

DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Water System Rehabilitation and Extension Project Town of Cairo, Ritchie County, West Virginia

NEPA Unique ID# EAXX-202-00-H4P-1770389114

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pittsburgh District (Corps) has prepared a draft environmental assessment (Draft EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The Draft EA, dated January 2026, for the Town of Cairo Water System Rehabilitation and Extension Project evaluates potential environmental impacts associated with the rehabilitation and improvement of the Town of Cairo's existing water supply. Water lines and various appurtenances will be replaced to ensure continuous water supply during repairs, maintain stable pressure for residents, and enhance fire flow capabilities by reducing friction loss and increasing flow to hydrants. These water system rehabilitation efforts will make the Town of Cairo's water system more reliable, efficient, and safe. The Water System Rehabilitation and Extension Project is proposed for federal funding under the Section 219 program located in the Town of Cairo, Ritchie County, West Virginia. The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1992 (Public Law 102-580), as amended, allows the Corps to consider reimbursement for design and/or construction of environmental infrastructure in West Virginia.

The Draft EA, considered two alternatives for the proposed water system rehabilitation and extension. The preferred alternative, ultimately the Proposed Action, includes federal funding for water system rehabilitation and extension including: the Smith Hill-High Street interconnection, Route 31 Water Line Replacement, River Crossing Leak Detection, Silver Run Road Waterline Replacement, and In-Town Waterline Replacement. These improvements aim to create a reliable water system, allow repairs without disrupting service, replace old lines, detect leaks, and upgrade fire hydrants and valves in the Town of Cairo in Ritchie County, West Virginia.

In addition to the preferred alternative, a "no action" alternative was evaluated. For the preferred alternative, the potential effects to the following resources were evaluated:

Environmental Setting	Significant	Minor	No Effect
Land Use			X
Physiography			X
Habitat and Vegetation		X (temporary construction)	
Floodplains			X
Soils			X
Aquatic Habitat/Water Quality		X (temporary construction)	
Wetlands			X
Wild and Scenic Rivers			X
Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste			X
Cultural Resources			X
Threatened and Endangered Species		X (temporary construction)	
Air Quality		X (temporary construction)	
Noise		X (temporary construction)	
Socioeconomic			X
Aesthetics			X
Transportation and Traffic		X (temporary construction)	
Child Health and Safety		X (long-term beneficial)	
Navigation			X
Public Infrastructure		X (long-term beneficial)	
Tribal Trust Resources			X
Changing Weather Patterns			X
Invasive Species			X
Hydrology		X (temporary construction)	

All practical means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. Best management practices (BMPs), as detailed in the Draft EA, will be implemented during construction to minimize environmental impacts. The Proposed Action avoids impacts to wetlands. One stream, Big Run, will be crossed and temporarily impacted by the Proposed Action. No compensatory mitigation is required.

Pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, the Proposed Action is in the process of being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure ESA compliance. The Corps has determined that the project will have no effect to the Indiana bat or the Northern long-eared bat, and that the project will not jeopardize the continued existence of the tricolored bat. Additionally, the Corps has determined that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the longsolid, round hickorynut, or snuffbox mussel. The Corps has also determined that the project will not jeopardize the continued existence of the salamander mussel

or the monarch butterfly and that the proposed project would not adversely modify any proposed critical habitat for the snuffbox mussel.

Pursuant to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the Corps subsequently determined that the Proposed Action will have no effect on archaeological resources and will have no adverse effect on the Bank of Cairo or any other architectural resources eligible for or listed in the National Register. The WV SHPO concurred with this determination on April 15, 2025.

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1972, as amended, the Proposed Action has been found to be compliant with Sections 401 and 404 of the CWA. One stream, Big Run, will be crossed and temporarily impacted by utilizing open cut/trench construction methods to install the water line. In-stream work will be conducted during periods of low flow and will adhere to regulations and guidelines established by the Corps, the WV Department of Environmental Protection (WV DEP), and the WV Division of Natural Resources (WV DNR). No permanent impacts will occur to any stream under the Proposed Action. Stream crossings associated with the Proposed Action will fall under the Corps Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit 3 for Maintenance. As detailed in the Draft EA, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting under Section 402 of the CWA is required. An NPDES General Water Pollution Control Permit was approved by the WV DEP Division of Water and Waste Management (WVR113025).

A 30-day public comment period will occur from 20 February 2026 to 20 March 2026. The Corps will consider all submissions received before the expiration date of the public comment period. The nature or scope of the proposal may be changed upon consideration of the comments received. If significant effects on the quality of the human environment are identified during public comment which cannot be mitigated, the Corps will initiate an Environmental Impact Statement and afford all the appropriate public participation opportunities attendant to an EIS.

Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the recommended plan would not significantly affect the human environment; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Date

NICHOLAS O. MELIN
COLONEL, Corps of Engineers
District Commander