

Draft Environmental Assessment

D'Iberville Community Clubhouse Relocation

Harrison County, Mississippi

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FEMA

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABFE	advisory base flood elevation
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
amsl	above mean sea level
APE	Area of Potential Effects
BMP	Best Management Practice
CAA	Clean Air Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	carbon monoxide
CWA	Clean Water Act
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
dB	decibel
DFIRM	Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map
DNL	Day-Night Average Sound Level
EA	Environmental Assessment
EO	Executive Order
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
MDAH	Mississippi Department of Archives and History
MDEQ	Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
MDMR	Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NISTAC	Nationwide Infrastructure Support Technical Assistance Consultants
NO ₂	nitrogen dioxide
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
O ₃	ozone
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PA	Public Assistance Program



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Pb	lead
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns
PM ₁₀	particulate matter less than 10 microns
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



1.0 INTRODUCTION

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina struck the Mississippi Gulf Coast, causing extensive damage. Subsequently, a Presidential Disaster Declaration, FEMA-1604-DR-MS, was signed for Katrina.

The D'Iberville Community Club has submitted an application for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding under FEMA's Public Assistance Program being administered in response to FEMA-1604-DR-MS, for the proposed relocation of its D'Iberville Community Clubhouse (Clubhouse).

In accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 93-288, as amended, and implementing regulations at 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 206, FEMA is required to review the environmental effects of the proposed action prior to making a funding decision. This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared in accordance with FEMA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations found in 44 CFR Part 10.

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The D'Iberville Community Clubhouse was located at 10045 Gorenflo Road in D'Iberville, Mississippi (Figure 1 in Appendix A) and consisted of an 11,500 square-foot building. According to the Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM), the facility was located within the 100-year floodplain and also within the 17-to 18-foot Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE) Zone. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall in Mississippi, causing a storm surge and high winds that severely damaged the Clubhouse. Damages exceeded the 50% repair/replacement ratio, making the building eligible for demolition and replacement. The Clubhouse building was condemned for health and safety reasons and has been demolished.

In accordance with FEMA's policy for FEMA-1604-DR-MS, the site of the former Clubhouse will be returned to grade and revegetated.

The D'Iberville Community Club currently has no clubhouse and uses whatever public County or City buildings are available for their monthly meetings and various activities. Consequently, there is a need to provide the Club with a permanent clubhouse in a location that is less prone to flooding.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the alternatives that were considered in addressing the purpose and need stated in Section 2. Two alternatives were evaluated: the No Action Alternative, and the Proposed Action Alternative, which is the relocation of the Clubhouse.

Alternative 1: No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the Clubhouse would not be replaced and the D'Iberville Community Club would continue to have no facility.



Alternative 2: Relocation of D’Iberville Community Clubhouse (Proposed Action)

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, the D’Iberville Community Club would relocate the Clubhouse to a 1.8-acre site on Lamey Bridge Road in D’Iberville, approximately 0.8 mile north of the original location (Figure 2 in Appendix A). The proposed project site is owned by the Harrison County School District and is located outside the 100-year floodplain and ABFE. It is bound on the north by the D’Iberville High school parking lot and athletic facilities, on the west by Lamey Bridge Road, on the south by a newly constructed Senior Center, and on the east by newly built apartment complexes. Access is provided via Lamey Bridge Road. Water and sewer pipes are present on the northern portion of the site. The proposed project site has been at least partially filled and graded, and the entire site planted with grass.

The new facility would be a one-story 12,500-square-foot brick building with stucco accents and a metal roof. This building, along with a parking lot containing 35 parking spaces, would be constructed on the western half of the proposed project site, closest to Lamey Bridge Road. An additional 100 parking spaces would be constructed on the eastern half of the project site; these parking spaces would be shared with the High School. The new Clubhouse would use existing utilities that provide service to adjacent buildings on Lamey Bridge Road, including municipal water, sewer, and electricity (Figure 3 in Appendix A).

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACTS

The following table summarizes the potential impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative and conditions or mitigation measures to offset those impacts. Following the summary table, any resource areas for which potential impacts were identified, as well as high priority resources including floodplains, waters of the U.S., environmental justice, biological resources, and cultural resources, will be discussed in greater detail.

Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
Geology and Soils	No impacts to geology are anticipated. Short-term minor impacts to soils may occur during construction.	Appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils, would minimize runoff.
Surface Water	Temporary short-term impacts to downstream surface waters are possible during construction activities.	A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit must be obtained prior to construction. Appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and stabilizing soils, would minimize runoff into downstream surface waters.
Groundwater	No impacts to groundwater are anticipated.	None.
Floodplains	No impacts to floodplains will occur.	None.
Waters of the U.S.	No impacts to waters of the U.S.,	Appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and stabilizing soils,



Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
including Wetlands	including wetlands, would occur.	would minimize runoff into downstream water resources.
Transportation	<p>There would be a minor temporary increase in the volume of construction traffic on roads in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site.</p> <p>Minor, long-term impacts to traffic levels on Lamey Bridge Road would occur as a result of increased traffic by individuals utilizing the proposed facility.</p>	Construction vehicles and equipment would be stored on-site during project construction and appropriate signage would be posted on affected roadways.
Public Health and Safety	Construction activities could present safety risks to those performing the activities.	All construction activities would be performed using qualified personnel and in accordance with the standards specified in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Appropriate signage and barriers would be in place prior to construction activities to alert pedestrians and motorists of project activities.
Hazardous Materials	No hazardous materials or waste impacts are anticipated. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment conducted in April of 2009 revealed no evidence of recognized environmental conditions in connection with the proposed project site or surrounding parcels (NISTAC 2009).	Any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during construction would be disposed and handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
Socioeconomic Resources	No adverse socioeconomic impacts are anticipated.	None.
Environmental Justice	No disproportionately high or adverse effect on minority or low-income populations is anticipated.	None.
Air Quality	Short-term impacts to air quality would occur during the construction period.	Construction contractors would be required to water down construction areas when necessary; fuel-burning equipment running times would be kept to a minimum; engines would be properly maintained.
Noise	Short-term noise impacts would occur during the construction period.	Construction would occur during normal working hours and equipment would meet all local, state, and federal noise regulations.

Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
Biological Resources	Approximately 1.8 acres of grassed area would be converted to Clubhouse and parking lot use. No impacts to threatened or endangered species are anticipated.	None.
Cultural Resources	No impacts to cultural resources are anticipated.	None.

4.1 Geology and Soils

The proposed project site is underlain by coastal deposits, an unconsolidated geologic formation consisting of loam, sand, gravel, and clay (MARIS, 2009; MDEQ, 2009).

The majority of the proposed project site contains soils classified as Harleston fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes. The Harleston Series consists of deep, moderately well-drained, moderately permeable soils. These soils formed in marine or stream deposits consisting of thick beds of sandy loam. They occur on terraces and uplands of the Southern Coastal Plain. These soils have a seasonal water table perched at a depth of 2 to 3 feet (USDA/NRCS, 1997). The Harleston Series are listed as non-hydric soils (USDA/NRCS, 2009a). A portion of the proposed project site near the southern boundary contains soils classified as Atmore silt loam. The Atmore Series consists of deep, poorly drained, moderately, slowly permeable soils that formed in loamy marine sediments. These soils are on Coastal Plain depressions and interstream divides. Slopes range from 0 to 5 percent. They have a seasonal water table perched at a depth of 0 to 1 feet (USDA/NRCS, 1997). The Atmore Series are listed as hydric soils (USDA/NRCS, 2009a).

The proposed project site terrain is level, sandy, well-drained, and approximately 26 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Surface water flows in southerly and southwesterly directions to a shallow drainage swale parallel to the fence near the southern boundary of the site. The general area surrounding the proposed project site slopes gently south and southeast toward a tributary of St. Martin Bayou (Figure 2 in Appendix A).

The Farmland Protection Policy Act states that federal agencies must “minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses...” According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Web Soil Survey, Harleston fine sandy loam is classified as a prime farmland soil (USDA/NRCS, 2009b). However, the proposed project site is within the City of D’Iberville limits (USCB, 2007), so the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) does not apply.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to geology or soils would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to geology are anticipated. Minimal disturbance to native soils may occur during the development of the property. The applicant would be required to submit a SWPPP. Implementation of appropriate BMPs would be required at the construction location. BMPs could include the installation of silt fences and the revegetation of soils to minimize the potential for erosion.



