

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

**Pit River New Tribal Health Clinic  
Shasta County, California**

**Rural Development  
U.S. Department of Agriculture**

**Pit River Health Service**

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## **A. INTRODUCTION**

The Pit River Health Service (PRHS) plans to submit a financing request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDA RD) to construct the proposed Pit River New Tribal Health Clinic Project (Project) in Shasta County, California (Project). The USDA RD is considering this financing request. Prior to taking a federal action (i.e., providing financial assistance), The USDA RD is required to complete an environmental impact analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (U.S.C. 4231 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and RD's NEPA implementing regulations, Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970). After completing an independent analysis of an environmental report prepared by PRHS and its consultant, the USDA RD concurred with its scope and content. In accordance with 7 CFR § 1970.102, the USDA RD adopted the report and issued it as the Agency's Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed Project. The USDA RD finds that the EA is consistent with federal regulations and meets the standards for an adequate assessment. The PRHS published a newspaper notice, announcing the availability of the EA for public review, in accordance with 7 CFR § 1970.102. In addition, the USDA RD considers the proposed Project an undertaking subject to review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), 16 USC 470(f), and its implementing regulation, "Protection of Historic Properties" (36 CFR Part 800).

## **B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE/NEED**

The overall purpose of the Project is to provide comprehensive, well-coordinated "continuum of care" medical and dental services delivery systems. The facility will be designed to provide an expansion of current Primary Care and Dental services, as well as facilities for Pharmacy, and Optometry which are currently not offered. The USDA RD has reviewed the purpose and need for the Project and determined that the proposal will meet the present and future needs of the PRHS.

## **C. ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED**

### **1. No Action**

Under the No Action Alternative, the USDA RD would not provide financial assistance to PRHS, and/or the proposed Project would not be constructed. This alternative would not assist the PRHS in expanding the existing Medical, Dental and Behavioral Health and add new optometry and pharmacy services.

### **2. Action Alternative (Preferred Alternative)**

Under the Action Alternative, the USDA RD would consider financing the proposed Project, and the PRHS would construct the New Tribal Health Clinic. The proposed project includes the construction of a new approximately 13,330 square foot new single-story B occupancy clinic building. The new construction would also include an approximately 600 square foot connector building to join the new construction with the existing clinic building. In addition, approximately 3,600 square feet of the existing approximately 8,000

square foot clinic will be remodeled. The final, unified facility will be approximately 22,000 square feet and will include clinical and office space for ambulatory medical, dental, behavioral health, outreach, pharmacy, optometry, laboratory, radiology, purchased/referred care, billing, and other support services. The pharmacy and optometry will be new services, as well as expanding existing lab, and radiology services, and expanding space for Dental and Medical Departments.

### 3. Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration

In addition to the No Action Alternative and Action Alternative, the PRHS considered other siting alternatives, which are documented in the **Alternatives** section of the EA.

#### D. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The analyses in the EA documented that the proposed Project would have no adverse effects to Land Use/Land Ownership and Socioeconomics/Environmental Justice. A summary of anticipated impacts on the human environment is provided below, including any mitigation measures deemed necessary to avoid or minimize impacts. The PRHS is responsible for implementing these measures.

**Floodplains** - The Proposed Action includes the construction of an approximately 13,330 square foot single-story clinic building with an approximately 600 square foot connector building that would join to the existing approximately 8,000 square foot clinic building. A portion of the existing clinic to be renovated is within a .01 percent Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone (100-year floodplain), as defined by FEMA. Additionally, a portion of the proposed new clinic is within a 0.2 percent Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone (500-year floodplain). The Pit River Health Service has completed the eight-step decision making process for floodplain impacts, per Executive Order 11988, in Section 2(a) and no practical alternatives were identified. Therefore, the buildings may be subject to flooding. The impact of flooding at any of the potential building sites will be affected by the ability of storm water drainage systems to managing flood waters. The new healthcare facility, as well as the renovations to be completed to the existing clinic, would be designed with storm water drainage systems that would manage storm water by infiltration into drainage swales or discharged into local drainage channels with adequate capacity and would not result in impacts related to placement of structures in floodplains. In addition, the new tribal clinic buildings would be designed to be constructed above grade on a slab in an effort to raise the new buildings to above the flood levels. Therefore, there would be no significant impacts related to the placement of structures in the floodplain with the incorporation of mitigation measures Floodplain-1 and Waters-1.

