



FEMA

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Bethel Recreation Facility Bethel, Vermont FEMA-DR-4022-VT

As a result of damages caused by Tropical Storm Irene between the period of August 27 to September 2, 2011, the President declared a major disaster declaration referenced as DR-4022-VT which makes FEMA Public Assistance (PA) funding authorized under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended, available to local governments, state agencies, and eligible private non-profit organizations in Vermont

The Town of Bethel (Sub-Grantee) has applied through Vermont Emergency Management & Homeland Security (VT DEMHS/Grantee) for PA funding. During the incident period of August 27 through September 2, 2011 Tropical Storm Irene brought torrential rains and flooding throughout the town of Bethel, VT. The flood the waters of Locust Creek rose to a high level causing damage to the Old Route 12 Bridge (Town Hwy # 79 - class 3 non federal aid road). The flood waters severely undermined both abutments causing them to shift and break apart, resulting in the collapse of the abutments and deck. Neither abutment nor the deck is salvageable.

The Town of Bethel has determined that repairing the Old Route 12 Bridge B49 is not in the best interest of the community and has decided to apply FEMA Alternate Project funding to two capital improvement projects. The Old Route 12 Bridge 49 has been formally discontinued by the town and the approaches have been secured to prevent vehicular and pedestrian access.

Project #1, which is not the subject of this Environmental Assessment (EA), will not be reviewed in this document because it is categorically excluded under NEPA. It consists of the following: removal and disposal of existing Bridge B49 (including footings, stem walls, deck and railing), shaping stream banks in accordance with Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (VTANR) recommendations, constructing turnarounds on either side of the bridge within existing right-of way, and grading the approach of Old Route 12 at the southerly intersection with VT State Route 12 to provide a more elevated and level "stop zone" at the intersection.

Project #2, which is the subject of this EA, will be analyzed in this document. It consists of the following: Bethel Recreation Facility improvements, such as the renovation and expansion of the pool house with accessible walkways and parking area, and the installation of an updated playground structure and surface.

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, this Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ); 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508. The purpose of an environmental assessment (EA) is to determine whether a federally proposed action could have significant environmental impacts. If the EA concludes that the environmental impacts of the proposal could be significant, then the agency is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). If, however, the agency concludes on the basis of the EA that the impacts would not be significant, then the agency may issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and proceed with the action. In the EA process, two (2) alternatives were considered: the No Action Alternative, and the Proposed Alternative- renovation of the current facility to the specifications of "Option C" of the March 2013 "Bethel Recreation Facility Master Plan" drafted by Vermont Integrated Architecture, P.C. Two (2) additional alternatives were considered but eliminated; "Option A" and "Option B" of the Master Plan.

FEMA evaluated the proposed project for any potential significant adverse impacts to existing physical resources (air quality, transportation/traffic, and historic and cultural resources), natural resources (geology and soils, water resources, floodplains, wildlife, vegetation, threatened and endangered species, and wetlands), socioeconomic resources (human health and safety, and environmental justice), and cumulative impacts.

These documents were made available for viewing online at <http://townofbethelvt.com/> and <http://www.fema.gov/resource-document-library>. A copy of the Draft EA and Draft FONSI will also be available for public review Friday October 24, 2014, at the Town Manager's Office and Town Clerk's Office located at 134 South Main Street, Bethel, VT 05032 as well as the Bethel Public Library located at 106 Main Street, Bethel, VT 05032. Hours for the Town Manager's Office are; Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Hours for the Town Clerk's Office are; Monday and Thursday 8:00 to 4:00 pm and Tuesday and Friday 8:00 am to 12:00 pm. Hours for the Bethel Public Library are; Monday and Wednesday 2:00 pm to 7:00 pm and Saturday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. The comment period will last for twenty-one (21) days, ending on Friday November 14, 2014.

CONDITIONS

The Town of Bethel shall comply with all prescribed conditions set forth in the EA, including, but not limited to the following conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize the receipt of federal funding.

1. The Town of Bethel or its designees are responsible for obtaining and complying with all required local, state, and federal permits and approvals.
2. Construction vehicles and equipment will be stored on site during the project. All construction activities will be performed using qualified personnel and in accordance with the standards specified in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Appropriate signage will be posted onsite and in the vicinity.

3. The construction will comply with all air quality regulations including Vermont's Prohibiting Idling of Motor Vehicles 23VSA§110. Construction will take place only during normal business hours and all equipment will meet local, state, and federal noise regulations. Idling time shall be limited onsite.
4. Water, hygroscopic materials, or non-toxic chemical stabilizers will be used as treatment to reduce fugitive dust emissions during demolition as required under Clean Air Act.
5. USGBC LEED Gold Standard stormwater management system; if applicable, compliance with the conditions listed in the "Stormwater Discharge from New Development and Redevelopment General Permit".
6. Best Management Practices during construction to control the release of sediment.
7. In the event that archaeological materials (e.g. Native American pottery, stone tools, old bottles, historic bricks) and/or human remains are uncovered during site preparation or construction, the Subgrantee/Town of Bethel shall require that their work crew/construction contractor immediately stop ground disturbing work within the vicinity of the discovery and take reasonable measures to avoid and minimize harm to the materials and discovery area. The Subgrantee/ Town of Bethel is responsible for ensuring that archaeological discoveries and human remains associated with this FEMA-funded work are adequately secured, access to the area is restricted, and that the Grantee/Vermont Emergency Management Division of the Department of Public Safety (VEM) and the FEMA Region 1 Environmental/Historic Preservation (Acting Regional Environmental Officer; Lydia Kachadoorian (857) 205-2860, are promptly notified of the discovery so that they may coordinate with the Vermont State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). The Grantee/VEM will advise the Subgrantee/ Town of Bethel to comply with procedures for the discovery of human skeletal remains established in 13 VSA 3761 (Unauthorized Removal of Human Remains), 13 VSA 3764 (Cemeteries and Monuments – Grave markers and historic tablets) and 18 VSA 5212 (Permit to Remove Dead Bodies). Violation of Vermont state law on the treatment of human remains may jeopardize FEMA funding for this project. FEMA Region 1, in consultation with the SHPO and other parties, shall assess the nature and character of discoveries and determine how the project may best move forward. In the event of a discovery, the Subgrantee/ Town of Bethel may not proceed with project implementation until FEMA has provided written approval to reinitiate of work.
8. The Town of Bethel shall notify FEMA and VT DEMHS should the scope of work change, including substantial design changes, additional ground disturbance, further vegetation removal, or other unanticipated changes to the physical environment.

FINDINGS

Based on input from and consultation with agencies, identified sources documented in the EA, the Town of Bethel, and in accordance with the FEMA regulations for environmental

considerations and Executive Orders on Floodplains, Wetlands, and Environmental Justice, FEMA finds that the Proposed Alternative, as defined in the EA, will have no significant impact on the natural or human environment. As a result of this Finding of No Significant Impact, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR §10.8) and the proposed project with prescribed conditions may proceed. If a change in the scope of work occurs, VT DEMHS and FEMA must be notified to evaluate if the proposed change would alter the potential impacts on the environment.

APPROVED:

Lydia Kachadoorian Date
Acting Regional Environmental Officer
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