

## Part 606 – Exhibits

### Subpart C – Reviews and Approvals

#### 606.35 Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI)—Example

##### **Finding Of No Significant Impact**

for

##### **David Creek Watershed Project**

**Clarke County, Anystate**

##### **Introduction**

The David Creek Watershed is a federally assisted action authorized for planning under Public Law 83–566, the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act. This act authorizes the Natural Resources Conservation Service to provide technical and financial assistance to local project sponsors. Local sponsors of the David Creek Project are the Clarke County Soil and Water Conservation District and the Clarke County Department of Environmental Protection.

An environmental assessment was undertaken in conjunction with the development of the watershed plan. This assessment was conducted in consultation with local, State, Tribal Governments, and Federal agencies as well as with interested organizations and individuals. Data developed during the assessment are available for public review at the following location:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
100 West 14th Street  
Yourtown, Anystate 12345

##### **Recommended Action**

Proposed is the development of about 41 conservation plans that will provide for land treatment measures to be applied on farms for reduction of sheet, rill, and stream bank erosion; storage and management of animal waste; and improved hydrologic condition in the watershed. The proposed plan will stabilize 2,650 acres of excessively eroding cropland and grassland and 2,500 feet of stream bank. Animal waste management facilities and application practices will be installed on about 30 farms in the watershed.

##### **Effect of Recommended Action**

The recommended action will protect the watershed hydrology by improving the soil cover condition and reducing overland flow velocities. Stream flow will be stabilized to the extent that peak flood flow rates will be slightly reduced and flow will be attenuated.

The proposed action will have little or no effect on wetlands. With land treatment applied on 2,650 acres, rainfall infiltration on cropland will be increased from 15 to 35 percent. This will provide for a 1 or 2 percent overall increase in ground water recharge in the watershed, which will ensure maintenance of ground water at levels needed for sustaining the wetlands.

The proposed project will encourage and promote the agricultural enterprises in the watershed through improved efficiency. This action will tend to offset pressures to convert important farmland to other uses, such as residential development.

A cultural resources inventory of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) was undertaken. The survey report recommends that no adverse affects will occur to historic properties in the watershed should the plan be implemented. The NRCS has consulted with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Your-tribe Confederated Tribe of Indians and has reached concurrence that no historic property will be adversely affected. If cultural resources are inadvertently discovered during implementation, NRCS will follow procedures as detailed in the State Level Agreement between the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation and Any-state NRCS.

No threatened or endangered species in the watershed will be affected by the project.

One of the primary objectives of the project is to improve water quality. About 80 percent of the cropland and animal waste pollutants will be controlled. Sediment influx to the Coalville Reservoir will be reduced by an estimated 3,900 tons annually. Nutrients attached to sediment will be retained on the land rather than delivered to receiving water. Land treatment practices will reduce loss of water and nutrients to the stream system, thereby reducing stream enrichment and conserving the nutrients for plant production.

Fish and wildlife habitats may be temporarily disturbed in some part of the 2,650 acres of cropland and grassland during installation of land treatment practices, but they will be restored to at least their previous value within one growing season. The Coalville Reservoir and the David Creek stream system will be more suitable for species sensitive to sediment concentrations. More suitable cover will be provided for open land wildlife by land treatment measures, such as diversions, grassed waterways, and critical area plantings. The value of woodland habitat will not decline.

The 2,500 feet of stream bank protection proposed will temporarily roil adjacent stream water during installation. About 40 percent of the stream bank (1,000 feet) to be protected is well shaded. This shading will be lost for at least three years after installation. Adjacent water temperature is expected to rise no more than 1°C during this period of exposure.

No wilderness areas are in the watershed. Scenic values will be complemented with the diversity added to the dairy farm landscape by conservation land treatment measures. During installation of the proposed measures, scenic values will be temporarily decreased at specific locations in the watershed.

### **Alternatives**

No significant adverse environmental impacts will result from installations except for minor inconveniences to local residents during construction.

The planned action is the most practical means of protecting the watershed, stabilizing the eroding lands, and controlling animal waste. Because no significant adverse environmental impacts will result from installation of the measures, the only other alternative considered was the future-without-project alternative.

### **Consultation—Public Participation**

Formal agency consultation began with the initiation of the notification of the State Single Point of Contact for Federal Assistance in February 2005. The Governor and the division of planning were also notified of the application for Federal assistance. Agencies were again notified when planning was authorized in September 1981.

Scoping meetings were held in December 2003, June 2004, and August 2004, and interdisciplinary efforts were used in all cases. Four Federal agencies (RD, FS, F&WS, and EPA), three State agencies (Department of Fish and Game, Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, and Economic Development Commission), four county agencies, and several local groups were involved in part or all of the scoping and planning processes.

Specific consultation was conducted with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Your-tribe Confederated Tribe of Indians concerning cultural resources and historic properties in the watershed. Comments from the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Your-tribe Confederated Tribe of Indians were used in the development of this plan.

The environmental assessment was transmitted to all participating and interested agencies, groups, and individuals for review and comment in October 2004. Public meetings were held throughout the planning process to keep all interested parties informed of the study progress and to obtain public input to the plan and environmental evaluation.

Agency consultation and public participation to date have shown no unresolved conflicts with the implementation of the selected plan.

**Conclusion**

Based on the environmental assessment summarized above, I find that the proposed action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, and I have determined that an environmental impact statement for the David Creek Watershed Plan is not required.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature)                      \_\_\_\_\_ (Date)  
(type in name)                      State Conservationist