



CERTIFICATION PROPOSAL

AGUA SUD WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT (EAST) PALMVIEW, TX

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AGUA SUD WASTEWATER COLLECTION AND TREATMENT (EAST) PALMVIEW, TX

- Project:** The proposed project consists of the construction of the wastewater collection system and wastewater treatment infrastructure for the City of Palmview and adjoining areas of the eastern portion of the service area managed by the AGUA Special Utility District (Agua SUD) in Hidalgo County, Texas (the “Project”).
- Project Objective:** The purpose of the Project is to provide access to first-time wastewater services in unserved areas and reduce exposure to untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges by constructing wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure, contributing to the reduction of water pollution and the risk of waterborne diseases.
- Expected Project Outcomes:** The environmental and human health outcomes anticipated for the Project include:
- Provide access to wastewater collection and wastewater treatment services for 1,752 new sewer connections;
 - Provide wastewater treatment capacity of 2.55 million gallons per day (MGD)
 - Initially eliminate untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges of approximately 0.90 MGD.¹
- Population Benefitted:** 8,183 residents of Palmview City, TX and adjoining areas.²
- Sponsor:** The local water utility, *Agua Special Utility District* (AGUA SUD).
- Project Cost:** \$US 44.26 million.

¹ Flows related to the availability of proposed first phase of the centralized collection system infrastructure. The flow quantity does not include total untreated or inadequately treated discharges anticipated to be addressed with the proposed wastewater treatment plant.

² Source: 2010 U.S. Census for Palmview, TX, as well as information provided by the Consultant (S&B Infrastructure Ltd.).

BOARD DOCUMENT BD 2014 -8
 CERTIFICATION PROPOSAL
 PALMVIEW, TX.

**Uses & Sources of
 Funds:**

Uses	Amount	%
Construction, contingencies, supervision and other	\$44,260,000	100.0
TOTAL	\$44,260,000	100.0
Sources	Amount	%
TWDB* - State Revolving Fund (Loan)	\$ 4,220,000	10.0
TWDB-EDAP & SRF Funds (Grant)	32,040,000	72.0
NADB-BEIF (Grant)	8,000,000	18.0
TOTAL	\$ 44,260,000	100.0

*Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Program

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1. ELIGIBILITY

Project Type

The Project falls within the eligible categories of wastewater collection and wastewater treatment.

Project Location

The Project is located in the City of Palmview in Hidalgo County, Texas, approximately three miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border. The Project is in the border region defined as within 100 kilometers (62.5 miles) of the U.S.-Mexico International border.

Project Sponsor and Legal Authority

The public-sector Project sponsor is the *Agua Special Utility District* (“Agua SUD” or the “Utility”). Pursuant to the Texas Administrative Code, Title 6, Subtitle C, Chapter 7201, and Texas Water Code Chapters 49 and 65, Agua SUD has legal authority through a Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN) to develop, operate and maintain water and wastewater system infrastructure within Hidalgo County, Texas. The CCN includes the cities of Palmview, Peñitas, Sullivan, and designated areas surrounding the cities of La Joya and Mission.

2. CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

2.1 TECHNICAL CRITERIA

2.1.1. Project Description

Geographic Location

The Project is located in the City of Palmview and adjoining areas in the southeastern area of the state of Texas. Palmview is at the intersection of U.S. Highway 83 and Farm Road 2061, eight miles northwest of McAllen in Hidalgo County. Figure 1 shows the approximate location of the Project.

Figure 1
PROJECT VICINITY MAP



General Community Profile

Residents within the Agua SUD CCN currently use on-site septic tank/drain filled systems with a few dwellings being served by other types of on-site systems. Due to population density and soil conditions, these systems are generally not considered to be in compliance with regulatory requirements. In a considerable portion of the planning area, a health hazard likely exists, particularly during wet weather. Therefore, the need for a different method of wastewater treatment and collection is necessary.

Due to the size and population concentrations of the Utility’s service area, the development of wastewater system infrastructure has been divided into two separate efforts. New wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure for the west area of the CCN was constructed in 2012 and is currently in operation serving the residents of City of Sullivan and the surrounding area. The east area is subdivided into five (5) phases due to funding constraints; nevertheless Agua SUD is committed to providing sewer service to the entire planning area albeit in phases. The Project proposed for certification will provide new service to the communities of Palmview and surrounding areas as the first phase within the eastern portion of Agua SUD service area.

