Message

From: Maier, Brent [Maier.Brent@epa.gov]
Sent: 12/8/2017 5:31:14 PM
To: Paul Babbitt (paul.babbitt@mail.house.gov) [paul.babbitt@mail.house.gov]
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Subject: U.S. EPA - Question Regarding Follow Up on Hopi Arsenic Mitigation Project
Attachments: HOPI 12.1.17.docx

Paul –

On our recent call on Tuesday, January 5th, we discussed briefly the arsenic mitigation project with the Hopi and wanted to check to see if you feel there is a need to set up a separate call to discuss, or whether the information in the attached Hope fact sheet provided you with all the information you needed. Please let me know and if there is a need for a follow up call, I would be happy to set that up with my Water Division colleague Emmanuelle Rapicavoli.

Here is the text from the attached fact sheet on arsenic:

Arsenic

Naturally-occurring arsenic is found in the First and Second Mesa areas of the Reservation. Eight of the 15 Hopi public water systems have arsenic levels above the primary drinking water standard (MCL). Currently three of those systems operate arsenic treatment plants, with a fourth treatment plant under construction at the Hopi Cultural Center. A regional water system (Hopi Arsenic Mitigation Project, or HAMP) that will have its source wells located in an area (Turquoise Trail) with arsenic levels below the MCL has been developed by the Hopi Tribe. The four remaining systems with the high arsenic levels: Polacca, Sipaulovi, Mishongnovi and Shungopavi, plan to purchase water from the HAMP once constructed.

Since 2006, USEPA has provided approximately $6 million of DWTSA funding towards the development of the HAMP. IHS has contributed approximately $1 million. Thus far USEPA funding has been used for planning activities including hydrogeological studies, the completion of a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), a Strategic (or Business) Plan for the new utility and an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed waterline routing. The funding has also been used to complete two new source wells in the Turquoise Trail area.

The remaining unfunded cost to complete the regional water system is approximately $14.5 million. The Hopi Tribe has committed to funding the electrical connection to the turquoise trail wellfield at a cost of $1.1M. EPA and IHS have tentatively committed to $3-4 million (EPA) and $1.2-$2M (IHS) for the next two fiscal year funding cycles to support the HAMP. The outstanding balance we anticipate will be funded through a USDA-RD loan/grant application.

In June 2017, the Hopi Tribe established the Hopi Utility Corporation (HUC) to manage the HAMP project and the operation and maintenance of the regional water system, once commissioned. The HUC is currently run by its director, Tim Bodell, who reports to the Hopi Telecommunications Inc. (HTI) general manager, Carroll Onsae. The HUC has obtained written agreements from each of the four affected villages to purchase HAMP water once the regional water system is commissioned. The HUC has also obtained a funding commitment from the Hopi Tribal Council to fund operations of the HUC for its first five years, until it can sustainably collect water usage fees to fund its operations.

The HUC plans to formally submit a grant/loan application to USDA-RD in February 2018. They will complete their first-year audits in January 2018 thus enabling them to complete the funding application. IHS is currently responding to USDA-RD's comments on the preliminary engineering report and anticipates completion in time to submit the revision to USDA in February 2018. We anticipate full funding for the entire project to be secured in the summer of 2018.

Contact Emmanuelle Rapicavoli, 415-972-3969 (12/1/17)

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