorical exclusion includes:

- The proposed action is not known or expected to have potentially significant environmental impacts on the quality of the human environment either individually or cumulatively over time;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect federally listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect national natural landmarks or any property with nationally significant historic, architectural, prehistoric archaeological or cultural value, including but not limited to, property listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect environmentally important natural resource areas as wetlands, prime farmland, wild and scenic rivers, and significant fish or wildlife habitat;
- Based on a review of the available mapping, no portion of the project lies within the 100-year floodplain; and,
- The proposed action is not known or expected to have a significant effect on the pattern and type of land use (industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational, residential) or growth and distribution of population, including altering the character of existing residential areas. Moreover, it is not known to be inconsistent with state or local government, or federally recognized Indian tribe approved land use plans or federal land management plans.

The Village has a permit to operate a public water system under the provisions of the Nebraska Safe Drinking Water Act and the Regulations Governing Public Water Supply Systems, Title 179. The proposed project is determined by DHHS to help the public water system maintain compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act. The system last underwent a routine sanitary survey by DHHS in March of 2019, wherein two minor deficiencies were noted and current records show they have been addressed. That completed survey is the first step of the Technical, Financial, and Managerial (TFM) program policy. Fairmont will still be required to undergo an Initial, and if necessary, a Final TFM Assessment by the DHHS, to ensure that their capabilities meet the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act. Also, their current Environmental Tracking Tool score is 0, below the allowable 11 per issued U.S. Environmental Protection Agency guidance.

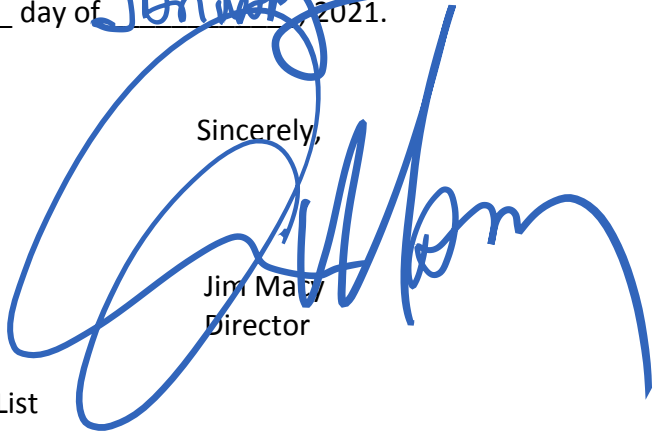
The NDEE shall revoke the categorical exclusion and shall require a full environmental review if, subsequent to the granting of exclusion, the state determines that the proposed project no longer meets the requirements for a categorical exclusion due to changes in the proposed project; or new evidence reveals that serious local or environmental issues exist; or federal, state, local or tribal laws are being violated.

This action is taken on the basis of careful review of the application and other supporting data, which are on file in the office of the NDEE. These are available for public review upon request. Persons having a comment on this categorical exclusion determination are encouraged to submit such comments directly to Hillary Stoll, Technical Assistance Section, NDEE at 402-471-4252 or email [hillary.stoll@nebraska.gov](mailto:hillary.stoll@nebraska.gov), or Dr. Burton Pflueger, State Revolving Fund Section, NDEE at 402-471-1883 or email [burton.pflueger@nebraska.gov](mailto:burton.pflueger@nebraska.gov).

Signed this 12<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2021.

Sincerely,

Jim Matz  
Director



Attachments: Distribution List  
Map

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DISTRIBUTION LIST  
VILLAGE OF FAIRMONT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY  
Office of Public Affairs  
P.O. Box 98922  
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DIRECTOR, NEBRASKA STATE  
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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
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Lincoln, NE 68509

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
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Wood River, NE 68883

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Environmental Coordinator  
Midwest Regional Office  
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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
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Room 308, Federal Building  
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Lincoln, NE 68508

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
Chris Simmons and Kelly Beard-Tittone  
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Lenexa, KS 66219

STATE CONSERVATIONIST  
Wayne Vanek  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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State Program Manager  
US Army Corps of Engineers  
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Omaha, NE 68138-3621

APPLICANT:  
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Fairmont, NE 68354

CONSULTING ENGINEER:  
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JEO Consulting Group, Inc.  
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LOCAL NEWSPAPER:  
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131 N 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Geneva, NE 68361

(Public Information Only not for Public Notice)

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT:  
Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District  
319 E 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
York, NE 68467

\*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this Categorical Exclusion has been distributed to this list electronically via email instead of physically via a mailed document.

# Map



(From SRF Funding Pre-application submitted by JES Consulting Group, Inc., December 2020)