

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY  
ADMINISTRATION OF APPALACHIAN REGIONAL COMMISSION  
GRANT TO CONSTRUCT SEWAGE SYSTEM FACILITIES FOR NEW  
TOYOTA MANUFACTURING FACILITY  
LEE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI**

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) proposes to administer a \$1.5 million Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) grant to help fund approximately 11.9 miles of 18-inch and 24-inch diameter force main sewer line in Tupelo, Lee County, Mississippi, and upgrade an existing pumping station. The grant has been awarded to the Pontotoc, Union, and Lee County Alliance (PUL Alliance), which would own the line and be responsible for its construction.

The proposed sewer line would serve the new Toyota Mississippi Manufacturing facility currently under construction in the Blue Springs Community along U.S. Highway 78, approximately 10 miles from the project area. The total cost of the line is estimated to be \$9,287,700, and the portion of this cost not funded by the ARC grant is being funded by the state of Mississippi, acting through the PUL Alliance. TVA has reviewed the proposed action and reasonable alternatives in an environmental assessment (EA) in accordance with its procedures implementing the National Environmental Policy Act. This EA is incorporated by reference.

Two alternatives, the No Action Alternative and an Action Alternative, were developed. Under the No Action Alternative, the construction of the sewer line and upgrade of the pumping station would probably be delayed while another federal agency was found to administer the ARC grant or other sources of funding were found to support the project. Impacts under this alternative likely would be similar to or greater than the impacts discussed below, depending on where and how the line would be constructed.

Based on the analysis in the EA, TVA concludes that the Action Alternative would have minor and insignificant impacts to terrestrial ecology, aquatic resources at crossings of 24 intermittent/seasonal streams and one perennial stream, and the Natchez Trace Parkway. There would be no impacts to wetlands. Portions of the proposed sewer line are located in floodplains. The construction would not adversely affect flooding or floodplain values and is considered a repetitive action in the 100-year floodplain. The proposed action is consistent with Executive Order 11988 on floodplain management.

No plants or animals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act or designated critical habitat for these species would be affected. With the implementation of routine best management practices, no adverse effects to state-listed plants or animals are anticipated.

The proposed action would not adversely affect any historic properties eligible for or listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with this determination in a letter dated April 14, 2008. The Choctaw Nation (Nation) of Oklahoma commented on May 8, 2008, that to the best of their knowledge, the project would have no adverse effect on any historic properties, but if construction exposed buried archaeological or building materials, the Nation should be contacted immediately. The Jena

Band of Choctaw Indians commented on May 19, 2008, that they had determined there would be no significant impact concerning their tribe.

The Chickasaw Nation commented on June 2, 2008, that the area is very important to them because of its religious and cultural significance. They noted that the proposed sewer line is in a location that contains hundreds of historic and sacred sites once used by the Chickasaw Nation, who did not abandon these sites but were forcibly removed by federal action. Because of the potential to uncover sacred sites, they requested that an archaeologist monitor construction of the sewer line in undisturbed areas. They also requested that in the event of inadvertent discoveries, all construction activities cease and the Chickasaw Nation be notified immediately so that they may evaluate and determine if confidential Chickasaw sacred sites have been discovered. In the case of discovery, they requested that sites be avoided.

### **Mitigation**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state of Mississippi, and National Park Service have made their approvals contingent on the use of best management practices and other measures listed in the EA. In addition to these conditions, TVA will require the following additional mitigation measure to reduce potential adverse effects on archaeological sites of importance to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma and the Chickasaw Nation:

- The PUL Alliance will hire a professional archaeologist to monitor the construction of the sewer line in undisturbed areas between the Haven Acres Pumping Station and the Tupelo Wastewater Treatment Plant and will provide the archaeologist written authority to stop construction if sites are located that could be of concern to the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma or the Chickasaw Nation. This archaeologist will be approved by TVA. A detailed monitoring plan is contained in Appendix A of the EA.

### **Conclusion and Findings**

Based on the findings listed above and the analyses in the associated EA, we conclude that the proposed activities involving the construction of the new sewer line would not be a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the environment. Accordingly, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. This Finding of No Significant Impact is contingent upon adherence to the permit conditions imposed by other agencies and the identified mitigation measure.



*June 11, 2008*

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Date Signed