**Wetlands** - A jurisdiction delineation was conducted and determined that there are wetlands located adjacent to the Project area. Staging and access into the Project area would not occur within areas that contain wetlands. In addition, Best Management Practices and Mitigation Measures (Wetlands-1 and Waters-2) would be in place during construction to control erosion and sediment would reduce the potential for run-off into the wetland areas, as

well as protect water quality and riparian-wetland habitat adjacent to the Project area.

**Cultural Resources** - A Cultural Resources pedestrian survey was conducted and no prehistoric artifacts, historic materials, buildings, or structures older than 50 years were observed. Although no sites were found within the Area of Potential Effect, mitigation measures would be in place to require the full-time presence of Atsuge Band tribal monitors during all ground-disturbing activities to ensure no impacts for the inadvertent discovery of cultural resources and the treatment of human remains that may be discovered during ground-disturbing (Cultural-1 & Cultural-2).

**Biological Resources** - A Biological Survey was performed. Based on the results of the survey, as well as desktop records searches, the Evening Grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertinus*) is known to breed in the project area from May 15 to August 10. If the project requires removal of vegetation suitable for nesting birds during the avian nesting season (Generally February through August), a preconstruction nesting bird survey would be conducted for compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (Bio-1). In addition, the Project will comply with the requirements of the Executive Order 13112 by the incorporation of Mitigation Measure Bio -2, which would require seeding the disturbed areas with a mixture of native herbaceous vegetation after construction which will discourage the establishment of non-native species and promote the restoration of native species.

**Water Resources** - The construction of the new facility would involve some removal of native vegetation, grading, and earth-moving activities. This would expose native soils and increase the potential for erosion and sedimentation, which could have a negative impact to adjacent water bodies as a result of storm water runoff. The construction site may also introduce water pollutants, including paints, solvents, concrete, drywall, pesticides and fertilizers, construction debris and trash, and spilled oil, fuel, and other fluids from construction vehicles to storm water runoff. Mitigation Measures Water Resources-1 and Water Resources-2 would be implemented that would reduce impacts by designing a drainage plan prior to construction and ensure adherence to BMPs during construction so as to avoid potential impacts to Burney Creek.

**Air Quality** - Construction of the project will require the use of heavy equipment and vehicles within the project area, and travel to and from the site with materials and construction personnel. The California Environmental Protection Agency Air Resources Board (CARB) has published federal, state and local statutes governing emissions caused by heavy equipment and vehicles (CARB 2015). Therefore, during construction, it is expected that there would be short-term construction-related impacts to air quality. The project would include Best Management Practices (Air-1) to be in place during construction that would reduce these short-term construction impacts.

**Noise** - Construction of the Project would consist of grading, the erection of foundations and buildings, and finishing work. The construction noise would be intermittent and temporary. The construction activity noise levels at and near the Project area would fluctuate depending on the particular type, number, and duration of use of various pieces of construction equipment. The nearest sensitive noise receptor to construction activities are residences

located approximately 100 feet to the north of the Project area. Therefore, certain construction activities could impact those users. Construction noise would only occur during the weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7p.m., with no weekend or evening construction. Best Management Practices (Noise-1) would be implemented that would further reduce short-term construction noise impacts on sensitive receptors.

**Transportation** - The existing health care facility is currently in operation on Park Avenue. The existing facility will remain in operation until the new facility is completed. Once the new facility is complete, the existing facility will then be renovated. During construction, there will be minimal short-term impacts on traffic patterns from trucks entering and leaving the Project area. Travel trips by the construction crew, along with transport of equipment and materials, would add to the current traffic volumes on SR-299, Tamarack Avenue and Park Avenue, but the increase would not be significant and long-term. The impacts to local traffic would most likely occur in the early morning and at the end of the construction day and the amount of traffic would fluctuate depending on the phase of construction. In addition, the staging area and construction crew parking would be located adjacent to the Project area and all vehicles would therefore enter and exit from the same area. A mitigation measure (Traffic-1) would be implemented for any traffic changes that may occur during construction, if any.

