



**U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration**

**Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization
Grant Program
Midwest Energy Final Tier 2 Site Specific Environmental Assessment**

PHMSA Approval:

**PHMSA Office of Planning and Analytics
Environmental Policy and Justice Division
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Overview:

The purpose of this Tier 2 Site Specific Environmental Assessment (Tier 2) is to (1) document the proposed action (the Project) and the need for the action (2) identify existing conditions; (3) assess the social, economic, and environmental effects using appropriate tools and agency coordination to comply with local, state, and federal environmental laws, regulations, and ordinances; and to (4) document applicable mitigation commitments that will avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential effects. This Tier 2 analysis informs PHMSA's determination as to whether the Project is consistent with the impacts described in the Tier 1 Nationwide Environmental Assessment for the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program.¹

I. Project Description/Proposed Action

Project Title	Midwest Energy, Inc.
Project Location	Hays, Kansas

Project Description/Proposed Action:

Midwest Energy, Inc. (MWE) is proposing to purchase equipment to assist in detecting methane leaks, specifically 20 handheld laser leak detection devices and 4 ATV units which will be used for mobile leak surveys. MWE will use the advanced leak detection equipment to detect methane leaks from a remote distance throughout the service territory (35 counties) including five disadvantaged county areas. MWE employees will be able to detect leaks from a distance of up to 100 feet away without entering unsafe or gaseous areas. From a vehicle, the surveyors can travel at speeds of up to 4 or 5 miles per hour and perform drive-by surveys. The units have the capability to plot GPS locations on a map, allowing MWE to verify all areas of the system that are currently being worked on have been surveyed for potential leaks.

No Action:

The No Action Alternative, as required under NEPA, serves as a baseline and is used to compare impacts resulting from the Proposed Action. Under the No Action Alternative, PHMSA would not fund this equipment acquisition project. The equipment purchased would supplement or replace MWE's existing equipment. Under this alternative, MWE would not be able to acquire the equipment at this time and therefore, they would rely on their current methane detection equipment. This could prolong the time leaks continue as the improved equipment is intended to improve the efficiency of detecting leaks, allowing MWE to promptly complete repairs. MWE would utilize current, less efficient means and methods of identifying leaks. Impacts and benefits associated with improved, more efficient identification of leaks and resulting repairs to leaking pipelines would not be seen and existing economic losses, and increased risk associated with prolonged gas leaks would continue.

Need for the Project:

Acquisition of equipment could minimize methane emissions in the service area (including 5 disadvantaged

¹ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/11/09/2022-24378/pipeline-safety-notice-of-availability-of-the-tier-1-nationwide-environmental-assessment-for-the>

² Blowdown refers to the venting of natural gas in current facilities, in order to begin rehabilitation, repair, or replacement activities.

communities), increase safety by finding and fixing leaks sooner, and provide an economic benefit to the community by securing MWE Service Technician jobs.
Equipment-Only Projects:
Yes
Description of the Environmental Setting of the Project Area:
This is an equipment purchase only and does not involve construction activities and therefore, will not include any physical impacts or alterations that could directly impact the human or natural environment.

II. Resource Review

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases (GHG)	
Question	Information and Justification
Is the project located in an area designated by the EPA as non-attainment or maintenance status for one or more of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)?	N/A
Will the construction activities produce emissions that exceed de minimis thresholds (tons per year) described in Table 2 of Appendix 4?	N/A
Will mitigation measures be used to capture blowdown ² ?	N/A
Does the system have the capability to reduce pressure on the segments to be replaced? If yes, what is the lowest psi your system can reach prior to venting?	N/A
Will [project proponent] commit to reducing pressure on your line to this psi prior to venting? Please calculate venting emissions based on this commitment and also provide comparison figure of venting emissions volume without pressure reduction/drawdown based on the calculation provided in Appendix 5.	N/A
Using Table 1 in Appendix 6, estimate the current leak rate per mile based on the type of pipeline material. Based on mileage of replacement and new pipeline material, estimate the total reduction of methane.	N/A
Conclusion:	
The acquisition of methane detection and survey equipment would have no direct effect on air quality or greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; however, the use of the equipment could reduce GHG emissions through timely identification and repair of natural gas leaks. Where the use of the methane detection and survey equipment leads to the identification of leaks and subsequent repairs, those repairs would be outside the scope of the project. The potential for cumulative impacts to air quality and GHG would be directly related to the nature and scope of the repair work, the type of equipment used to repair the leaks, and how long the repair work would take. While the extent of potential impacts of future repair work is speculative, as discussed in the "Tier 1 Nationwide Environmental Analysis for the PHMSA: Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program Programmatic Environmental Assessment", maintenance and repair activities are unlikely to cause a significant increase in GHG emissions or significantly contribute to climate change.	

