

Texas Water Development Board

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Phone (512) 463-7847, Fax (512) 475-2053

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: T. Clay Schultz, Ph.D., Director, Regional Water Planning and Development 

DATE: July 11, 2016

SUBJECT: Canyon Regional Water Authority, Guadalupe County
Environmental Determination
Wells Ranch Phase II – Well Field and Transmission Line Project
Project 8: Santa Clara to Wagner Transmission Line Project
State Water Implementation Fund for Texas: Project 51005 (L15006)

The attached memorandum contains the staff's views regarding the environmental soundness of the pipeline components of the Wells Ranch Phase II – Well Field and Transmission Line Project (Project 8: Santa Clara to Wagner Transmission Line Project) proposed by Canyon Regional Water Authority (Authority) in Guadalupe County, Texas. This project will utilize planning, design, and construction funds from loan L15006 from the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT). The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) committed this loan on July 23, 2015, in the amount of \$42,000,000. The Authority closed the loan on December 10, 2015.

This transmission pipeline will be constructed as part of a larger water supply expansion project, including new wells; new collection lines; water treatment plant expansion; new tanks; new pumps; new waterlines; ancillary electrical, mechanical, and controls equipment; rights-of-way; and other items necessary and incidental to completion of the project. Although the loan is intended to fund a number of project components, the present Environmental Determination solely pertains to the installation of the Santa Clara to Wagner Transmission Line Project. Specifically, the Authority proposes to install approximately 22,000 linear feet (4.17 miles) of 30-inch-diameter water transmission pipeline within existing easements owned by the Authority, crossing several private properties. Installation will require trenching and boring within a 30-foot-wide permanent easement and a 20-foot-wide temporary construction easement. The project is located in northwestern Guadalupe County, between Farm-to-Market Road 78 and Interstate Highway 10, approximately two miles southwest of Marion, Texas (see attached map).

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Based on staff's environmental review, no significant adverse environmental impacts should result from the proposed project discussed in the attached Environmental Determination. As required by 31 Texas Administrative Code § 363.14, full consideration has been given to the views and comments of the requisite regulatory agencies. Based on this review, the following conditions have been developed to ensure the TWDB-funded project is environmentally sound, and will not have any adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment:

- Terms and conditions of a United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Nationwide Permit 12 for Utility Line Activities (USACE Project No. SWF-2016-00051);
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of cultural resources; and
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of threatened and endangered species.

With the addition of these conditions, the specified project elements above are environmentally sound and design funds may be released once all other requirements are satisfied.

Enclosure

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TO: T. Clay Schultz, Ph.D., Director, Regional Water Planning and Development 

FROM: Lauren Dill, Environmental Reviewer, Team 6 (Regions M and N) 

DATE: July 11, 2016

SUBJECT: Environmental Summary
Canyon Regional Water Authority, Guadalupe County
Wells Ranch Phase II – Well Field and Transmission Line Project
Project 8: Santa Clara to Wagner Transmission Line Project
State Water Implementation Fund for Texas: Project 51005 (L15006)

Pursuant to the environmental assessment requirements of 31 Texas Administrative Code § 363.14, I have conducted a review of the Wells Ranch Phase II – Well Field and Transmission Line Project (Project 8: Santa Clara to Wagner Transmission Line Project) proposed by Canyon Regional Water Authority (Authority), Guadalupe County, Texas. This project will utilize planning, design, and construction funds from loan L15006 from the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT). The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) committed this loan on July 23, 2015, in the amount of \$42,000,000. The Authority closed the loan on December 10, 2015.

Purpose and Need¹

The Authority consists of eleven public water supply entities and one public water system wholesale customer, stretching over six Central Texas counties. The Authority's legislated purpose is to develop water supply sources for its member entities. Member entities include the Cities of Cibolo, La Vernia, and Marion, Texas, as well as local utilities that provide water to the Cities of San Marcos and Seguin, Texas, and parts of Guadalupe and eastern Bexar Counties. San Antonio Water System is also a wholesale customer. Central Texas is experiencing rapid population growth, and as referenced in the South Central Texas Regional Water Planning Group (Region L) Water Plan (May 2015), the aggregate populations of the areas served by the Authority are expected to more than double between 2015 and 2060. As also discussed in the Region L Water Plan, the

¹ Canyon Regional Water Authority (June 2016). *Environmental Data Form for the Santa Clara to Wagner Transmission Line Project* (Prepared by SWCA Environmental Consultants). Received by TWDB July 1, 2016.

