

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT OFFICE AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY HANCOCK COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI FEMA – 1604 – DR – MS

The Hancock County Water & Sewer District (HCWSD) has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for assistance with funding of construction of a new relocated HCWSD office and maintenance facility, in Hancock County, Mississippi. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina storm surge severely damaged the HCWSD operations and maintenance/shop buildings, located on Longfellow Road in Bay St. Louis. Damages to the HCWSD operations and maintenance buildings met FEMA's repair/replacement ratio for the demolition and replacement of the structures. FEMA proposes to provide assistance for this project through the Public Assistance Program (PA) under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA – 1604 – DR – MS.

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The purpose of the EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the relocation project, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). In the EA process, FEMA considered three alternatives: the No Action Alternative; the Proposed Action Alternative; and one Alternative Location Action.

The Proposed Action Alternative would relocate the HCWSD office and maintenance facility north of Interstate-10, on Stennis Airport Road. The proposed construction site comprises approximately 3.1 acres. The new facility would consist of an office building, a maintenance shop, driveway and parking, and an open laydown yard. A new location is required to meet the directive that utility facilities be re-built in non-flood hazard areas, with a minimum finished floor elevation of 21 feet above sea level. The site would remain inside the advisory base flood elevation (ABFE). Wetland impacts of the project would be mitigated through purchase of mitigation bank credits.

The proposed project as described in the EA was evaluated for any potential significant adverse impacts to existing land use, water resources (surface water, groundwater, waters of the United States, and floodplains), air quality, noise, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, and State and Federally-listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitat), and cultural resources. It was also evaluated for safety and hazardous materials issues as well as for disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low- income populations.

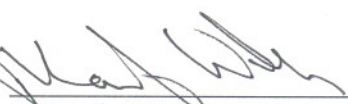
FINDINGS

Based on input and consultations with Federal and State resource agencies, and other identified sources documented in the attached EA, and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act FEMA regulations (44 CFR Part 10) for environmental considerations, and executive orders on floodplains (EO 11988), wetlands (EO 11990), and environmental justice (EO 12898), FEMA has found that the proposed project with the prescribed mitigation measures as defined in the EA will have no significant impact on the natural or human environment. As a result of this Finding of No Significant Impact, an EIS will not be prepared, and the proposed project with prescribed conditions may proceed. If a change in the scope of work occurs, the State and FEMA must be notified to evaluate if the proposed change would alter the potential impacts on the environment.

Recommended:

Approved:


Michael Grisham 8-01-07
Date


J. Randy Walker 8/2/07
Date

FEMA Environmental Liaison Officer

FEMA Infrastructure Branch Chief
FEMA - 1604 - DR - MS