² Blowdown refers to the venting of natural gas in current facilities, in order to begin rehabilitation, repair, or replacement activities.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases (GHG)

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required for the acquisition of equipment as no direct impacts to air quality will occur.

Water Resources

Question	Information and Justification
Are there water resources within the project area, such as wetlands, streams, rivers, or floodplains? If so, would the project temporarily or permanently impact wetlands or waterways?	N/A
Under the Clean Water Act, is a Section 401 State certification potentially required? If yes, describe anticipated permit and how project proponent will ensure permit compliance.	N/A
Under the Clean Water Act, is a USACE Section 404 Permit required for the discharge of dredge and fill material? If yes, describe anticipated permit and how project proponent will ensure permit compliance.	N/A
Under the Clean Water Act, is an EPA or State Section 402 permit required for the discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States? Is a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) required?	N/A
Will work activities take place within a FEMA designated floodplain? If so, describe any permanent or temporary impacts and the required coordination efforts with state or local floodplain regulatory agencies.	N/A
Will the proposed project activities potentially occur within a coastal zone ³ or affect any coastal use or natural resource of the coastal zone, requiring a Consistency Determination and Certification?	N/A

Conclusion:

The acquisition of methane detection and survey equipment would have no direct impact on water resources. The use of the leak detectors will have no direct impact on water resources but in cases where the ATVs are used to survey areas for potential methane leaks where water resources may be present, i.e., wetlands, streams, etc., minor indirect impacts could occur such as turbidity in streams should the ATV need to cross in open waters, wetlands or other aquatic areas. However, it is incumbent upon MWE employees to exert discretion in sensitive areas, such as wetlands, and avoid these areas, if possible, which would reduce or eliminate the potential for indirect impacts. Should MWE identify leaks and needed repairs located within water resources, authorization from the US Army Corps of Engineers would likely be required and the appropriate NEPA analysis would be conducted for the specific repair work. However, because work would be considered maintenance and repair, it is anticipated all impacts would be temporary and all areas would be restored to original condition. If leaks are detected in portions of the system that fall within wetlands, waters, or floodplains, MWE will coordinate any repair work that could impact water resources with the appropriate local, state or federal agency.

³ The term "coastal zone" means the coastal waters (including the lands therein and thereunder) and the adjacent shorelands (including the waters therein and thereunder), strongly influenced by each other and in proximity to the shorelines of the several coastal states, and includes islands, transitional and intertidal areas, salt marshes, wetlands, and beaches.)

Water Resources

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures are required for the acquisition of equipment as no direct impacts will occur to water resources. If leaks identify needed repairs in pipeline located in waters of the US, including wetlands, the US Army Corps of Engineers would identify mitigation measures in the appropriate authorizations/permits.

Groundwater and Hazardous Materials/Waste

Question	Information and Justification
Does the project have potential to encounter and impact groundwater? If yes, describe potential impacts from construction activities.	N/A
Will the project require boring or directional drilling that may require pits containing mud and inadvertent return fluids? If yes, describe measures that will be taken during construction activities to prevent impacts to groundwater resources.	N/A
Will the project potentially involve a site(s) contaminated by hazardous waste? Is there any indication that the pipeline was ever used to convey coal gas? If yes, PHMSA will work with the project proponent for required studies.	N/A
Does the project have the potential to encounter or disturb lead pipes or asbestos?	N/A

Conclusion:

