

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

### **Rural Utilities Service**

#### **West River Electric Association: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact**

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA

**ACTION:** Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

**SUMMARY:** Notice is given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance for West River Electric Association for the construction of the Mallridge Substation in Pennington County, South Dakota.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR FOR COPIES OF THE EA AND FONSI, CONTACT:**

RUSPublicComments@usda.gov or, Shawn Boone, Environmental Protection Specialist, USDA, RUS, RD by phone at: 854-202-5472

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The proposed project consists of the construction of a new electrical 69–12.47/7.2 kV distribution substation. The substation will be connected to the future 69kV transmission line located on the north property boundary to improve electrical delivery reliability for West River customers. The project area consists of 8 acres and will impact 0.66 acres of jurisdictional wetlands for the construction of a substation, access road, parking area, and a stormwater pond. Alternatives considered by RUS and West River include: the No Action alternative and other on-site alternatives. The alternatives are discussed in the EA the Corps of Engineers wrote and the RUS adopted. The RUS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed project.

the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District, South Dakota Regulatory Office (Corps) has written an Environmental Assessment that the RUS is adopting. The Corps published a public notice on October 5, 2023. A 21-day comment period was announced in the public notice. One comment was received and addressed by the applicant. The Corps evaluated these responses and found them to be sufficient with no additional discussion required.

Based on the Corps' EA, commitments made by West River, and public comments received, RUS has concluded that the project would have no significant impact (or no impacts) to water quality, wetlands, floodplains, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

The proposed project will result in 'no historic properties affected' regarding resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project will have 'no effect' on federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof. The proposed project would not disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations. The project area is not prime farmland.

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. 4321 et seq.), 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 federal action would 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.

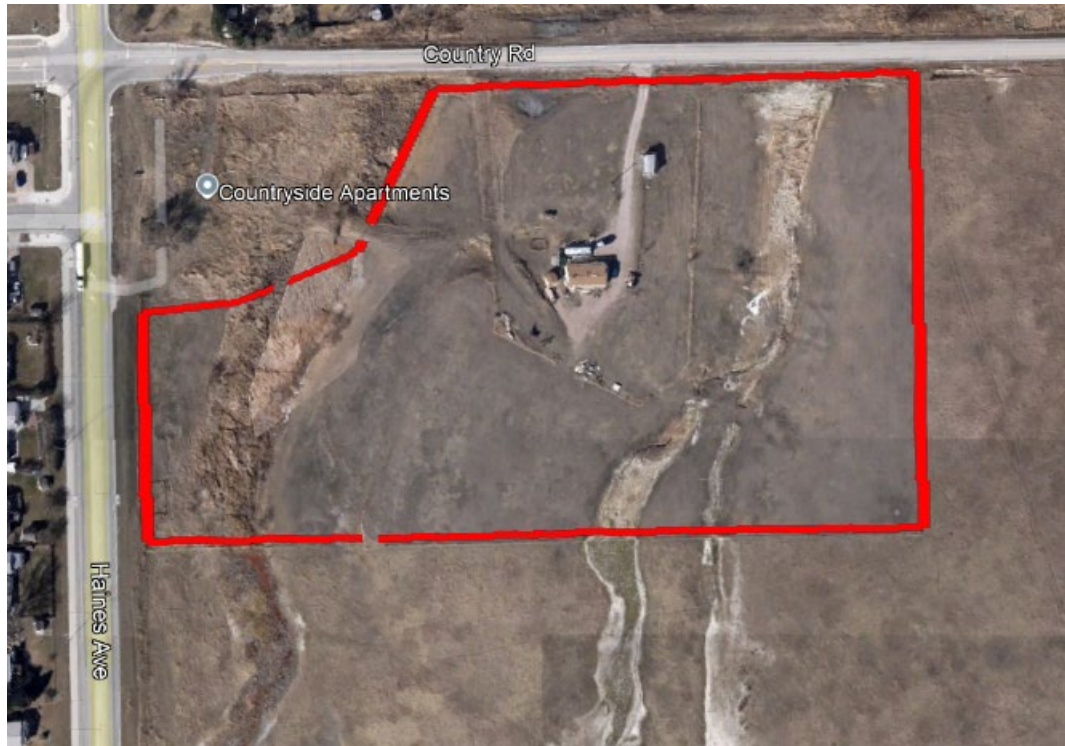


Figure 1  
Location of project area is on Country Road, Rapid City,  
Pennington County, South Dakota.

This Finding of No Significant Impact is effective upon signature.

Dated:

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CHRISTOPHER A. MCLEAN  
Assistant Administrator  
Electric Programs Rural Utilities Service

Contact Person For additional information on this FONSI and EA, please contact Shawn Boone, Environmental Protection Specialist, at [shawn.boone@usda.gov](mailto:shawn.boone@usda.gov).