

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Rural Development

Sunnyside Phase II Storage and Generation Project: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to La Plata Electric Association for the development of a solar project in La Plata County, Colorado.

FURTHER INFORMATION: To obtain copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and FONSI, or for further information, contact: Environmental and Historic Preservation Division, USDA Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-1570. The EA and FONSI are also available for public review at:
<https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessment/sunnyside-phase-ii-storage-and-generation-project>
Questions and comments should be emailed to RUS at RUSPublicComments@usda.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed project consists of the construction of a 51 acre solar photovoltaic system and battery energy storage system on LPEA co-op owned property in La Plata County near Durango, CO at 299 CR 218. Alternatives considered by RUS and LPEA are discussed in the Environmental Assessment for Sunnyside Phase II Storage and Generation Project. The RUS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed project.

Based on its EA, with commitments made by LPEA, RUS has concluded that the project will have no significant impact to water quality, wetlands, floodplains, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

The proposed project will have no adverse effect on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed project have been identified. Therefore, RUS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 4231–4347), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), and USDA Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the project.

RUS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been

adequately addressed. RUS's potential federal action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.

Dated: July 17th, 2025