The acquisition of methane detection and survey equipment will not result in impacts to groundwater or hazardous materials, nor will it create hazardous waste. Where the use of the purchased equipment and detection of leaks leads to needed repairs, those repairs would be outside the scope of the project and MWE would be responsible for ensuring there would be no adverse effects to groundwater or hazardous materials. The potential for cumulative impacts to groundwater would be directly related to the nature and scope of the repair work and the location of the needed repairs, relative to the depth to groundwater at the particular repair site. Additionally, the potential to encounter hazardous materials or waste would be dependent on the specific location of repairs relative to the nearest hazardous materials/waste site. While the extent of potential impacts resulting from future repair work is speculative, as discussed in the "Tier 1 Nationwide Environmental Analysis for PHMSA: Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program Programmatic Environmental Assessment", no adverse impacts are anticipated. During pipeline repair and/or rehabilitation, hazardous waste may be generated through construction activities, site grading, and boring/drilling. Contaminated soils, not associated with the pipeline, may be treated in ground (in-situ) or removed from the site (es-situ) for remediation. Project proponents would ensure that proper mitigation (EPA 1997) and personal protection equipment for human safety is utilized if the project proponent has reason to believe hazardous wastes or materials may be present.

Mitigation Measures:

The acquisition of equipment will have no direct impact on groundwater or hazardous materials and therefore, no mitigation measures are required.

Soils	
Will all bare soils be stabilized using methods in Appendix 3? Will additional measures be required?	N/A
Will the project require unique impacts related to soils?	N/A
Conclusion:	
The acquisition of methane detection and survey equipment would not result in impacts to soils. When purchased ATVs are used to survey for possible leaks, it is incumbent on MWE employees to operate equipment in a responsible manner resulting in no adverse impacts to soils. Where the use of the purchased equipment leads to identifying leaks requiring repairs, MWE is responsible for ensuring soils are stabilized and best management practices are followed while repairs are being completed.	
Mitigation Measures:	
The acquisition of equipment will have no impact on soils and therefore, no mitigation measures are required.	

Biological Resources	
Question	Information and Justification
Based on review of IPaC and NOAA Fisheries database, are there any federally threatened or endangered species and/or critical habitat within the project area?, ⁴ If no, no further analysis is required.	N/A
Will the project impact any areas in or adjacent to habitat for Federally, listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat? If no, provide justification and avoidance measures. If yes, PHMSA will work with the project proponent to conduct necessary consultation with resource agencies.	N/A
Conclusion:	
Acquisition of methane identification equipment would not result in direct impacts to biological resources and therefore, PHMSA has determined the purchase of equipment will have No Effect to federally threatened or endangered species and/or critical habitat. The methane detection equipment will be utilized in previously disturbed areas where pipeline is existing and serviceable. Where leaks are detected and repairs are needed, MWE will follow their normal protocol for maintenance and repairs, ensuring there will be no adverse impacts to biological resources, including federally threatened or endangered species.	
Mitigation Measures:	
No mitigation measures are necessary for the acquisition of equipment.	

⁴ <https://ipac.ecosphere.fws.gov/> and <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/species-directory/threatened-endangered>

Cultural Resources	
Question	Information and Justification
Does the project include any ground disturbing activities, modifications to buildings or structures, or construction or installation of any new aboveground components?	N/A
Is the project located within a previously identified local, state, or National Register historic district or adjacent to any locally or nationally recognized historic properties? This information can be gathered from the local government and/or State Historic Preservation Office. ⁵	N/A
Does the project or any part of the project take place on tribal lands or land where a tribal cultural interest may exist? ⁶	N/A
Are there any nearby properties or resources that either appear to be or are documented to have been constructed more than 45 years ago? ⁷ Does there appear to be a group of properties of similar age, design, or method of construction? Any designed landscapes such as a park or cemetery? Please provide photographs to show the context of the project area and adjacent properties.	N/A N/A
Has the entire area and depth of construction for the project been previously disturbed by the original installation or other activities? If so, provide any documentation of prior ground disturbances.	N/A
Will project implementation require removal or disturbance of any stone or brick sidewalk, roadway, or landscape materials or other old or unique features? Please provide photos of the project area that include the roadway and sidewalk materials in the project and staging areas.	N/A
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>The undertaking consists of the purchase of methane detection equipment, utilizing federal funds, and therefore, by nature, does result in any physical effect or consequence. Therefore, in accordance with 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1), the undertaking is a type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties, assuming such historic properties were present. The purpose of the equipment to be purchased is to detect leaks in MWE’s natural gas system and therefore, all areas to be assessed for leaks will occur in previously disturbed areas. Where the detection of leaks leads to repair work, construction activities would likely be limited to previously disturbed areas, and PHMSA anticipates there would be limited potential to impact cultural resources. PHMSA does not anticipate cumulative adverse effects to NRHP-eligible or listed historic or archaeological resources.</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measures:</p> <p>The acquisition of methane detection and survey equipment does not have the potential to cause effects to historic properties and therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.</p>	

⁵ Many SHPOs have an [online system](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/state-historic-preservation-offices.htm) at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/state-historic-preservation-offices.htm> that can tell you previously identified historic properties in your project area. The [National Register list](https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm) at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm> can also be accessed online.