According to the 2010 census, Palmview had a population of 5,460, with an average annual growth rate of 2.89% for the previous 10 year period. The City’s economic activity is largely based on retail trade and services. The median household Income for the City of Palmview is \$40,556, which is below the state median income of \$50,920.³ The city has an economically

³ Source: 2010 US Census Bureau.

active population of 2,101. Other areas to be served by the Project are unincorporated and census data is not specifically available.

The status of public services in the Agua SUD service area, which includes the city of Palmview and the adjacent areas to be served by the Project, is described in the following table.

**Table 1
 BASIC PUBLIC SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE (AGUA SUD)**

Water System			
Water coverage: ¹	99 %		
Water supply source:	Rio Grande		
Number of hookups: ²	14,350		
Wastewater Collection System			
Coverage: ³	9% (west area only)		
Number of connections: ²	1,325		
Wastewater Treatment			
Service Coverage: ⁴	100% (west area only)		
Treatment facilities:	Plant	Type	Capacity
	Sullivan City	Activated Sludge, Sequencing Batch Reactors (SBR)	1.4 MGD
Solid Waste			
Solid waste collection :	95 %		
Final disposal:	Landfill		
Street Paving			
Coverage:	No data		

¹ Source: Data provided by the Utility, November 2013

² Source: Data provided by the Utility, November 2013

³ Source: Calculation based on water and sewer connection data provided by Utility, 2013.
 MGD= millions of gallons a day

⁴Service coverage for wastewater treatment equals the percentage of discharges collected through the centralized collection infrastructure that are treated by a centralized wastewater treatment facility.

Project Scope

The Project consists of the construction of wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure for the City of Palmview and adjoining areas of the eastern portion of the Agua SUD service area.

The Project includes the following components:

- *Wastewater collection infrastructure (first phase)*, including four lift stations and approximately 160,600 linear feet of gravity sewer lines, 7,875 linear feet of force main lines and 534 manholes;

- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), consisting of a dual SBR train with aerobic digesters and the capacity to treat 2.55 MGD;
- Hookups and decommission of septic tanks for 1,752 dwellings within 49 subdivisions.

Currently, the project area does not have a centralized wastewater collection and treatment system. The implementation of the proposed Project will help eliminate the use of failing septic tanks and cesspools, thereby reducing the risk of exposure to untreated or inadequately treated wastewater for residents in the Project area. The Project will benefit approximately 1,752 households or an estimated 8,183 residents.

The wastewater collection system will connect all dwellings within the project area to the proposed 2.55 MGD Sequencing Batch Reactor (SBR) wastewater treatment plant, which will be located in the southern area of Palmview. As part of the Project, the aging cesspools and septic tanks will be decommissioned once the wastewater collection system is brought online.

The WWTP is designed to be expanded to 7.5 MGD by adding other treatment trains for future needs. The treated wastewater effluent will be discharged to the adjacent Hidalgo County Drainage ditch, which eventually discharges to the Laguna Madre and the Gulf of Mexico. On May 17, 2013, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality issued the corresponding discharge permit number WQ0014415003 for up to 7.55 MGD.

The following figure shows the location of the proposed Palmview Wastewater Collection and Treatment project components.

