



FEMA

DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for
VAL REISS PARK

BACKGROUND

On August 29, 2005, the tidal surge and high velocity winds from Hurricane Katrina resulted in extensive damage to Val Reiss Park located at 1101 Magistrate St., Chalmette, LA. Val Reiss Park was owned and operated by St. Bernard Parish at the time of the disaster. The approximately 33 acre park presently includes damaged elements such as fencing, lighting, walking trails, parking lots, sheds, baseball fields, bleachers, and dugouts. The remaining portions of the park are dominated by vegetation.

Due to Hurricane Katrina, park facilities throughout St. Bernard Parish were heavily damaged. The purpose of the proposed action is to capitalize on the central location of Val Reiss Park by enhancing the functional need of Val Reiss Park. St. Bernard Parish Government has determined that the centralized location of Val Reiss Park adequately serves the post Katrina population of the parish.

In accordance with 44 CFR Part 10, FEMA regulations to implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared. The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with the enhancement of Val Reiss Park and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The need for the proposed action is to adequately support the public recreational needs of post-Katrina St. Bernard Parish. The alternatives considered include 1) No Action, and 2) Enhancement of Val Reiss Park (Proposed Action).

The proposed action includes the construction of a new recreational complex for St. Bernard Parish. The project shall include one (1) youth baseball/softball quadraplex, one (1) mixed youth/adult baseball/softball quadraplex, a multi-purpose building, picnic areas, parking lots, circulation roads, a walking path, playground lots, a restroom/concession building, a shuttle road, a scout house, fencing, and utility infrastructure.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

A legal notice has been posted in the local newspaper, August 29, 2008 and September 5, 2008. The draft EA can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website at

<http://www.fema.gov/ehp/docs.shtm> and is also available for public review at the St. Bernard Parish Government Complex Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, 8201 W. Judge Perez Dr., Chalmette, LA 70043 from August 29, 2008 to September 12, 2008. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA will become final and the initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice.

FINDINGS

FEMA has evaluated the proposed project for significant adverse impacts to geology, soils, water resources (surface water, groundwater, and wetlands), floodplains, coastal resources, air quality, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, Federally listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitats), cultural resources, socioeconomics (including minority and low income populations), safety, noise, hazardous materials, and traffic. The results of these evaluations as well as consultations and input from other Federal and state agencies are presented in the draft EA. 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. In addition, the proposed project does not appear to have the potential for significant cumulative effects when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10) and the proposed project as described in the EA may proceed.

CONDITIONS

The following conditions must be met as part of the implementation of the project. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize Federal funds:

- A storm water pollution prevention plan would be prepared and best management practices for storm water management would be implemented to minimize any detrimental effects to water quality during construction
- The park enhancement should be coordinated with the local floodplain administrator and comply with floodplain ordinances.
- To reduce potential short term effects to air quality from construction related activities, the contractor would be responsible for using best management practices to reduce fugitive dust generation and diesel emissions.
- Hazardous materials used in construction of the new park must be managed (stored, used, transported, and disposed of) in accordance with federal, state, and local hazardous waste, hazardous material, and hazardous substance requirements. If hazardous substances are released to the project area during construction, these federal, state, and local requirements must be followed in response and cleanup.
- All construction activities should be conducted in a safe manner in accordance with OSHA requirements.

- Any fill or borrow material used in the repair activities must be sourced 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 hours of the discovery. The applicant shall also notify FEMA and the Louisiana Division of Archaeology at 225-342-8170 within seventy-two hours of the discovery. Failure to comply with these stipulations may jeopardize receipt of FEMA funding.

APPROVAL

Howard R. Bush, Environmental Liaison Officer Date
Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office
FEMA-1603/1607-DR-LA

James Stark, Director Date
Louisiana Transitional Recovery Office
FEMA-1603/1607-DR-LA