⁶ The SHPO may have information on areas of tribal interest, or a good source is the [HUD TDAT website](https://egis.hud.gov/TDAT/) at <https://egis.hud.gov/TDAT/>.

⁷ Local tax and property records or historic maps may indicate dates of construction.

Section 4(f)	
Question	Information and Justification
Are there Section 4(f) properties within or immediately adjacent to the project area? If yes, provide a list of properties or as an attachment.	N/A
Will any construction activities occur within the property boundaries of a Section 4(f) property? If so, please detail these activities and indicate if these are temporary or permanent uses of the Section 4(f) property. Further coordination with PHMSA is required for all projects that might impact a Section 4(f) property.	N/A
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>The acquisition of equipment will not result in a use of a Section 4(f) property, if any are present within areas to be surveyed. The equipment will be used for the identification of potential leaks within MWE’s service area. If leaks are found, repairs will be conducted in accordance with MWE’s normal protocol and should not result in any change or alteration in the use of the current property, regardless of the Section 4(f) status. MWE will coordinate, as appropriate, with all property owners affected by repair work, including those areas falling within publicly owned parks, recreation areas, wildlife or waterfowl refuges.</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measures:</p> <p>The acquisition of equipment will not change the use of any property, including any Section 4(f) properties and therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.</p>	

Land Use and Transportation	
Question	Information and Justification
Will the full extent of the project boundaries remain within the existing right-of-way or easements? If no, please describe any right-of-way acquisitions or additional easements needed.	N/A
Will the project result in detours, transportation restrictions, or other impacts to normal traffic flow or to existing transportation facilities during construction? Will there be any permanent change to existing transportation facilities? If so, what are the changes, and how would changes affect the public?	N/A N/A
Will the project interrupt or impede emergency response services from fire, police, ambulance or any other emergency or safety response providers? If so, describe any coordination that will occur with emergency response providers?	N/A
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>The acquisition of equipment will not result in changes to land use or have any impact to transportation facilities. Where the use of the methane detection and survey equipment leads to the identification of leaks and subsequent repairs, those repairs would be outside the scope of the project. Such repairs are not anticipated to constitute any changes to land use and should occur within the current right-of-way. Should MWE identify leaks and repairs needing additional right-of-way, upgrades, or changes to the current system, MWE would be solely responsible for evaluating those on an individual basis and coordinating with the appropriate local, state and federal agencies.</p>	

Land Use and Transportation

Mitigation Measures:

The acquisition of equipment will not result in any changes to land use and will have no impact on transportation facilities and therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Noise and Vibration

Question	Information and Justification
Will the project construction occur for longer than a month at a single project location?	N/A
Will the project location be in proximity (less than 50-ft.) to noise sensitive receivers (residences, schools, houses of worship, etc.)? If so, what measures will be taken to reduce noise and vibration impacts to sensitive receptors?	N/A
Will the project require high-noise and vibration inducing construction methods? If so, please specify.	N/A
Will the project comply with state and local ordinances? If so, identify applicable ordinances and limitations on noise/vibration times or sound levels.	N/A
Will construction activities require large bulldozers, hoe ram, or other vibratory equipment within 20 feet of a structure?	N/A

Conclusion:

Acquisition of equipment will not result in direct noise or vibration impacts. The use of detection equipment may result in minor indirect noise impacts. Methane detection equipment may emit low levels of noise when in use to assist the user in identifying leaks; however, these are not anticipated to cause any disturbances or adverse effects to others or to be heard by anyone other than the user or those in the company of the user, at the time of use. The equipment purchase also includes four, side-by-side ATVs that will be used for mobile leak surveys. The operation of ATVs will result in some noise disturbances while in use, but these are anticipated to be very minor and temporary. No vibration impacts will result from the use of any methane detection or survey equipment. Where the use of the methane detection equipment leads to the identification of leaks and subsequent repairs, those repairs would be further removed and outside the scope of the project. Should MWE pursue any needed repairs, the resultant noise and vibration impacts would be directly related to the nature and scope of the repair work, the type of equipment used to repair the leaks, and how long the repair work would take. While the exact extent of noise and vibration impacts is unknown, as discussed in the Tier 1 Nationwide Environmental Analysis, individual pieces of equipment may generate noise levels of 80 to 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet. However, such elevated noise levels would be temporary and of short duration (less than one month) at most locations and thus result in no adverse effects.