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	:	Jeff Walker, Executive Administrator

projected water needs (the difference between available supply and anticipated demand) are expected to grow from 6,094 acre-feet in 2020 to 20,835 acre-feet in 2070. The Authority's Wells Ranch Project has been included in the TWDB State Water Plan as an important water management strategy for Region L in 2007, 2012, and 2016. The multi-year and phased project will increase and diversify the Authority's water supply sources with a groundwater alternative.

The Santa Clara Transmission Line is one of the pipeline components of the Wells Ranch Phase II Water Supply Project that is necessary in the development of an additional 7,400 acre-feet per year of groundwater from the Carrizo and Wilcox Aquifers to support the water supply needs of several of the Authority's member entities. The Santa Clara Transmission Line will transport water from the existing Wells Ranch Phase I transmission pipeline system to the Authority's existing Wagner Booster Pump Station. From the Wagner Booster Pump Station, the additional water supply will be moved through an existing transmission pipeline system to several of the Authority's member entities that are participating in the Wells Ranch Phase II Water Supply Project. Additionally, this transmission pipeline component will provide a looping connection between the Wells Ranch transmission system and an existing pipeline transmission system to move water supplied from the Authority's existing Dunlap Water Treatment Plant. This looping connection between the two water supply systems will improve overall system reliability and operational flexibility.

Background

The Authority was created by the Legislature in 1989 and is comprised of eleven member entities: Crystal Clear Special Utility District, East Central Special Utility District, Springs Hill Water Supply Corporation, Green Valley Special Utility District, County Line Special Utility District, Maxwell Water Supply Corporation, Martindale Water Supply Corporation, and the Cities of Marion, Cibolo, Converse, and LaVernia, Texas. The Authority's governing board consists of two voting members from each of the member entities.

The Authority's Wells Ranch Supply Project is a two-phased groundwater supply project utilizing groundwater from the Carrizo and Wilcox Aquifers in Guadalupe and Gonzales Counties as an alternative to Edwards Aquifer production. Phase I began operation in 2009 and resulted in the construction of a 5-million-gallon-per-day water treatment facility, a well field that can produce approximately 5,200 acre-feet per year, ground storage tanks and booster pump stations, and approximately 100,000 feet of 24- and 30-inch water transmission pipeline for member entities.

The requested SWIFT funding will be used to complete Phase II of the groundwater supply project. Upon completion of the proposed project, the Authority will have a total production capacity of approximately 13,000 acre-feet per year.

Project Description

The proposed Project 8: Santa Clara to Wagner Transmission Line Project is located in northwestern Guadalupe County, between Farm-to-Market Road 78 and Interstate Highway 10, approximately 2 miles southwest of Marion, Texas. The proposed project area is approximately 4.17 miles in length and 50 feet wide (approximately 25.5 acres) (see attached maps). The project consists of the installation of approximately 22,000 linear feet of a new 30-inch-diameter water main pipeline within existing easements owned by the Authority, crossing several private properties. Installation of the pipeline will require trenching and boring of a 30-foot-wide permanent easement, with a 20-foot-wide temporary construction easement. Trenching will be 7 to 8 feet deep, while bore pits will be 8 to 10 feet deep. The total estimated project cost for this component is \$5,952,000. The planning, design, and construction phases of the proposed project will be funded by the TWDB.