On March 3, 2009, a letter requesting project review was sent to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); to date, no response has been received (Appendix B).

4.2 Water Resources

4.2.1 Surface Water

The Clean Water Act (CWA), as amended in 1977, established the basic framework for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States.

The proposed project site is relatively level and contains no surface water resources. The nearest surface water is an unnamed, intermittent water system within 200 feet to the south; Mill Creek is approximately 400 feet to the east. The project area is drained by St. Martin Bayou, Biloxi Bay, and ultimately the Mississippi Sound. A site visit conducted by Nationwide Infrastructure Support Technical Assistance Consultants (NISTAC) and FEMA biologists on February 27, 2009, verified these findings.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur and there would be no adverse impacts to surface water.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, short-term impacts to downstream surface waters could occur during the construction period due to erosion of soils during construction. The applicant would be required to submit a SWPPP and NPDES permit application prior to construction. To reduce impacts to surface water, the applicant would implement appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils.

On March 3, 2009, letters requesting project review were sent to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Water Management Division, the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) Office of Pollution Control, and the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission (Appendix B). To date, no responses have been received.

4.2.2 Floodplains

Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires federal agencies to avoid direct or indirect support of development within the 100-year floodplain whenever there is a practicable alternative. FEMA uses Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to identify the regulatory 100-year floodplain for the National Flood Insurance Program. Consistent with EO 11988, both conventional FIRMs and Preliminary DFIRMs were examined during the preparation of this EA. The conventional FIRM (FEMA, 1988; Community Panel Number 285255 0210 E) shows the proposed project site as being located in Flood Zone C and the Preliminary DFIRM (MDEQ, 2007; Map Number 28047C0284G) shows it as being located in Zone X, both of which are outside of the 100-year floodplain. FEMA has also developed ABFE Maps based on a flood frequency analysis completed by FEMA that updates the flood risk data with information on storms that have occurred in the past 25+ years, including (but not limited to) Hurricane Katrina. The ABFE map shows that the proposed project site is located within the Limit of Katrina Surge Inundation and outside the ABFE Inland Limit (FEMA, 2006; ABFE Map Number MS-K25).

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur and there would be no impacts to floodplains.



Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to the floodplain would occur. The proposed project site is located outside of the 100-year floodplain and ABFE inland limit and development of the site would not impede natural floodplain uses.

4.2.3 Waters of the U.S. Including Wetlands

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates the discharge of dredged or filled material into waters of the U.S., including wetlands, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Additionally, EO 11990 (Protection of Wetlands) requires federal agencies to avoid, to the extent possible, adverse impact of wetlands.

The proposed project site is approximately 0.5 mile north of St. Martin Bayou. A review of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) map for the proposed project area indicated that no wetlands are located on the site; however, nontidal, forested/scrub-shrub wetlands are depicted just east of the site (USFWS, 2009).

A wetland determination was conducted by NISTAC and FEMA biologists on February 27, 2009, which confirmed that no wetlands occur on the proposed project site. The methods and procedures used for this determination are in accordance with the 1987 *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual* (USACE, 1987). The Corps manual requires the presence of all three parameters (greater than 50% dominance of hydrophytic vegetation, evidence of hydric soils, and presence of hydrologic indicators) for an area to be considered a wetland. A ditch (hydrologic indicator) runs parallel to the fence near the southern boundary of the site; however, Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), an upland grass species, is the dominant vegetation, and was probably seeded there. Soil samples were taken; soils on the site consist of fill material that has been graded. The wetlands shown on the NWI map and located to the east of the proposed project site have been filled recently for construction of a new apartment complex.

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) enables coastal states, including Mississippi, to designate state coastal zone boundaries and develop coastal management programs to improve protection of sensitive shoreline resources and guide sustainable use of coastal areas. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the proposed project site is located within the Mississippi Coastal Zone (NOAA, 2004).

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur and there would be no impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no wetland impacts are anticipated as no wetlands are located on or adjacent to the proposed project site. To reduce impacts to surface water, the applicant should implement appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils. On March 3, 2009, letters requesting project review were sent to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR), Bureau of Wetlands Permitting, and the USACE Mobile District. The MDMR responded in a letter dated March 10, 2009, that the Department has no objections to the proposed project provided there are no direct or indirect impacts to coastal wetlands and no coastal program agency objects to the proposal. No other responses have been received to date.



