

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Louisiana Recovery Office
1 Seine Court
New Orleans, Louisiana 70114



FEMA

**DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
CHANGE OF LOCATION PROJECT - FISH LABORATORY AT THE
ROCKEFELLER WILDLIFE REFUGE
CAMERON PARISH, LOUISIANA
*FEMA-1607-DR-LA***

Introduction

Hurricane Rita, a Category 3 hurricane with a strong storm surge, made landfall on September 24, 2005, causing catastrophic damage to the western parishes of Louisiana. As a result of damages from Hurricane Rita, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was authorized under Presidential disaster declaration FEMA-1607-DR-LA to provide Federal assistance to designated disaster areas in Louisiana. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (PL 93288) Section 406 authorizes FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) Program to provide financial and other forms of assistance to State and local governments to support response, recovery, and mitigation efforts following Presidentially declared disasters.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has submitted an application for FEMA Public Assistance funding being administered in response to FEMA-1607-DR-LA, Hurricane Rita, which was signed as a Presidential Disaster Declaration on September 24, 2005. The applicant proposes to construct a new Fish Laboratory Complex within the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge at a nearby new site to replace the facilities that were destroyed by Hurricane Rita.

In accordance with 44 CFR Part 10, FEMA regulations to implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared. The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction of the proposed Fish Laboratory and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Findings

The above described action would not result in any significant adverse impacts related to geology, soils, hydrology, floodplains, wetlands, water quality, air quality, vegetation, wildlife, state and federally listed threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, socioeconomics (including minority and low income populations), safety, security, noise, hazardous materials, toxic wastes, traffic, or transportation. Based on the information analyzed, FEMA has determined that the implementation of the proposed action would not result in significant adverse impacts to the quality of the natural and human environment. The proposed alternative is not anticipated to have the potential for significant cumulative effects when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in accordance with 44 CFR Part 10.8 (d)(3)(x). As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10) and the proposed action as described in the EA may proceed.

CONDITIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Based upon the studies and consultations undertaken in this EA, several conditions must be met and mitigation measures must be taken by the applicant prior to and during project implementation.

- Applicant must prepare and carry out a storm water pollution prevention plan to minimize any detrimental effects to water quality during project implementation.
- Applicant must source any fill or borrow material used in the repair activities from sites that do not contain any buried cultural materials (i.e. wells, cisterns, foundations, basements, prehistoric Indian artifacts, human burials, and the like). If during the course of work, archaeological artifacts (prehistoric or historic) or human remains are discovered, the applicant shall stop work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The applicant shall inform their Public Assistance (PA) contacts at FEMA, who will in turn contact FEMA Historic Preservation (HP) staff. The applicant will not proceed with work until FEMA HP completes consultation with the SHPO. In addition, if unmarked graves are present, compliance with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act (R.S. 8:671 et seq.) is required. The applicant shall notify the law enforcement agency of the jurisdiction where the remains are located within twenty-four (24) hours of the discovery. The applicant shall also notify FEMA and the Louisiana Division of Archaeology at 225-342-8170 within seventy-two (72) hours of the discovery. Failure to comply with these stipulations may jeopardize receipt of FEMA funding.

- Applicant must take appropriate measures to minimize potential short-term effects to air quality from construction related activities, such as increased dust and equipment exhaust emissions.
- Applicant must conduct all construction activities in a safe manner in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration requirements.
- Applicant must initiate appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation, and management of unexpected encounters with hazardous materials during construction, in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.
- Applicant must take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control spills of hazardous materials, and must disposed of any hazardous and non-hazardous materials in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local requirements.
- Applicant must install a silt fence prior to commencement of project construction. The silt fence must be entrenched and staked with hay bales, around the periphery of all ground disturbing activities and equipment staging areas to reduce runoff of disturbed soils into adjacent aquatic/wetland areas.
- Applicant must coordinated all construction with the local floodplain administrator and comply with floodplain ordinance. All permits and certificates, and all coordination pertaining to these permit(s), should be documented and provided to the local floodplain administrator, to Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (LA GOHSEP) and to FEMA as part of the permanent project file. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d) (9), the replacement of building contents, materials and equipment, where possible, disaster proofing of the building and/or elimination of such future losses by relocation of those building contents, materials and equipment to or above the Advisory Base Floodplain Elevation (ABFE).
- Applicant must coordinate proposed methods for treating all wastes generated by the operation of the proposed project with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and obtain a point source effluent discharge permit.
- Applicant must remove all remaining portions of damaged or destroyed contributing facilities and remaining debris from all affected areas.
- Applicant must obtain all required federal, state, and local approvals and authorizations prior to commencement of project construction.

Approval:

Joseph Threat, Director
Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office
FEMA-1603/1607-DR-LA

Date

Katherine Zeringue, Environmental Liaison Officer
Louisiana Recovery Office
FEMA-1603/1607-DR-LA

Date