Mitigation Measures:

The acquisition of equipment will not result in any noise or vibration impacts and therefore, no mitigation measures are necessary.

Environmental Justice	
Question	Information and Justification
Using the EPA EJScreen or census data ⁸ , is the project located in an area of minority and/or low-income individuals as defined by USDOT Order 5610.2(c)? If so, provide demographic data for minority and/or low-income individuals within ½ mile from the project area as a percentage of the total population.	N/A
Will the project displace existing residents or workers from their homes and communities? If so, what is the expected duration?	N/A
Will the project require service disruptions to homes and communities? If so, what is the expected communication and outreach plan to the residents and the duration of the outages?	N/A
Are there populations with Limited English Proficiency located in the project area? If so, what measures will be taken to provide communications in other languages?	N/A
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>Acquisition of methane identification and survey equipment will have no direct effect on EJ communities. However, the use of the equipment will lead to the identification of leaks and prompt repair of leaks resulting in an increase in pipeline safety across the system while also improving operation. Therefore, consistent with Executive Order 12898 and DOT Order 5610.2(c), PHMSA has determined the project would not result in disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low-income populations. The purchase of the equipment is ultimately anticipated to have an overall beneficial effect to all populations by the prompt identification and repair of leaks in MWE's system.</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measures:</p> <p>No impacts will occur as a result of purchasing methane detection equipment and therefore, no mitigation measures are required.</p>	

Safety	
Question	Information and Justification
Has a risk profile been developed to describe the condition of the current infrastructure and potential safety concerns?	N/A
Has a public awareness program been developed and implemented that follows the guidance provided by the American Petroleum Institute (API) Recommended Practice (RP) 1162?	N/A
Does the project area include pipes prone to leakage?	N/A

⁸ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045222>

Safety	
Will construction safety methods and procedures to protect human health and prevent/minimize hazardous materials releases during construction, including personal protection, workplace monitoring and site-specific health and safety plans, be utilized? If yes, document measures and reference appropriate safety plans.	N/A
Has an assessment of the project been performed to analyze the risk and benefits of implementation?	N/A
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>The acquisition of methane identification equipment will have no direct effect on safety. However, the purpose of the equipment is to identify leaks efficiently and effectively in the natural gas system leading to prompt repairs. Ultimately, the proper operation of the equipment could reduce the duration of leaks which would result in an increase in pipeline safety by reducing the number and severity of incidents caused by undetected or prolonged leaks.</p>	
<p>Mitigation Measures:</p> <p>The project involves the purchase of methane detection and survey equipment used for identifying leaks and therefore, there will be no direct impacts requiring mitigative measures; however, it is noted that the equipment will assist MWE in identifying and repairing leaks, ultimately increasing pipeline safety in MWE's service area by reducing the number and severity of incidents.</p>	

III. Public Involvement

On June 16, 2022, PHMSA published a Federal Register notice (87 FR 36374) with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on its intent to request Office of Management and Budget three-year approval of an information collection titled: “The Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program”. During the 60-day comment period three comment letters were received from the Distribution Contractors Association, the American Public Gas Association (APGA), and the Plastics Pipe Institute. These letters are available for public review at the Docket No: PHMSA-2022-0009⁹. The commenters noted support for the program and did not raise any specific environmental concerns. The APGA also provided comments related to the grant application process, providing general suggestions including a request to clarify the timing of the Tier 2 process.