4.3 Transportation

The proposed project site is located on Lamey Bridge Road on land owned by Harrison County School District. The proposed project site is south of the existing D'Iberville High School and north of a newly constructed Senior Center. Access to the proposed project site would be provided from Lamey Bridge Road (Figure 2 in Appendix A). Traffic volume on Lamey Bridge Road is high during peak periods and during sporting events, as the D'Iberville High School Athletic Complex parking lot borders the northern boundary of the site.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to transportation, site access, or traffic levels are anticipated.

Proposed Action Alternative – There would be a minor temporary increase in the volume of construction traffic on roads in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site that could potentially result in a slower traffic flow for the duration of the construction phase, with additional delays during peak times, such as during sporting events and drop-off/pick-up times at the D'Iberville High School. To mitigate potential delays, construction vehicles and equipment would be stored on site during project construction and appropriate signage would be posted on affected roadways. Lamey Bridge Road may be closed or partially closed during roadway improvements. Appropriate signage will be posted to facilitate traffic flow.

Minor, long-term impacts to traffic levels on Lamey Bridge Road would occur as a result of traffic generated by individuals utilizing the proposed facility.

On March 3, 2009, a letter requesting project review was sent to the Mississippi Department of Transportation. To date, no response has been received.

4.4 Public Health and Safety

Safety and security issues considered in this EA include the health and safety of the area residents and the general public and the protection of personnel involved in activities related to the proposed construction.

EO 13045, Protection of Children, requires federal agencies to make it a high priority to identify and assess environmental health and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children. The project is located adjacent to D'Iberville High School.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur and the safety of the general public would remain unchanged.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, construction activities could present safety risks to those performing the activities. To minimize risks to safety and human health, all construction activities would be performed using qualified personnel trained in all appropriate safety precautions, including the proper use of the appropriate equipment. Additionally, all activities will be conducted in a safe manner in accordance with the standards specified in OSHA regulations.

The project site is located on Lamey Bridge road in a C-2 commercial zone, where buildings and lodges for social organizations are allowed (City of D'Iberville, 2009). Appropriate construction barriers including exclusionary fences would be in place to protect the area, pedestrians and

students. The Senior Center, located on the southern boundary of the site is separated by a privacy fence.

To alert motorists and pedestrians of project activities, appropriate signage and barriers would be on site prior to and during construction activities.

4.5 Environmental Justice

EO 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations) mandates that federal agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Socioeconomic and demographic data for the project area were reviewed to determine if the proposed action would have a disproportionate impact on minority or low-income persons.

The proposed project site is located in Census Tract 33.01 Block Group 2, which has a minority population that is significantly higher than the City of D’Iberville, and higher than Harrison County. The U.S. Census Bureau lists the following census data for the project area (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).

	State of Mississippi	Harrison County	City of D’Iberville	Census Tract 33.01 Block Group 2
Total population (2000)	2,844,658	189,601	7,608	1116
Annual median household income	\$31,330	\$35,624	\$34,700	\$40,179
% Households below poverty level	20%	15%	12%	12%
% Minority population	39%	27%	2%	19%
% Hispanic (may be of any race)	1.39%	2.6%	2.6%	3%
% of population over 65	12%	11%	8.6%	10%

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations.

Proposed Action Alternative – Although EJ populations reside in the area surrounding the proposed project site, the Proposed Action Alternative would not have any disproportionately high or adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations as it would not displace any residents, businesses, or community services.

4.6 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires that states adopt ambient air quality standards. The standards have been established in order to protect the public from potentially harmful amounts of pollutants. Under the CAA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes primary and secondary air quality standards. Primary air quality standards protect the public



health, including the health of “sensitive populations, such as people with asthma, children, and older adults.” Secondary air quality standards protect public welfare by promoting ecosystems health, and preventing decreased visibility and damage to crops and buildings. EPA has set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the following six criteria pollutants: ozone (O₃), particulate matter (PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and lead (Pb). According to MDEQ, the entire state of Mississippi is classified as in attainment, meaning that criteria air pollutants do not exceed the NAAQS (MDEQ, 2002).

