

**INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE  
ALASKA AREA NATIVE HEALTH SERVICE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND DETERMINATION  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**WATER TREATMENT PLANT REPLACEMENT PROJECT  
AT  
TULUKSAK, ALASKA**

**Project 21-N4W**

*December 2021*

**Background**

This project provides for the construction and operation of a replacement water treatment plant (WTP), washeteria, and water storage tank (WST) in Tuluksak, Alaska, under the management of the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Village Safe Water (VSW) and Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC).

The Proposed Action will:

- construct a new, replacement combined WTP/washeteria and WST
- construct an untreated water transmission line between the existing community drinking water wells and the new WTP
- construct a new water main to connect the community buildings and school to the new WTP
- construct new water service lines from the water main to the school, community/teen center, clinic, store and construction camp
- construct sewer service lines to connect the same buildings to existing sewer mains
- modify and repair lift stations, manholes, and plumbing inside the existing building if required
- install new bathroom facilities if required at some of the community buildings
- construct a new section of sewer force main to connect the new WTP/washeteria to the existing sewage lagoon force main
- repair and upgrade the sewage lagoon to accommodate the additional wastewater
- install a heat recovery line between the existing power plant and the new WTP
- repair roads disturbed by construction

In an effort to improve infrastructure capacities and overall public health, the Tuluksak Native Community proposes to construct a replacement WTP/washeteria and WST. The proposed project will provide an appropriate solution to the existing water and sanitation system deficiencies. The Environmental Assessment (EA), submitted by VSW and ANTHC, analyzes two alternatives in detail: No Action and Proposed Action alternatives, which represent an acceptable range of reasonable alternatives.

**Federal and State Agencies**

The Indian Health Service is the Lead Agency for the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action will be funded by Indian Health Service (IHS), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Denali Commission.

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**Environmental Issues**

The major resource issues identified through the Tuluksak EA for the Proposed Action are listed in Table 1. For each resource, the short- and long-term impacts, and required mitigation are identified.

<b>Table 1. Identified Resource Issues for Tuluksak WTP Replacement Project</b>		
<b>Major Resource Issues</b>	<b>Impacts Noted</b>	<b>Required Mitigation</b>
Floodplain	The project is located mostly in a floodplain. There are no short- or long-term impacts to floodwater distribution from buried infrastructure and negligible impacts from aboveground infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Construct WTP/washeteria and WST on a pad elevated above the floodplain.</li> <li>▪ Water and sewer mains, service lines and associated infrastructure would be built to withstand a flood event and prevent contamination of the water supply and protect the environment from sewage.</li> <li>▪ The infrastructure would be designed and constructed to operate after a flood event with little to no maintenance or repair required.</li> <li>▪ Construction would not occur when flooding is imminent.</li> </ul>
Wetlands	Temporary impacts to 0.19-acre of wetlands during construction of buried untreated water line and sewer service line.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clearly mark construction limits to avoid unnecessary disturbance.</li> <li>▪ Seed disturbed areas immediately following construction.</li> <li>▪ Implement sediment and erosion control measures during and after construction to prevent stormwater impacts.</li> </ul>
Historic Properties	No short- or long-term impacts to cultural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SHPO concurrence will be obtained for this project</li> <li>▪ Stop work and report any previously unknown cultural resources to VSW, ANTHC, IHS, and SHPO immediately if discovered during construction.</li> </ul>

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<b>Table 1. Identified Resource Issues for Tuluksak WTP Replacement Project</b>		
<b>Major Resource Issues</b>	<b>Impacts Noted</b>	<b>Required Mitigation</b>
Socioeconomic Issues and Environmental Justice	<p>Long-term beneficial impacts to the community by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treated water to a watering point for hauling to homes</li> <li>• piping treated water to community buildings and the school</li> <li>• piping sewage from community buildings and the school to the sewage lagoon</li> </ul> <p>Minor, short-term beneficial impacts from temporary construction employment and business revenue opportunities.</p> <p>The Proposed Action would not cause disproportionately high or adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hire local workers during the construction phase.</li> <li>▪ Procure construction housing, goods and services from local vendors if possible.</li> </ul>

The EA also analyzed additional environmental issues, and short-term minor or no impacts would occur. Therefore, the following resources were eliminated from further review: Air Quality, Water Resources – Surface Water and Groundwater, Soils and Geology, Wildlife and Vegetation, Recreation, Soundscape, Visual Resources, Land Use, Public Service and Infrastructure, Energy Use, and Hazardous Materials. No long-term impacts would occur.

**Consultation**

The Proposed Action, as presented in the EA, was presented to the local and federal agencies with direct interest and jurisdiction. Tuluksak Native Community was involved in the development of the alternatives and the selection of the Proposed Action as the appropriate solution to the sanitation and public health concerns.

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**Finding**

The conclusion presented in the EA was reviewed by project stakeholders. The IHS, acting with authority as the Lead Agency in the NEPA process, agrees with the conclusion laid out in the EA. Therefore, the IHS is issuing a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Proposed Action.

VSW and ANTHC have agreed to notify the appropriate authority and IHS if a change in the project or its scope occurs that would change this environmental determination, require additional environmental review, or adversely impact the environment.

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Chris Fehrman, P.E.  
NEPA Review Officer  
Alaska Area Native Health Service

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Date