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# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION SUMMARY AND NOTIFICATION

### **Purpose**

This memo documents for the project file the justification for granting a Categorical Exclusion.

### **Background**

The City of Blytheville, (Project No. 24-074), located in Mississippi County, is proposing research and testing, along with various associated planning and design measures, to explore the possibility of per-and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) evidence in the city's groundwater. There is a former U.S. Air Force base, Eaker Air Force base, near the City which is still used for various civil service training along with other aviation related activities. In 2018, groundwater samples taken at the air base revealed PFOS+PFOA maximum levels of contamination. Groundwater wells used to supply Blytheville's drinking water are located only 2 miles from the air base. The proposed project is to install 8 shallow groundwater monitoring wells around Blytheville's wells to monitor PFAS migration from the air base in the shallow groundwater formation. It is unknown what path PFAS contaminated water may enter the aquifer which serves as Blytheville's drinking water.

This CE decision is exclusive to and only applies to Phase I of the proposed project, research, testing and possible planning and design actions, as needed. This CE does not include any other construction activities other than the installation of groundwater monitoring wells, as described above.

This project qualifies as a CE in that is an action relating to existing infrastructure systems (such as sewer systems; drinking water supply systems; and stormwater systems, including combined sewer overflow systems) that involve minor upgrading, or minor expansion of system capacity or rehabilitation (including functional replacement) of the existing system and system components (such as the sewer collection network and treatment system; the system to collect, treat, store and distribute drinking water; and stormwater systems, including combined sewer overflow systems) or construction of new minor ancillary facilities adjacent to or on the same property as existing facilities. This category does not include actions that: involve new or relocated discharges to surface or ground water; will likely result in the substantial increase in the volume or the loading of pollutant to the receiving water; will provide capacity to serve a population 30% greater than the existing population; are not supported by the state, or other regional growth plan or strategy; or directly or indirectly involve or relate to upgrading or extending infrastructure systems primarily for the purposes of future development.

No extraordinary circumstances found in 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §6.204 apply to this proposed action.

### **Key Points**

1. Review completed by Keith Sanders
2. Determination approved by Keith Sanders

### **Recommendation**

The proposed project has been determined to be categorically excluded from the full and substantive environmental review process as part of the Arkansas Natural Resources Commission's State Revolving

Fund program. The proposed project meets the requirements for a CE found in 40 CFR Part 6, Subpart B, §6.204 of the Environmental Protection Agency's National Environmental Protection Act Environmental Review Procedures.