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no short- or long-term impacts to air quality because no construction would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, short-term impacts to air quality could occur during construction. To reduce temporary impacts to air quality, the construction contractors would be required to water down construction areas when necessary to minimize particulate matter and dust. Emissions from fuel-burning internal combustion engines (e.g., heavy equipment and earthmoving machinery) could temporarily increase the levels of some of the criteria pollutants, including CO, NO₂, O₃, PM₁₀, and non-criteria pollutants such as volatile organic compounds. To reduce the emission of criteria pollutants, fuel-burning equipment running times would be kept to a minimum and engines would be properly maintained.

4.7 Noise

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound. Sound is most commonly measured in decibels (dB) on the A-weighted scale, which is the scale most similar to the range of sounds that the human ear can hear. The Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) is an average measure of sound. The DNL descriptor is accepted by federal agencies as a standard for estimating sound impacts and establishing guidelines for compatible land uses. EPA guidelines, and those of many other federal agencies, state that outdoor sound levels in excess of 55 dB DNL are “normally unacceptable” for noise-sensitive land uses including residences, schools, or hospitals (EPA, 1974).

There are noise-sensitive areas within a 1-mile radius of the proposed project site, including a few residential homes, the D’Iberville High School, and a newly constructed Senior Center.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no short- or long-term impact to noise levels because no construction would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, minor, short-term increases in noise levels are anticipated during the construction period. Equipment and machinery utilized on the proposed project site would meet all local, state, and federal noise regulations. Construction will be scheduled between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. in accordance with the City of D’Iberville Noise Ordinance (Rogers, pers. comm.). Construction activities are not anticipated to greatly disrupt daily activities at nearby noise-sensitive areas. Normal activities at the new facility are unlikely to affect noise-sensitive areas.

4.8 Biological Resources

The proposed project site is comprised of level terrain with sandy, well-drained soils, and is dominated by Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), which was probably seeded there. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists the following federally endangered and threatened animal species for Harrison County (USFWS, 2008):

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Louisiana black bear	<i>Ursus americanus luteolus</i>	T
Gulf sturgeon	<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	T (CH)
Piping plover	<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	T (CH)
Gopher tortoise	<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	T
Green turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	T
Loggerhead turtle	<i>Caretta caretta</i>	T
Kemp's Ridley turtle	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>	E
Mississippi gopher frog	<i>Rana capito sevosa</i>	E
Louisiana quillwort	<i>Isoetes louisianensis</i>	E
Alabama red-bellied turtle	<i>Pseudemys alabamensis</i>	E
Leatherback turtle	<i>Dermochelys comacea</i>	E
West Indian manatee	<i>Trichechus manatus</i>	E
Brown pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	E
Red-cockaded woodpecker	<i>Picoides borealis</i>	E
T = threatened, E = endangered, (CH) = listed with critical habitat		

The site visit conducted on February 27, 2009, confirmed that the proposed project site does not contain habitat for any federally listed flora and fauna; therefore it is unlikely that any threatened or endangered species are present.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no impacts to biological resources.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, approximately 1.9 acres of grassed area would be converted to building and parking lot use. No suitable habitat for any federally listed flora and fauna species is located within the areas to be impacted by the proposed project activities. Therefore, under the Proposed Action Alternative, there would be no impacts to threatened or endangered species. On March 3, 2009, a letter requesting project review was sent to the USFWS Jackson Field Office. To date, no response has been received.

4.9 Cultural Resources

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended, and implemented by 36 CFR Part 800, requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties and provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) an opportunity to comment on federal projects that will have an effect on historic properties prior to implementation. Historic properties are defined as archeological sites, standing structures, or other historic resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

A FEMA Archeologist and a FEMA Architectural Historian, both qualified in their respective disciplines under the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (36 CFR Part 61), conducted an assessment of the project's potential to affect historic properties within the Area of Potential Effects (APE). The APE is the geographic area within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if such properties exist. For archaeological resources, the APE consists of the proposed site; for historic architectural resources, the APE is extended out to a 0.5-mile radius around the proposed project site. This APE was previously established through FEMA consultation with the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

On February 27, 2009, a FEMA Architectural Historian visited the APE to determine if any historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP were present within the APE. Visual inspection of the APE did not reveal any evidence of historic properties. Currently there are no standing structures on the proposed project site. All of the existing structures that surround the parcel, including the apartment complexes to the east, the senior center to the south and the High School to the west are of recent construction.