Figure 2
EAST SEWER COLLECTION INFRASTRUCTURE

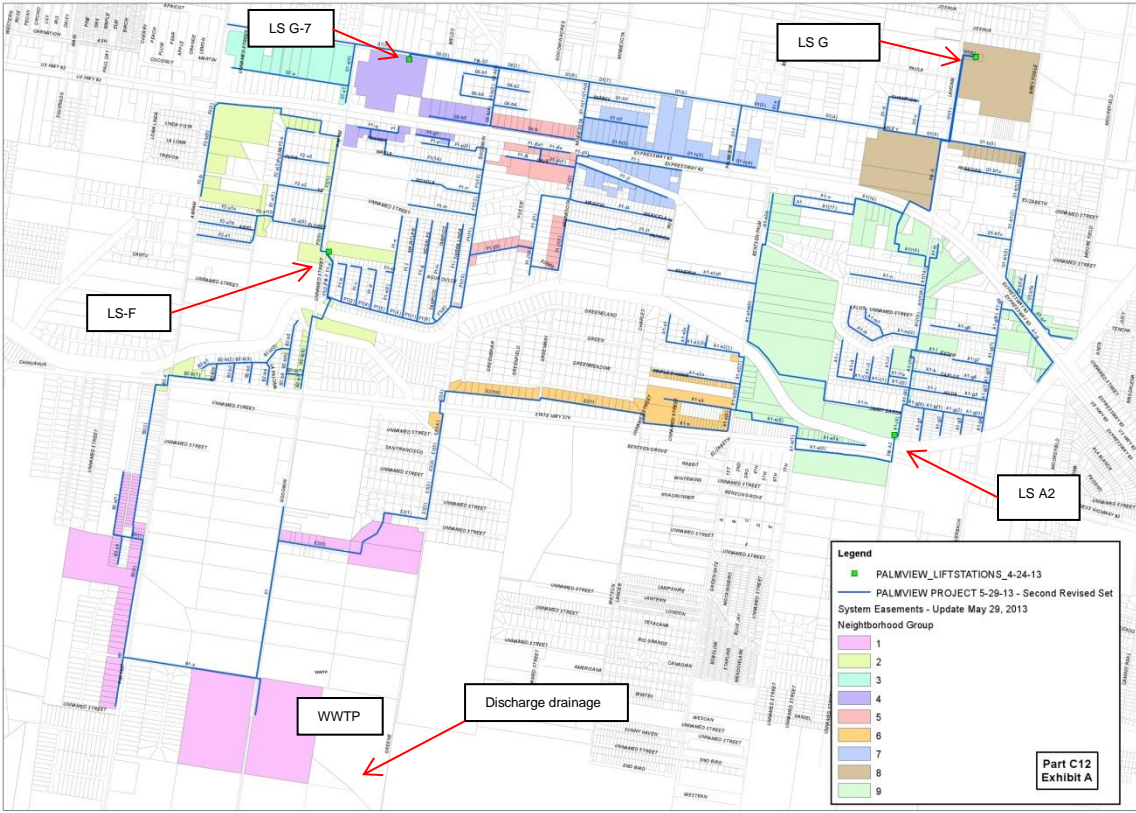
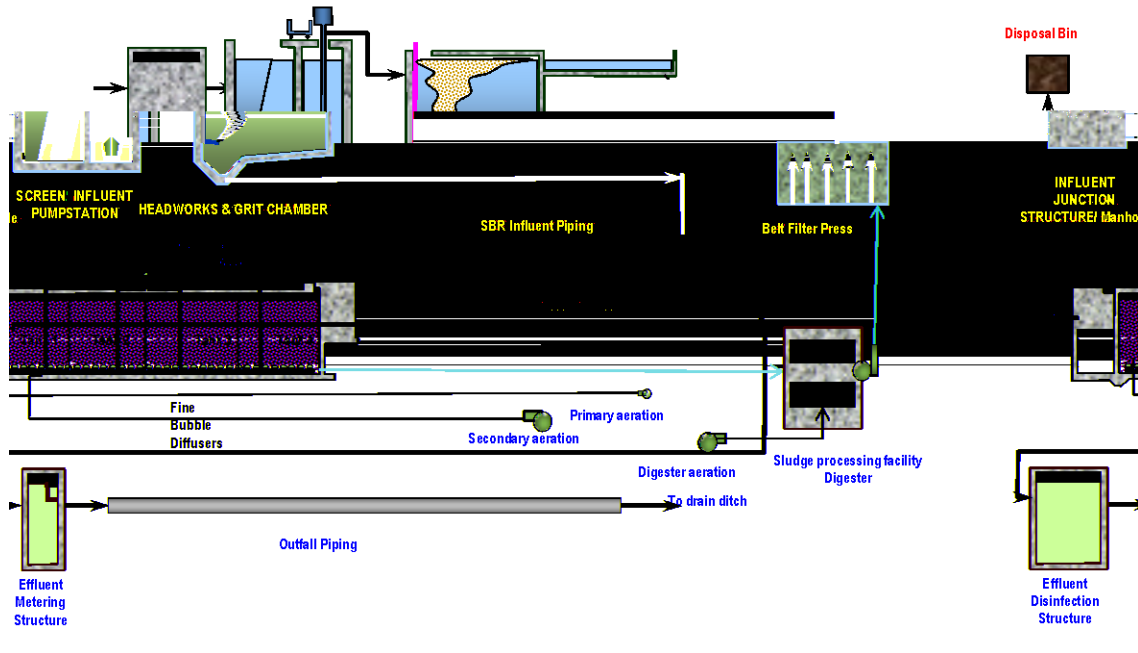


Figure 3 shows the process schematic of the proposed Wastewater Treatment System.

