Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of Availability of the Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Amended Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Proposed Interceptor Sewer Line in the Village of Ruidoso and the City of Ruidoso Downs (Sewer Line Restoration/Rehabilitation) Project
Lincoln County, New Mexico

Interested persons are hereby notified that the Village of Ruidoso, New Mexico has submitted an application for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding under FEMA’s Public Assistance (PA) Program being administered in response to FEMA 1783-DR-NM. The Village of Ruidoso and the City of Ruidoso Downs have proposed to repair, replace, rehabilitate sections of the interceptor line to reduce the likelihood of raw sewage leaking in the Rio Ruidoso river.

The proposed project would abandon and re-align exposed and vulnerable sections of the interceptor sewer line; restore and rehabilitate sections of the interceptor sewer line damaged by the 2008 flooding and mitigate future damage by armoring key locations of the sewer line within its existing footprint. For the exposed or vulnerable existing interceptor sewer line sections, the proposal is to abandon those existing sewer line sections and re-align the sections by moving the line away from the Rio Ruidoso river. New lines will be placed near and parallel to the current line and they will be buried four (4) feet lower than the current line in order to abide by United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulations.

Most of the rehabilitated line and re-aligned line will continue to allow for gravity flow to carry interceptor sewer line contents down to the Regional Wastewater Treatment facility in the City of Ruidoso Downs. However, two lift stations will be installed, to address two of the most vulnerable sections of the interceptor sewer line. This will allow for movement of sewage through the system where grade does not allow for gravity sewer.

In order to mitigate future damage to the restored and rehabilitated sewer line, the proposal is to armor the interceptor sewer line and install flood mitigation measures immediately adjacent to key interceptor sewer line crossings and interceptor sewer line sections running immediately parallel to the Rio Ruidoso river. In many of these locations, it is infeasible to re-align the interceptor sewer line away from the Rio Ruidoso river, since re-alignment may result in greater impact to the Rio Ruidoso river and private property along the river.

In accordance with 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), and the implementing regulations of FEMA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action on the human and natural environment and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was signed in November 2010. After the 2010 FONSI was issued, the Village of Ruidoso completed additional engineering studies, causing a new scope of work to be developed in 2019. A Final EA was published and a FONSI was signed in October 2020 in accordance with the FEMA’s Instruction 108-1-1 and NEPA.

On February 15, 2022, the Village of Ruidoso requested FEMA to reevaluate the potential impacts associated with a proposed change to the construction schedule and noise requirements condition for the Interceptor Sewer Line in the Village of Ruidoso and the City of Ruidoso Downs Project (Sewer Line Restoration/Rehabilitation). FEMA requested that the Recipient provide a noise abatement plan. FEMA
has determined that the published noise and pumping schedule restrictions cannot be met. To offset potential impacts the Recipient shall require the contractor to mitigate the activity and equipment noise through project-specific “Noise Abatement Plans” that will meet or exceed the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.95.

FEMA has concluded that amending the Final EA to incorporate an extension to the construction schedule, qualifies as a major federal action that will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment, nor does it have the potential for significant cumulative effects. An EIS will not be prepared and the proposed project as described in the Final EA may proceed. The Draft FONSI for the Amended EA for the Proposed Interceptor Sewer Line in the Village of Ruidoso and the City of Ruidoso Downs (Sewer Line Restoration/ Rehabilitation) Project is available for comment and can be viewed and downloaded from the Village of Ruidoso websites https://www.ruidoso-nm.gov/ and https://ruidososewerproject.com/. The Draft FONSI for the Amended EA can also be viewed at the Village of Ruidoso, Ruidoso Public Library located 107 Kansas City Road, Ruidoso, NM 88345 between Monday and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The comment period will end 7 days from the initial notice publication date. Written comments on the Draft FONSI for the Amended EA can be mailed or emailed to Kevin Jaynes, 800 N. Loop 288, Denton, TX 76209 fema-r6-ehp@fema.dhs.gov. If no substantive comments are received, the Amended EA will become final and a Final FONSI will be issued for the project. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.