A search of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History site files and maps indicated that no previously recorded sites are located within the proposed project site and no archaeological surveys have been conducted at the proposed project site. However, within a 2-mile radius, 13 archaeological sites have been recorded in Harrison and Jackson Counties.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur and there would be no impacts to archeological or historic architectural resources.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to archeological or historic architectural resources are anticipated. Because intact soils may exist on-site and known archeological sites are located nearby, FEMA conducted a Phase I archeological survey at the proposed project site on March 6, 2009. The survey showed that the project site has an intact "A" horizon below a level of fill that has been placed over much of the surface. The 44 artifacts recovered are a relatively light scatter of historic artifacts mixed with recent glass found within the fill level and the "A" horizon. The artifacts tentatively date to the early to mid-1900s. They could be associated with the structure that was once located on the property and/or the past use of the land as an agricultural field. No features were found. Due to the lack of a significant artifact assemblage and an absence of features at the proposed site, the small scatter of artifacts is not eligible for the NRHP. Because the construction of the proposed facility is surrounded by buildings that are less than 50 years of age, there will be no impact to a historic viewshed. No historic structures are present on the project site, and the potential for existing and intact resources is low due to the disturbed nature of the site.



In letters dated April 15, 2009, to the SHPO and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), FEMA determined that, due to the lack of identified historic properties in the APE and the past and present uses of the project site, “No Historic Properties will be Affected” by the proposed undertaking. No responses have been received to date.

However, 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 in FEMA who will in turn contact FEMA Historic Preservation Staff. Work will not proceed until FEMA Historic Preservation Staff has completed consultation with the Mississippi SHPO and the THPO. In addition, if unmarked graves are present, compliance with the antiquities law of Mississippi is required. The Applicant shall notify the local law enforcement agency within 24 hours of the discovery and FEMA within 72 hours

5.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

According to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, cumulative impacts represent the “impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time (40 CFR 1508.7).” In accordance with NEPA and to the extent reasonable and practical, this EA considered the combined effect of the Proposed Action Alternative and other actions occurring or proposed in the vicinity of the proposed project site.

D’Iberville and the entire Mississippi Gulf coast are undergoing recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina caused extensive damages. The recovery efforts in the area include demolition, reconstruction, and new construction. These projects and the proposed project may have cumulative temporary impacts on air quality, noise, traffic, and surface water resources in D’Iberville during construction activities. No other cumulative effects are anticipated.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

FEMA is the lead federal agency for conducting the NEPA compliance process for the proposed project in D’Iberville, Mississippi. It is the goal of the lead agency to expedite the preparation and review of NEPA documents and to be responsive to the needs of the community and the purpose and need of the proposed action while meeting the intent of NEPA and complying with all NEPA provisions.

D’Iberville Community Club will notify the public of the availability of the draft EA through publication of a public notice in a local newspaper. FEMA will conduct an expedited public comment period commencing on the initial date of publication of the public notice.

7.0 AGENCY COORDINATION AND PERMITS

The following agencies and organizations were contacted by letter requesting project review during the preparation of this EA. Responses received to date are included in Appendix B.



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- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, Alabama
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, Water Management Division
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson Field Office
 - Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
 - Mississippi Department of Archives and History
 - Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
 - Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control, Environmental Permits Division
 - Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Bureau of Wetlands Permitting
 - Mississippi Department of Transportation, Environmental Division
 - Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission

In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, the applicant would be responsible for acquiring any necessary permits prior to commencing construction at the proposed project site.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

No impacts to geology, groundwater, floodplains, waters of the U.S. including wetlands, hazardous materials, socioeconomics, environmental justice, biological resources, or cultural resources are anticipated under the Proposed Action Alternative.

During the construction period, short-term impacts to soils, surface water, transportation, air quality, and noise are anticipated. Short-term impacts will be mitigated utilizing BMPs, such as silt fences, proper equipment maintenance, and appropriate signage. Minor, long-term impacts to traffic levels on Lamey Bridge Road would occur.

9.0 REFERENCES

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Appendix A
Figures

Appendix B
Agency Coordination