Figure 3
AGUA SUD'S PALMVIEW WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM- PROCESS SCHEMATIC



It is estimated that once the Project receives the notice to proceed, it will take approximately 27 months to complete its construction. Potential factors affecting the Project completion timeline, such as issues with weather or delivery of the materials, were taken into account. The following milestone dates have been estimated.

Table 2
PROJECT MILESTONES

Key Milestones	Status
Easement acquisition	Anticipated second quarter of 2014
Land acquisition – Lift Station LE-F	Anticipated second quarter of 2014
Procurement	Anticipated fourth quarter of 2014
Construction period	27 months from the notice to proceed (NTP).

2.1.2. Technical Feasibility

Design Criteria

The proposed Palmview wastewater collection system and wastewater treatment plant final design were completed in accordance with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) standards as outlined in the Texas Administrative Code Title 30, Part 1, Chapter 217 “*Design Criteria for Domestic Wastewater Systems*”, and the *Agua SUD Rules and Regulations*. Final Designs include the implementation of green building practices as part of the technical construction specifications, with an extensive effort made to achieve energy efficiency and

optimal operational performance. These final designs were reviewed by BECC, NADB, and the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

Selected Technology

As part of the Project development for the Palmview wastewater collection and treatment systems, a Facilities Plan was completed during the planning phase, for which different alternatives were evaluated based on the following attributes:

- Constructability
- Capital cost
- Operations and maintenance (O&M) cost
- Material and equipment reliability
- Environmental impact
- Social/community acceptance
- Topography
- System reliability
- Rights of way and easement requirements
- Pavement removal and replacement
- Technology and sustainable practices

The analysis of alternatives considered for the wastewater collection system included the use of different technologies: Septic Tank Effluent Pumping System (STEP), Septic Tank Effluent Gravity System (STEG), Vacuum Sewer System and Gravity System were thoroughly analyzed in order to select the best option for the Project. In accordance to the characteristics described above, a conventional gravity system was selected as the preferred system for wastewater collection.

Sewer pipe diameters were calculated using slopes and velocities aimed at preventing silting, septic conditions, and over excavation, and minimizing the use of lift stations that might increase Project costs. Maximum flow rate, full build-out in the Project areas and treatment capacity were also taken into consideration for pipe diameter requirements.

With respect to the WWTP, based on discharge quality requirements established by TCEQ on the Discharge Permit, the availability of land, as well as climate conditions in the area, the Project alternative analysis was initiated with eleven alternatives which included the use of on-site treatment, pond systems, trickling filters and other activated sludge processes. From the analyzed process alternatives, only the activated sludge process provides the features that can most reliably meet the effluent limitations set by the Discharge Permit. The three common forms of activated sludge process- the oxidation ditch system, sequential batch reactor system (SBR) , and extended aeration system - were considered for further evaluation.

The SBR was selected as the preferred alternative because the initial capital cost and the O&M cost are less and the footprint is smaller than either the conventional activated sludge or the oxidation ditch. Furthermore, the wastewater treatment plant at Sullivan City also uses the SBR

technology providing an opportunity to minimize staff training, reduce the number of spare parts and allow interchangeability of staff and equipment.

Additionally, the Project designs for the wastewater collection system and the WWTP were refined through a value engineering (VE) effort conducted in October 2012. The main opportunities recommended in the VE report, which were considered to improve the design of both the wastewater collection and treatment systems, included:

1. WWTP site optimization to reduce the construction area and hence, the total cost. This approach included the consolidation of buildings into one facility.
2. Design modifications to eliminate two lift stations.
3. Standardize the lift station design to include only wet well type with the Caisson construction process.

These recommendations resulted in total potential construction cost savings of \$8,150,000.

