

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
FOR THE PRAIRIE ISLAND
INDIAN COMMUNITY
NORTH ELK RUN COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AND FEE-TO-TRUST PROJECT**

Notice is hereby given that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) has released an Environmental Assessment (EA) dated October 2024 for the Prairie Island Indian Community (Tribe) North Elk Run Community Development and Fee-to-Trust Project. The EA has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA; 42 United States Code §4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Guidelines for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the BIA NEPA Guidebook (59 Indian Affairs Manual 3-H), and assesses the environmental impacts that could result from the acquisition by the BIA of approximately 781 acres (Project Site) into federal trust status for the benefit of the Tribe (Proposed Action). Once in trust, the Tribe proposes land use planning and development of the Project Site for residential, commercial/industrial, and tribal community development purposes (Proposed Project).

The Project Site is located east of Highway 52 and is partially within unincorporated Olmsted County and partially within the City of Pine Island, Minnesota. The Project Site includes land on either side of White Pine Road SE and either side of E White Bridge Road. Existing land uses within the Project site include cattle grazing and agriculture. Surrounding land uses include agriculture and rural residences with small commercial developments to the south.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to facilitate tribal self-sufficiency, self-determination, and economic development, thus satisfying both the Department of the Interior's (Department) land acquisition policy as articulated in the Department's trust land regulations at 25 CFR Part 151. The Department's authority to act on the Tribe's application is governed by the Department's regulations at 25 CFR Part 151. The BIA serves as the Lead Agency for NEPA compliance and will use the EA to determine if the Proposed Action would result in significant adverse effects to the environment. Public comments will be considered by the BIA, and either a Finding of No Significant Impact will be prepared or additional environmental analysis will be conducted. After the NEPA process is complete, the BIA may issue a determination on the Proposed Action.

The public comment period for the EA will begin on November 9, 2024 and end on December 9, 2024. For additional information, please contact Scott Doig, Division of Environmental & Cultural Resources Management (DECRM) Branch Chief and Regional Environmental Scientist, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Midwest Regional Office, at 612.719.5337 or by email at scott.doig@bia.gov. Written comments should be emailed to scott.doig@bia.gov or mailed to the following address by end of day December 9, 2024:

Scott Doig, Branch Chief and Regional Environmental Scientist
Bureau of Indian Affairs, Midwest Regional Office
Norman Pointe II Building
5600 W. American Blvd., Suite 500
Bloomington, MN 55437

The EA is available for public review online at <http://www.PIICCommunityEA.com>.