**Aesthetics** - The Project would provide a noticeable visual contrast from the existing condition. The project would include the construction of approximately 13,300 square feet of space and parking would be located along Park Avenue. The new facility would be set back from Park Avenue and would be constructed using a combination of exterior wood siding, stucco, and stone veneer. The elevations of the Project would not exceed single-story structures and there would be no significant impacts to existing viewsheds of the surrounding area. Although implementation of the Project may involve short-term, construction-related impacts to visual quality, the new facility would be designed to provide consistency with the surroundings. In addition, the Project would introduce new lighting sources to an existing undeveloped area. The area is currently surrounded with commercial development and limited residential development. A mitigation measure (Aesthetics-1) would be implemented to ensure new sources of lighting would be designed to avoid significant increases in nighttime light.

**Human Health and Safety** - A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was performed and no hazardous wastes or materials were observed in the Project area and no known histories of storage and/or use of hazardous materials have been documented. The Project may have short-term impacts during grading and construction from the use of hazardous materials, which may include substances such as gasoline, diesel fuel, motor oil, hydraulic fluid, solvents, cleaners, and sealants. Mitigation measures (Human Health and Safety-1) would be in place to ensure the proper storage and handling of materials and plans are in place for the accidental spill of materials.

#### **E. PUBLIC AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT**

A local newspaper advertisement [and as appropriate, legal notice], announcing the availability of the EA and participation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, was/were published on

April 27, 2022 and May 4, 2022, in the Intermountain News in Burney, California. A copy of the EA was available for public review at the Pit River Health Service - Burney Clinic, located at 36977 Park Avenue, Burney, California 96013, (530) 335-3651. The environmental assessment was also available for review on the PRHS website: [www.pitriverhealthservice.org](http://www.pitriverhealthservice.org). The 14-day comment period ended on May 11, 2022. The USDA RD received one comment from the Indian Health Service. The comment included clarifications to mitigation measures, as well as corrections to the public review EA. All the comments were responded to by providing additional language, as well as correcting misspelling in the EA. The comment letter and response has been included as Appendix J of the Final EA.

#### **F. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Based on its EA, the USDA RD has concluded that the proposed Project would have no significant effects to Land Use/Land Ownership, Wetlands, Cultural Resources, Biological Resources, Water Resources, Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice, Air Quality, Noise, Transportation, Aesthetics, and Human Health and Safety. The proposed Project will have no effects on historic properties listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and no effects to federally listed species or designated critical habitat.

The proposed Project would not disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations.

In accordance with 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 RD's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970), the USDA RD has determined that the environmental impacts of the proposed Project have been adequately addressed and that no significant impacts to the quality of the human environment would result from construction and operation of the proposed Project. Any final action by USDA RD related to the proposed Project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant federal and state environmental laws and regulations. Because USDA RD's action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, the USDA RD will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its potential federal action associated with the proposed Project.

#### **G. USDA RD LOAN REVIEW AND RIGHT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW**

This FONSI is not a decision on a loan application and therefore not an approval of the expenditure of federal funds. Issuance of the FONSI and its notices concludes the USDA RD's environmental review process. The ultimate decision on loan approval depends upon conclusion of this environmental review process in addition to financial and engineering reviews. Issuance of the FONSI and publication of notices will allow for these reviews to proceed. The decision to provide financial assistance also is subject to the availability of loan funds for the designated purpose in the USDA RD's budget. There are no provisions to appeal this decision (i.e., issuance of a FONSI). Legal challenges to the FONSI may be filed in Federal District Court under the Administrative Procedures Act.

**H. APPROVAL**

This Finding of No Significant Impact is effective upon signature.

Dated: May 25, 2022

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For additional information on this FONSI and EA, please contact J. Michael Colbert, USDA Loan Specialist, State Environmental Coordinator - Community Facility and WEP Programs [USDA RD], 221 W. 8<sup>th</sup> street, Alturas, CA 96101, (530) 233-4137 x112, [mike.colbert@usda.gov](mailto:mike.colbert@usda.gov).