Reviews by Regulatory Agencies and Resulting Conditions

On the Authority's behalf, SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) coordinated with the following federal and state regulatory agencies: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Wildlife Division, Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program; United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Fort Worth District; Texas Historical Commission (THC); and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Austin Ecological Services Field Office. In addition, the National Flood Insurance Program Liaison for Region VI and Guadalupe County Floodplain Administrator were given an opportunity to review the Environmental Data Form. No adverse comments were received. A summary of the correspondence has been provided below.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Division, Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program

The TPWD reviewed the proposed project and provided an email response dated March 24, 2016 (TPWD Project Number 36224), with no recommendations for the proposed project regarding vegetation impacts, invasive species and re-vegetation, surface water and wetlands, aquatic resources, state listed species, and species of concern. Based on the referenced response, TPWD does not anticipate significant adverse impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species, or other fish and wildlife resources, and considers coordination associated with the proposed project to be complete.

United States Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Worth District

The USACE provided a response letter dated March 10, 2016 (Project Number SWF-2016-00051), stating that the project will involve activities subject to the requirements of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and that the project appears to qualify for a Nationwide Permit 12 for Utility Line Activities. Provided that the permittee complies with all the terms and conditions therein, the project may proceed. The nationwide permit is valid until March 18, 2017. Furthermore, activities that have commenced, or

are under contract to commence, in reliance on a nationwide permit will remain authorized provided the activity is completed within 12 months of the date of the nationwide permit's expiration, modification, or revocation, unless discretionary authority has been exercised on a case-by-case basis to modify, suspend, or revoke the authorization in accordance with 33 CFR § 330.4(e) and 33 CFR § 330.5(c) or (d).

One ephemeral stream (Channel 1) is intersected by the proposed project. Disturbed areas within Channel 1 will be returned to pre-construction contours.

Texas Historical Commission

SWCA conducted a survey of the proposed project area under Antiquities Code Permit #6683 with investigations occurring in October 2013. SWCA's report (Acuna and Sloan 2014) concluded that the proposed project will have no adverse effects on cultural resources. The THC provided concurrence with SWCA's assessment in the form of a letter of concurrence dated October 17, 2014.

The SWIFT loan is conditioned to read that if archeological sites are discovered during construction, work will cease immediately in that area and the Authority will notify the THC and the TWDB of the discovery. The THC and the TWDB will then proceed in accordance with the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR Part 800) prior to taking any action which would affect the cultural resources.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Austin Ecological Services Field Office

The USFWS was given the opportunity to review the proposed project for compliance with the Endangered Species Act. No response was received by the agency.

The SWIFT loan is conditioned to read that if threatened or endangered species are encountered during construction, work will cease immediately and the Authority will notify TWDB staff, TPWD, and the USFWS. Subsequent to notification, mitigation measures will be taken in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