2.1.3. Land Acquisition and Right-of-way Requirements

Significant land and rights-of-way acquisition have been required for the Project. The 40 acre WWTP site has been acquired. Four lift station properties are required for the Project, three of which have been acquired. Final acquisition tasks for the fourth lift station site are expected to be complete in the second quarter of 2014.

Efforts were made to align the collection pipeline within the public roadways in order to avoid acquisition costs; however, private property easements could not always be avoided. More than 350 utility easements from private property owners are also required for pipe installation. Approximately 60% of the easements have been acquired and the remainder is being pursued through negotiation. This process is also expected to be completed in the second quarter of 2014. Agua SUD does have the authority to take the necessary easements through a condemnation process or may realign the installation as required.

Table 3 describes the status of the land acquisition and easements required for the Project

Table 3
STATUS OF PERMIT AND LAND ACQUISITION

Permit / Site*	Status
Easement acquisition	Anticipated completion - Second quarter of 2014
WWTP land acquisition	Complete
Lift Station sites:	
LE-G	Complete
LE-G-7	Complete
LE-A2	Complete
LE-F	Anticipated completion - Second quarter of 2014

*For all portions of land, sponsor will provide original copies of final registered deeds for BECC and NADB files.

In addition, some collection system pipeline will require special crossing permits through existing infrastructure. Although efforts were made to minimize crossing points for the pipe alignment, the final design for the Projects do require crossings related to U.S. Highway 83 as well as through various irrigation canals scattered throughout the area. For these crossings, temporary permits will be issued by either Texas Department of Transportation or the applicable irrigation district during the construction process. Designs and specifications have been reviewed by the agencies and the process for issuing the permits is not anticipated to face any obstacles at the appropriate time for construction.

All pending land acquisition tasks must be completed prior to final funding commitment.

2.1.4. Management and Operations

Management and operation of the proposed wastewater collection and treatment Project will be the responsibility of the Utility. The sponsor has an O&M manual that includes routine tasks as well as procedures to address unexpected conditions needed to ensure a proper operation of the system. AGUA SUD currently serves approximately 14,350 water hookups and 1,325 wastewater connections in its service area. The Utility is organized in various departments, including: Water Treatment, Operation and Maintenance, and Administration. The impacts of the proposed Project to the O&M budget and procedures have been reviewed and considered sustainable.

In accordance with funding program requirements, the Utility is responsible for demonstrating the regular application of a pretreatment program. On July 30, 2008, Agua SUD adopted rules, regulations, and fees for the District, regulating sewer use, sewer construction and industrial wastewater discharges (Article 13), as provided by Section 7201.021 of the Texas Special District Local Laws Code.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

Palmview residents have drinking water service but currently lack wastewater collection services, relying on failing septic tanks or cesspools for their wastewater disposal. Consequently, there are untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges and runoffs that could potentially reach surface waters within the Rio Grande basin and/or infiltrate to reach the groundwater. Without Project implementation, there is a potential for human contact with raw wastewater and organisms which are vectors for infectious diseases.

With the construction of the wastewater collection system, up to 900,000 gallons per day (gpd) of untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges will be eliminated in the area to be served by the collection system. Additional treatment capacity will be available for future phases of collection infrastructure installation to serve existing populations in the service area. The risk for waterborne diseases transmission and the level of environmental contamination will be reduced as a result of the implementation of the Project.

2.2.1. Compliance with Applicable Environmental Laws and Regulations

Applicable Laws and Regulations

The Project is subject to the environmental clearance process included in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In considering funding from the US-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program, the Project was reviewed in accordance with the U.S. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 USC §§4321-4370f. In accordance with NEPA, Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations found at Title 40 CFR §§1500.1-1508.28, and EPA NEPA regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 6, EPA Region 6 completed the environmental review and clearance process.

Additionally, due to funding participation for the Project through TWDB's Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) and the Economically Distressed Assistance Program (EDAP), the Director of the Project Engineering and Review section, as delegated by the Executive Administrator, must also consider the environmental effects of the Project.

