



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Las Cruces District Office
1800 Marquess Street
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005
www.blm.gov/nm

In Reply Refer To:
NMNM 115773
2800 (L0310)

SEP 28 2012

Re. Final Environmental Impact Statement, Alamogordo Regional Water Supply Project EIS, Record of Decision Errata Sheet

Dear Interested Party:

Copies of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Alamogordo Regional Water Supply Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were distributed to interested parties on August 29, 2012. It has come to our attention that the ROD contained an error which requires correction. The correction is the removal of the following sentence "*Reclamation intends to construct and operate the desalination facility.*" Enclosed is the page containing the removal for the affected section of the ROD. Please replace page 1 of the original ROD with the like numbered page provided.

A corrected version of the ROD as well as the errata sheet is also available on the New Mexico BLM website at http://www.blm.gov/nm/st/en/fo/Las_Cruces_District_Office.html under the Planning/NEPA section for the Las Cruces District Office. Additional information regarding the EIS is available at the Las Cruces District Office.

If you need additional information, or if you have questions concerning the project, please contact Douglas Haywood at (575) 525-4498.

Sincerely,

Bill Childress
District Manager

1 Enclosure

1 INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared the Alamogordo Water Supply Project (project) Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to assess the City of Alamogordo (City), New Mexico, proposal to develop a municipal potable water supply. The City has determined that the current water supply is not sufficient to meet current and future projected water demands and has submitted a right-of-way (ROW) application to the BLM to construct and operate groundwater wells on BLM-managed land. The City proposes to implement the project to meet both current and future water demands for the City. The project would be located on a combination of Federal, state, and private lands, including land and ROWs managed by the BLM. The BLM is the lead Federal agency for preparation of this EIS, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and Otero County serve as cooperating agencies. Otero County possesses special expertise with respect to environmental resources and potential impacts in the study area. The groundwater facilities and ancillary infrastructure is designed to pump and convey up to 4,000 acre-feet per year (afy).

The City has identified a projected water demand of 10,842 afy through 2045 (City of Alamogordo 40 years water development plan, 2003). The demand was determined through study of consumption rates and projected population levels. New Mexico municipalities are statutorily given the ability to acquire additional water rights long before the actual demand for the water materializes based on its “reasonably projected additional needs” during a 40-year time period. Following development of a 40-year water plan, the City identified, and the Twelfth Judicial District Court agreed, that the City had 3,513 afy of reliable surface rights and 3,931 afy of reliable groundwater supplies from its existing wells, for a total of 7,444 afy in reliable water supplies. Based on the projected demand, the City therefore has a present and future need to obtain 3,398 afy in additional water supplies by the year 2045.

In order to address this additional need, the City has been issued a permit by the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer (NMOSE) to divert up to 4,000 afy from the Snake Tank well field (Revised Permit No. T-3825). Since the water diverted from this well field is brackish groundwater, approximately 20 percent of the water volume is lost during the desalination process; the project would therefore provide approximately 3,200 afy of the City’s additional need of 3,398 afy in the year 2045. The additional 198 afy would need to be attained from other sources, such as the purchase of bulk water or additional water rights, sources that are undetermined at this point in time and are not a part of this EIS.

2 DECISION

Based on the analysis in the Alamogordo Regional Water Supply Project Final EIS, I have decided to approve the Proposed Action as it is described in Section 2.2.2 of the Final EIS, to the extent that the proposal involves or affects public land, as provided in Section 501 [43 U.S.C. 1761] (a)(1) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended.

Following is a summary of the Proposed Action (Alternative B):