Local Floodplain Administrator and National Flood Insurance Program Liaison

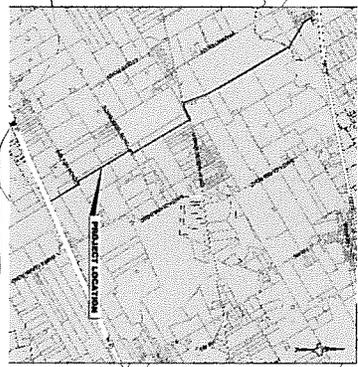
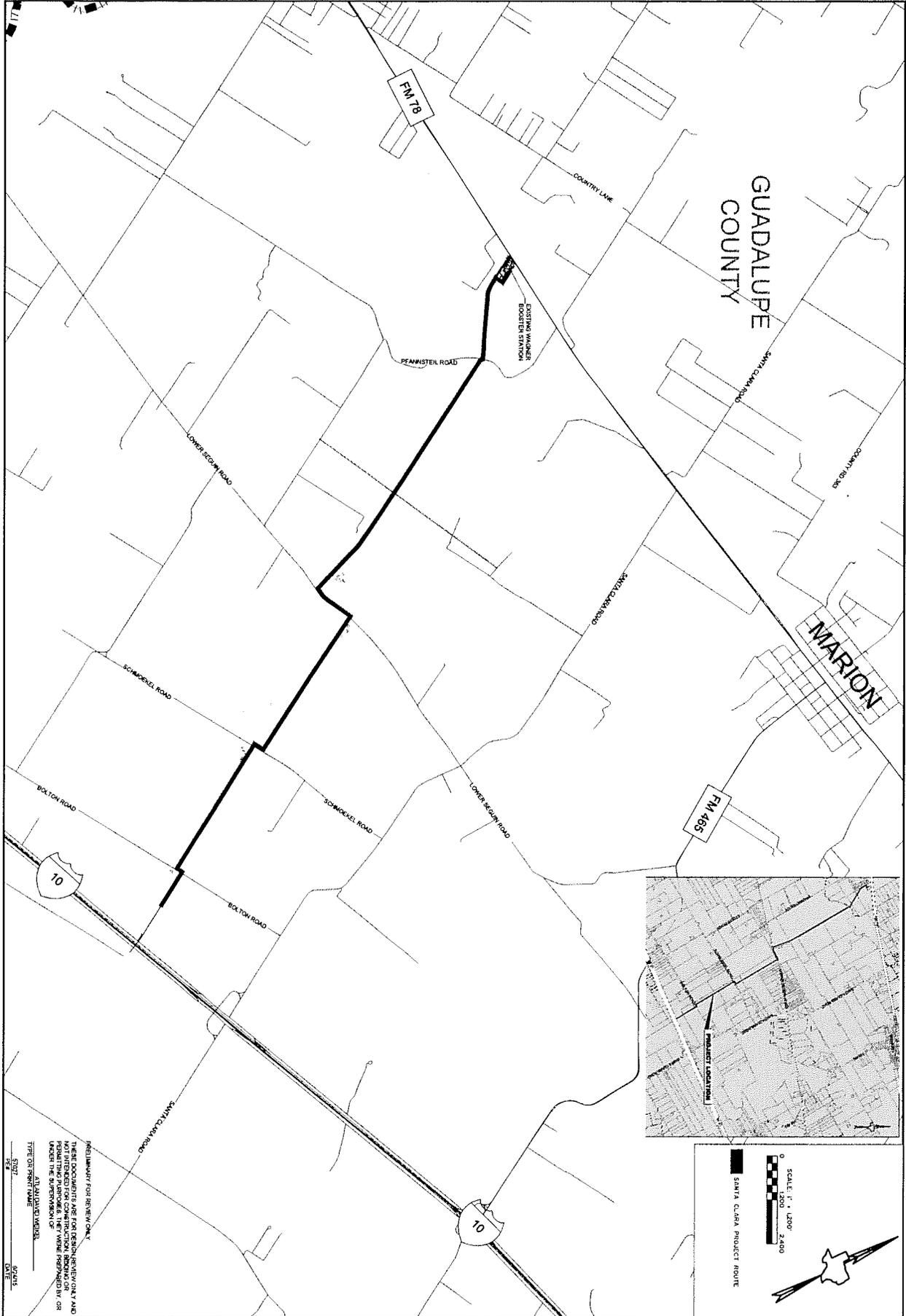
Both the local floodplain administrator for Guadalupe County and Region VI Liaison for the National Flood Insurance Program were given the opportunity to review the proposed project in letters dated February 3, 2015. The Region VI Liaison for the National Flood Insurance Program responded with a letter dated February 17, 2016, requesting that the community's floodplain administrator be contacted for review and possible permit requirements for the proposed project. According to the response from the Guadalupe County Floodplain Administrator in an email dated June 7, 2016, no permits will be required for the proposed project.

Conditions and Recommendation

Full consideration has been given to the views and comments of the requisite regulatory agencies. Based on a detailed environmental review consistent with 31 Texas Administrative Code § 363.14, the following conditions have been developed in order to ensure that this TWDB-funded project is environmentally sound and will not have any adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment:

- Terms and conditions of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 12 for Utility Line Activities (USACE Project No. SWF-2016-00051);
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of cultural resources; and
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of threatened and endangered species.

With the addition of these conditions, I recommend that the Executive Administrator find the specified project elements above to be environmentally sound and that design funds be released once other requirements are satisfied.



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SHEET NO 1	OF 1 SHEETS	CANYON REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY SANTA CLARA 24" WATER MAIN PROPOSED ROUTE WAGNER BOOSTER STATION TO IH 10
		REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

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DESIGNED BY:	SCALE:
DRAWN BY:	DATE: 24 September, 2015
CHECKED BY:	PROJECT NO.: