



State Revolving Fund Loan Programs

Drinking Water, Clean Water, Nonpoint Source

PRELIMINARY DECISION OF CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO ALL INTERESTED CITIZENS, ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES:

TOWN OF FORT BRANCH

WATER UTILITY STUDY

SRF Project DW 25 52 26 01

Date: October 31, 2026

Pursuant to IC 5-1.2-3, the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) Loan Program has determined that the project described here and in the Town of Fort Branch's Preliminary Engineering Report will have no substantial negative environmental impact. Therefore, the SRF is issuing a preliminary decision of Categorical Exclusion (CE) from the requirements of substantive environmental review.

How were environmental issues considered?

The National Environmental Policy Act requires agencies disbursing Federal funds to include environmental factors in the decision-making process. A summary of the project is attached for your review. The SRF's preliminary review has found that the proposed project does not require the preparation of either an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement.

Why is additional environmental review not required?

Our environmental review has concluded that significant environmental impacts will not result from the proposed action. In the absence of significant comments, the attached CE shall serve as the final environmental document.

How do I submit comments?

Comments can be submitted to:

State Revolving Fund
100 N. Senate Ave., IGCN 1275
Indianapolis, IN 46204
publiccomments@ifa.in.gov

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

I. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Name and Address: Water Utility Study
Town of Fort Branch
801 E Mulberry St
Fort Branch, IN 47648

SRF Project Number: **DW 25 52 26 01**

Authorized Representative: Sandra Birch, Town Council President

II. PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project is located in Gibson County, Union Township, Princeton and Haubstadt 24k USGS Quadrangle, Township 3S, Range 10W and 11W , and Section 13, 18, 19, and 24. See **Figures 1-2**.

III. PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Fort Branch has numerous dead-end and undersized water mains. These water mains contribute to decreased flow availability on the southern end of the Town and the inability to allow additional water users to connect south of the Town. The dead-end water mains require frequent flushing in order to prevent stagnant and dirty water in the system. These water mains are also prone to leaks and breaks.

To address these issues, the proposed project includes installation or replacement of water mains in the following areas of the distribution system:

- Polk Street: Installation of approximately 2700 LF of 8-in water main along Polk Street from Park Street to Strain Street; installation of approximately 550 LF of 6-in water main along Ulen Street from Polk Street to West Street and along Williams Street from Polk Street to the alley.
- Park Street & US-41: Installation of approximately 7150 LF of 8- and 6-inch water main along Park Street from the water treatment facility to US-41 and along US-41 from Park Street to Strain Street. The new water main will connect to existing dead-end water mains on perpendicular side streets.
- Railroad St., Main St., Coal Mine Rd., & Hillcrest St.: Installation of approximately 8000 LF of 8- and 6-inch water main in the following areas: Railroad Street from Strain St. to Poplar St.; Poplar Street from Railroad St. to Main St.; Main Street from Poplar St. to Coal Mine Rd.; Mulberry Street from Railroad St. to Main St.; Coal Mine Road from Main St. to the Train Station Apartments; Lincoln Street from Evans St. to Coal Mine Road; and Hillcrest Street from Rosedale St. to Coal Mine Rd.
- Indian Hills: Installation of approximately 2600 LF of 8-in water main on Coal Mine Road from the Train State Apartments to CR 40 E.

Valves, hydrants, and appurtenances will also be installed or replaced along these water main alignments to improve operation of the distribution system. Additionally, service

lines along these alignments that are determined to be lead or galvanized requiring replacement (GRR) will be fully replaced.

IV. ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS, AFFORDABILITY, AND FUNDING

The total cost of this project is estimated to be approximately \$7,215,000. The Town intends to finance the project with a loan from the Drinking Water SRF Loan Program for a term and annual fixed interest rate to be determined at loan closing. Monthly user rates and charges may need to be analyzed to determine if adjustments are required for loan repayment.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES

The environmental impacts will be minimal. All project activities will take place in areas previously disturbed by existing utilities. The proposed project will not affect streams, floodplains, wetlands, wooded areas, or other sensitive environmental resources and will not convert prime farmland.

Construction and operation of the project will not alter, demolish or remove historic properties. If any visual or audible impacts to historic properties occur, they will be temporary and will not alter the characteristics that qualify such properties for inclusion in or eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. The SRF's finding pursuant to Section 106 of the National Preservation Act is: "no historic properties affected."

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A properly noticed public hearing was held on April 23, 2025, at 6:00 pm at the Fort Branch Senior/Community Center at 112 North Railroad Street, Fort Branch, IN 47648. There were no questions on this project during the hearing. No written comments were received in the 5-day period following the hearing for this project.

