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Final Notice and Public Explanation of a Proposed Activity in a 100-Year Floodplain or Wetland

This is to give notice that Benton County has conducted an evaluation required by Executive Order 11988 and/or 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C—Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management, to determine the potential effect that its proposed activity in the floodplain and/or designated wetland will have on the environment for an Iowa Watershed Approach project, 13-NDRI-002, funded through a CDBG-NDR grant.

The proposed activity is to install nine agricultural best management practices (pond, wetland, grade stabilization, etc.) at five sites in Tama County. Five proposed practices have been determined to be in a National Wetland Inventory-designated wetland (1.06 acres). Detailed information about the proposed practices, such as practice location and footprint, can be found at the web link provided below.

Benton County has considered the following alternatives and mitigation measures to be taken to minimize adverse impacts and to restore and preserve natural and beneficial values:

1. Proposed action alternative, to be implemented: the installation and maintenance of selected structures, e.g. farm ponds, terraces, wetlands, etc., are intended to reduce flood risks and improve water quality, i.e. enhance the 100-year floodplain and/or designated wetland. There are no known adverse impacts. Structures will be permitted as necessary according to local and State of Iowa requirements. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been consulted regarding this project.
2. No action alternative, not selected: under this alternative there would be no incentives for landowners to install selected structures that reduce pollutant loading and/or reduce flooding intensity. The potential for negative economic impacts resulting from reduced water quality and quantity would remain present and possibly increase.

Benton County has reevaluated the alternatives to building in the floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988 and/or 11990 are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments. This activity will have no significant adverse impact on the environment because the structures are designed to build/restore wetlands or reduce risks from flooding.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments on this proposed project are invited and should be submitted by Monday, March 30, 2020 to the attention of Hayley Rippel, 111 E. 4th St., Vinton, Iowa. Review of previously noted environmental files can be reviewed on the Benton County website at <https://www.bentoncountyiowa.org/public-notices/public-notices/default.aspx>. All comments will be taken into account by Benton County, Iowa, prior to its decision on the proposed project.