On November 9, 2022, PHMSA published a Federal Register notice (87 FR 67748) with a 30-day comment period soliciting comments on the “Tier 1 Nationwide Environmental Assessment for the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program”. During the 30-day comment period, PHMSA received one comment letter from the APGA on various aspects of the program and air quality related analysis in the EA on December 9, 2022. This APGA letter is available for public review at the Docket No: PHMSA-2022-0123¹⁰. PHMSA reviewed the comment letter and determined the comments were not substantial and did not warrant further analysis. One comment provided by the APGA indicated that the majority of construction methods used for pipe replacements would be replacement by open trenching and that some may want to abandon the existing pipe rather than removing it for replacement. Any departures from methods described in the Tier 1 EA will require additional documentation from the project proponent, as solicited in this Tier 2. No additional public involvement is required for this project; however, this action is consistent with actions discussed in the Tier 1 EA, which included a public comment period.

IV. List of Agencies and Persons Consulted

No agency consultation was required for this project as it consists only of the purchase of equipment. The equipment will be utilized in previously disturbed areas where pipeline is existing and serviceable. Where leaks are detected and repairs are needed, MWE will follow their normal protocol for outreach to potentially affected persons prior to conducting maintenance and repairs.

⁹ <https://www.regulations.gov/docket/PHMSA-2022-0009/comments>

¹⁰ <https://www.regulations.gov/document/PHMSA-2022-0123-0002/comment>



**U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration**

**Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization
Grant Program
Midwest Energy Finding of No Significant Impact**

PHMSA Approval:

Finding of No Significant Impact

Midwest Energy, Inc. (MWE) is the provisional selectee for a grant to purchase handheld infrared laser methane detectors with GPS datalogging capabilities and four, side-by-side all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) through the Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), PHMSA is assessing the potential impacts on the human environment that could result from the purchase of the methane detection equipment described above in this Tier 2 EA. The purpose of this federal action is to aid MWE in creating a more effective and efficient system for detecting leaks, allowing for prompt repairs and thereby reducing potential incidents of injury, avoiding economic loss, and avoiding outages. The purchase of this equipment is needed to assist MWE in identifying leaks more efficiently. It is noted that federal action consists only of the purchase of equipment and does not include any construction activities for repairs or other activities that may result from the identification of leaks which could require ground disturbance or direct alterations to any part of MWE's natural gas system. Any repair work would be outside the scope of the federal action. The Selected Action Alternative is purchasing specialized methane detection equipment, including infrared laser detectors with advanced technology and GPS mapping capabilities and ATVs needed for mobile leak surveys. This federal action was evaluated in this Tier 2 EA. As discussed in this Tier 2 analysis, there will be no direct effects to the natural or human environment as there are no construction activities included as part of the federal action. However, because the equipment to be purchased is intended to assist in effectively identifying leaks for the purpose of efficient repairs to MWE's natural gas system, ultimately there will be indirect, beneficial effects resulting from the equipment purchase which include the ultimate and cumulative reduction in greenhouse gasses, providing for an increase in pipeline safety benefitting all populations served by MWE. MWE is responsible for ensuring all maintenance or repair work resulting from the use of acquired equipment is in compliance with all local, state and federal laws. No agency consultation was required for this Selected Action Alternative as it consists only of the purchase of equipment. Public Involvement was not required; however, this action is consistent with actions discussed in the Tier 1 EA, which included a public comment period. Based on the above analysis in this Tier 2 EA, PHMSA has not identified any significant adverse impacts on human health or the environment that would result from implementation of the Selected Action Alternative, which is the MWE equipment acquisition. Consistent with the Tier 1 EA¹¹ and based on the information in this Tier 2 EA, PHMSA is making a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6, for this project as it meets the following conditions:

- The Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire for the selected action is complete and accurate.
- The types and extent of anticipated environmental impacts are as expected in the Tier 1 EA.
- Project proponent commits to compliance with applicable Federal and State environmental requirements.
- PHMSA's review of the Tier 2 Environmental Questionnaire did not identify adverse and unanticipated types or levels of environmental impacts.

After careful and thorough consideration of the facts herein, the undersigned finds that the proposed Federal action, namely the Selected Action Alternative, is consistent with existing environmental policies and objectives as set forth in NEPA and other applicable environmental requirements and is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment or otherwise, including any condition requiring consultation pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA. Furthermore, PHMSA finds that this Tier 2 EA satisfies the requirements of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and CEQ regulations (40 CFR parts 1500-1508). As a result, PHMSA will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

¹¹ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/11/09/2022-24378/pipeline-safety-notice-of-availability-of-the-tier-1-nationwide-environmental-assessment-for-the>