

**Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed
Activity in a Floodplain – Bethel, Maine**

To: All interested Agencies, Groups, and Individuals

The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) intends to fund the following Proposed Action under the Catalyst Program. NBRC will prepare an 8-Step Decision-Making Process review in compliance with Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) as amended by Executive Order 13690 (Establishing a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard and a Process for Further Soliciting and Considering Stakeholder Input), which established a more protective standard for evaluating flood risk to ensure projects funded by the Federal government are more resilient to the impacts of flooding.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to rehabilitate the wastewater treatment facility responsible for collecting and treating wastewater generated by the Town of Bethel. This aligns with the NBRC Category of Basic Public Infrastructure, as the project aims to modernize the wastewater system. The Proposed Action includes renovating both the interior and exterior of the existing facility (approximate GPS coordinates: 44°24'43.5" N, 70°47'10.4" W) to replace aging equipment and improve operational efficiency. Planned upgrades will modernize the WWTF Main Building. This includes replacements of outdated interior components, such as HVAC, electrical, plumbing, and architectural elements. Additionally, outdated PLCs (Programmable Logic Controllers) will be replaced in the control room.

Interior renovations will focus on enhancing laboratory space, dedicated equipment storage, and employee facilities, including lockers, administrative and meeting spaces, a control room, and chemical storage. Most of the original structure will be reused, with construction primarily involving interior renovations and a 1,000-square-foot expansion to accommodate a new laboratory. The structural integrity of the existing building will be assessed to determine the extent of necessary renovations. Exterior updates may include new siding and/or a new roof.

The FFRMS floodplain for the Proposed Action was determined using the 0.2-percent-annual-chance Flood Approach (0.2PFA). This decision was based on the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), which identifies the property as being within the 500-year floodplain. The NBRC has determined that the parcel and the existing building footprint are located in an FFRMS floodplain and warrant an analysis under the 8-Step Decision-Making Process.

This notice provides people who may be affected by the Proposed Action and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment with an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate impacts.

Comments should be submitted by email to nepa@nbrc.gov. The public comment period must begin the day after the publication date and run for 15 days. NBRC is accepting comments on this notice from January 3, 2025, through the end of the day of January 18, 2025.

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