Environmental Studies and Compliance Activities

The Project is subject to regulations under NEPA; therefore an Environmental Information Document (EID) was prepared for the Project. An initial EID was completed for a wastewater collection and treatment system in the Project area in 2001. The EID discloses the environmental impacts that would result from the implementation of the proposed action. The document presents an assessment of the Project alternatives related to the following areas for environmental consequences:

- Air quality, odors, and greenhouse gas emissions
- Noise impacts
- Water quality, hydrology and floodplain impacts
- Biological resources and wetland impacts
- Cultural and historic resource impacts
- Geology and soils impacts
- Municipal and public service impacts
- Public health, hazards and waste management
- Socioeconomic conditions
- Land use and planning
- Transportation and circulation
- Utilities and service systems, and
- Environmental justice

Based on the findings and conclusions of the EID, EPA Region 6 prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), which was issued in October 27, 2001, determining that implementation of the proposed project, will not result in significant impacts to the environment. However, financial and other administrative issues with the previous project sponsor prevented the original project from advancing.

After the current utility was re-established, the Project was re-initiated with some scope modifications and a change in the WWTP site. In order to include Project changes, EPA Region 6 issued an amended FONSI on June 21, 2010. Although the EA concluded that there will be no significant adverse impacts on the environment, mitigation measures were established in the document to address temporary, minor adverse impacts during construction and are enforceable under the FONSI. These measures are provided, in summary, in Section 2.2.2., below, and available for detailed review in the official FONSI document.

In order to comply with the environmental review requirements of the CWSRF and EDAP programs, the Director of the Project Engineering and Review section, as delegated by the Executive Administrator of the TWDB, issued a Statement of Findings for the proposed project on April 25, 2013, which, in effect, adopted the findings of the FONSI issued by the EPA .

Pending Environmental Tasks and Authorizations

There are no environmental authorizations pending.

Compliance Documentation

The following authorizations have been obtained for the Project:

- Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) Authorization by EPA signed on October 27, 2001, an amendment signed on June 21, 2010.
- Statement of Findings issued by TWDB on April 25, 2013.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Discharge Permit No. WQ0014415003, issued by TCEQ on May 17, 2013

2.2.2. Environmental Effects/Impacts

Existing Conditions and Project Impact – Environment

Wastewater service in the planning area is presently being provided by on-site septic tank/drain filed systems. Due to population density and soil conditions these systems are generally not considered to be in compliance with regulatory requirements. In a considerable portion of the planning area potential for human contact with raw wastewater likely exists, particularly during wet weather. The Texas Department of State Health Services issued an opinion that a nuisance existed in the project area, considered dangerous to the public health and safety. Therefore, the need for a different method of wastewater treatment and collection is required. The following are the expected Project environmental benefits:

- Provide access to wastewater collection and wastewater treatment services for 1,752 new sewer connections;
- Provide wastewater treatment capacity of 2.55 million gallons per day (MGD);

- Eliminate untreated wastewater discharges of approximately 0.90 MGD.⁴

Mitigation of Risks

Although implementation of the Projects will have no significant adverse impacts on the environment, mitigation measures were established to address temporary, minor adverse impacts during construction. Potential impacts during construction include the following:

- The local air basin will be temporarily impacted by emissions of carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide and sulfur dioxide emissions due to vehicles and equipment used during construction.
- Noise levels may be elevated during construction activities. This impact is short in duration and concentrated to the work area and will include temporary roadway blockages; as well as presence of workers in the area.
- Surface water resources could be temporarily impacted by construction storm water runoff.
- Threatened and endangered species may be disturbed.

In summary, the mitigation measures include the following:

- Best Management Practices (BMP) and compliance with local ordinances to reduce the temporary impacts of construction.
- If threatened or endangered species happen to be encountered during construction, work will cease immediately and the District will notify U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6. Mitigation measures will be taken in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Natural Resources Conservation

The Project contributes to reduce environmental deterioration by installing wastewater collection lines and providing the necessary means to collect and convey these flows to the proposed WWTP. Additionally, green building practices and improvements found during the value engineering process support efficient design and construction activities such as the elimination of lift stations and use of gravity systems to reduce energy costs as well as procedures to minimize dewatering and earth movements in the Project area. Also, the treatment technology chosen for the Project provides high energy efficiency and the facility footprint is smaller with fewer impacts to the natural landscape.

No-action Alternative

The no-action alternative was not considered viable for the project, since the chronic condition of the existing on-site systems could result in significant health and safety hazards. The use of septic systems with drain fields and other types of on-site disposal systems present serious

⁴ Flows related to the availability of proposed first phase of the centralized collection system infrastructure. The flow quantity does not include total untreated or inadequately treated discharges anticipated to be addressed with the proposed wastewater treatment plant.

health issues, particularly during wet weather. Additionally, the new service infrastructure will eliminate the discharge of untreated or inadequately treated wastewater into the environment and associated impacts on water quality and public health will be avoided. Finally, the Nuisance Order issued for the Project area would not be addressed without the implementation of the Project and individual residents could be found in non-compliance to current regulations.

Existing Conditions and Project Impact – Health

According to the “World Health Organization Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Links to Health FACTS AND FIGURES – *updated November 2004”, sanitation projects can have the following benefits to human health:

- Improved sanitation reduces diarrhea morbidity by 32%.
- Access to safe water and sanitation facilities and better hygiene practice can reduce morbidity from ascariasis by 29%.⁵

Project implementation is expected to reduce the health risks associated with uncontrolled discharges and inadequate on-site wastewater treatment. The Project will reduce the possibility of human contact with improperly disposed and partially treated or raw wastewater; as a result, it will reduce the transmission of water borne diseases.

Waterborne diseases are caused by pathogenic microorganisms that are transmitted as a result of inadequate wastewater disposal practices and unsafe water supplies. An individual may become ill after drinking water that has been contaminated with these organisms; eating uncooked foods that have been in contact with contaminated water; or through poor hygiene habits that contribute to the dissemination of diseases by direct or indirect human contact. Table 4 shows waterborne statistics for Hidalgo County in Texas.

**Table 4
 WATERBORNE DISEASE STATISTICS FOR PALMVIEW, TEXAS**

Disease	Number or Annual Cases				
	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Amoebiasis	2	2	0	2	1
Campylobacteriosis	32	86	67	52	67
Cryptosporidiosis	4	5	14	10	5
Shigellosis	134	234	355	268	84

Source: Texas Department of State Health Services.

There is a risk of exposure to untreated or inadequately treated wastewater due to malfunctioning on-site wastewater disposal systems, which increases the exposure risk of area residents to waterborne diseases. The infrastructure to be implemented under this Project will reduce this risk and thus prevent potential health threats. Additionally, the Project is intended

⁵ WHO, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Links to Health, Facts and figures updated November 2004 (http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/facts2004/en/).

to address the conditions as documented in the Nuisance Order issued by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Transboundary Effects

Due to the proximity of Palmview with several Mexican cities located in the Northern area of the State of Tamaulipas, there are frequent border crossings between these communities. The construction of wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure, in these currently unserved areas, will have a direct positive impact on the health of residents of communities adjacent to the border and throughout the entire region, since these actions will help reduce the risk for waterborne diseases caused by exposure to untreated discharges. Additionally, the Project's implementation will reduce the potential for contamination of shared bodies of water, including the Rio Grande.

2.3 FINANCIAL CRITERIA

The total estimated cost of the Project is US\$44,260,000 which includes the funding for construction, supervision, contingencies and other. The Project meets all BEIF program criteria and has been approved by EPA for a BEIF grant of up to US\$8,000,000 for the Wastewater Collection and Treatment to complete the financing of the Project. Table 5 presents a breakdown of total Project costs, as well as the source of funds.

**Table 5
 USES AND SOURCES OF FUNDS
 (US\$)**

Uses	Amount	%
Construction, contingencies, supervision and other	\$44,260,000	100.0
TOTAL	\$44,260,000	100.0
Sources	Amount	%
TWDB*-State Revolving Fund (Loan)	\$4,220,000	10.0
TWDB-EDAP & SRF Funds (Grant)	32,040,000	72.0
NADB-BEIF Grant	8,000,000	18.0
TOTAL	\$44,260,000	100.0

*Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Program

3 PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION

3.1 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

BECC published the draft certification proposal for a 30-day public comment period beginning February 20, 2014. The following Project documentation was made available upon request:

- Facilities Plan for a Wastewater Collection System and Wastewater Treatment Plant for the Eastern Agua SUD service Area. S & B Infrastructure, LTD, 2012
- Environmental Information Document for the Proposed Agua Special Utility District (SUD) East Service Area Wastewater Collection and Treatment System Improvement Project-Hidalgo County, (2001)
- Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed wastewater collection and treatment systems for Agua Special Utility District East Service Area, October 27, 2001.
- Amended Finding of No Significant Impact for the proposed wastewater collection and treatment systems for Agua Special Utility District East Service Area, July 21, 2010.
- Statement of Findings issued by TWDB on April 25, 2013.
- Nuisance report by the Texas Department of Health (October 2nd, 2001)
- Final Design for the Palmview Wastewater Treatment Plant, Palmview, TX,S & B Infrastructure, LTD, July 2013
- Final Design for the Palmview Wastewater Collection System, Palmview, TX,S & B Infrastructure, LTD, May 2013
- Discharge Permit for the Wastewater Treatment Plant TPDES PERMIT NO. WQ0014415003, issued by TCEQ on May 17, 2013
- Public Participation Report including Public Meeting Minutes, pictures, articles and materials.

The public comment period ended on March 23, 2014, with no comments received.

3.2 OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The Utility conducted extensive outreach efforts to communicate the Project characteristics, including cost and fees and to obtain the support of the residents of the Project area. In accordance with the public outreach requirements of the BEIF program, activities such as the use of a local steering committee, public meetings, and appropriate project information access where conducted as described in the Public Participation Plan (PPP). The following information provides a summary of the outreach activities carried out for the Project.

The Local Steering Committee was formed on September 12, 2013. The steering committee included members of the community and the Utility's staff. The steering committee developed a public participation plan and periodically met with the Project team to help the Utility to

disseminate information regarding the Project. The Project's technical and financial information was made available to the public for review. The Local Steering Committee, with assistance of the Agua SUD personnel, prepared a fact sheet and a presentation on the Project. Information on the Project was presented to the community during two public meetings.

The first Public Meeting notice was posted at the Utility and published September 24, 2013 in the McAllen Monitor. Additionally, notices were sent out to all service users in their September monthly water bill. The first public meeting was held on October 24, 2013 at the Agua SUD Offices. Based on the sign-in sheet, the meeting was attended by more than 20 individuals. This meeting informed the residents of the Project characteristics, potential funding sources, and future household connections.

A second public meeting was held on January 23, 2014. During the meeting the community was informed of the proposed funding structure and potential environmental impacts of the Project. The meeting was attended by 14 residents showing their support and interest towards Project implementation. The meeting served as a discussion forum for the attendees and Project support was documented through a survey conducted at the event in which 100% of the attendants expressed their understanding and support to the Project.

Additionally, the Project included a public comment process with the publication of the environmental clearance finding on June 21, 2010. No public comments were received related to the proposed Project, WWTP site, or identified environmental effects of the Project.

The Project sponsor informed BECC that no comments expressing concern about the Project were received related to the public outreach process.

BECC conducted a media search to identify potential public opinion about the Project (construction of a wastewater collection, conveyance and treatment (2.55 MGD) infrastructure located in Palmview, TX). The majority of the articles regarding the Project are on the testimony given before the Texas Water Development Board in fall 2013. The information posted on these sites explained the need for services in the area and did not have comments from residents and did not have any negative comments posted from readers. No opposition to the Project was detected in the media search.

References to the Project were found on the websites listed below:

- http://m.themonitor.com/news/local/article_0863d692-3872-11e3-9c73-0019bb30f31a.html?mode=iqm
(Posted October 2013, article focused on financing from the Texas Water Development Board, mentions NABD funding)
- <http://www.myharlingennews.com/?p=30957> (Posted on Wednesday, June 6, 2012 article on BECC's TA for the project)

The following sites mentioned the project but did not state BECC/NADB participation:

- <http://www.foxrio2.com/palmview-awarded-multi-million-dollar-water-measure/>
(Posted on October 17, 2013, article on the financing approved by the Texas Water Development Board)
- <http://www.kveo.com/news/315m-funding-tx-state-water-board-awarded-agua-sud>
(Posted on October 18, 2013, article on financing approved by the Texas Water Development Board)
- <http://www.kveo.com/news/palmview-getting-new-wastewater-plant> (Posted on October 23, 2013, article focuses on plans to build a wastewater treatment plant)
- http://www.themonitor.com/news/local/article_32c7fe1e-c7d7-5a9c-98d2-da924f0d1ee9.html (Posted Dec. 2011, article on Agua SUD testifying before Texas Water Development Board for funding, does mention the TA grant from BECC).