

**DRAFT**  
**Environmental Assessment**

**For**

**Proposed New**  
**West Side Community Center**  
**Gulfport, Mississippi**

**FEMA-1604-DR-MS**

**Prepared for:**

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**

## Table of Contents

	<b>PAGE</b>
<b>1.0 Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Disaster Background and Overview	4
1.2 Purpose and Need	6
<b>2.0 Alternatives Considered</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Alternatives Analyzed and Dismissed	7
2.2 Alternatives Further Evaluated	7
<b>3.0 Affected Environments and Potential Impacts of the Alternatives Considered</b>	<b>13</b>
3.1 Geology, Seismicity and Soils	13
3.2 Land Use & Zoning	15
3.3 Floodplain Encroachment	15
3.4 Traffic and Parking to Residential and Commercial Area to Traffic Patterns	16
3.5 Public Health and Safety (e.g. Hazardous Waste)	17
3.6 Socioeconomic Issues	19
3.7 Air Quality	20
3.8 Noise	21
3.9 Public Services and Utilities	22
3.10 Water Resources/Water Quality	23
3.11 Biological Resources	25

## Table of Contents (cont.)

	<b>PAGE</b>
Wetlands	24
Threatened and Endangered Species (animal, plant, aquatic) Affected Environments	25
3.12 Cultural Resources, Historic Properties and Archeological Resources	27
3.13 Agency Coordination and Permits	28
<b>4.0 Public Involvement</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>5.0 List of Preparers</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>References</b>	
<b>Appendices</b>	

**Environmental Assessment  
Proposed New  
West Site Community Center  
FEMA-1604-DR-MS**

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Disaster Background and Overview**

Federal Emergency Management Agency (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 proposed project, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Hurricane Katrina made landfall on the southeastern coast of Louisiana and the southwestern coast of Mississippi on August 29, 2005, with maximum sustained winds of 140 mph. Hurricane-force winds extended outward up to 105 miles from the center of the storm. Coastal storm surge flooding of 20 to 30 feet above normal tide levels, along with large and dangerous battering waves, occurred near and to the east of where the center of the storm made landfall. Widespread damage occurred, including beach erosion and damage and/or destruction of homes and public infrastructure.

Like many other public and private buildings on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, the wind and

extraordinary storm surge associated with Hurricane Katrina caused extensive structural damage to the former Gaston Hewes Recreational Center located at 2608 17th Street in Gulfport, Mississippi. The former Gaston Hewes Recreational Center was located approximately 400 feet west of the corner of 17th Street and Highway 49.

The proposed project site for the new West Side Community Center consists of approximately 1.0 acre, as shown on the tax parcel attached as Figure 1 (Parcel #0711I-03-067.001) and as shown on proposed building layout as Figure 2 in Appendix A. The legal description identifies the project site as being in Section 8, Township 8 South, Range 11 West in a residential area of Gulfport, Harrison County, Mississippi. The center of the project site is located at Latitude 30°, 21', 44.73" and Longitude 89°, 06', 35.13". The proposed project site was the former locations of the Mississippi Highway Patrol District 8, Troop K Office and Gulf Coast Mental Health Center. According to an interview with Mississippi Highway Patrol Captain Jimmy O'Banner, the Highway Patrol facility housed administrative offices and a vehicle maintenance facility until it was severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The above referenced structures have since been demolished and the parcel cleared.

The proposed project site is bounded on the north by 9<sup>th</sup> Street, across which are located single family residences; on the east by 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, across which are located single family residences; on the south by 8<sup>th</sup> Street, across which are located single family residences; on the west by 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, across which are single family residences. The proposed new West Side Community Center will be located approximately 1.14 miles southwest from the location of the former recreational center.

The proposed new West Side Community Center is a new 10,783 square foot facility with brick façade and standing seam metal roof. The building will consist of a weight room, meeting room, multipurpose area, kitchen and bathroom facilities.

## **1.2 Purpose and Need**

There is an immediate need to replace the former Gaston Hewes Recreational Center to provide the citizens, especially the lower income families, in the immediate area of Gulfport with accessible facilities for recreation and community activities. Most of Gulfport's recreational and community facilities, especially south of Interstate I-10 were either destroyed or severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. This proposed project, the West Side Community Center, will be another tangible sign of Gulfport's re-building efforts.

## **2.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENTS AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

### **2.1 Alternatives Evaluated**

#### *Repair/Re-construction of Gaston Hewes Recreational Center*

Re-construction of the existing Gaston Hewes Recreational Center building was considered, but repair/reconstruction cost was greater than relocation and building a new recreational center. It was also thought that combining the proposed new recreational center with the proposed senior citizen center on the west adjacent land parcel along with a nearby park would provide the community a greater benefit. The future use of the former Gaston Hewes Recreational Center location is yet to be determined, but may be a new site for construction of other public service infrastructure needs (fire, police, etc.).

### **2.2 Alternatives Considered for Further Review**

#### *Alternative 1: No Action Alternative*

Under the No Action alternative, FEMA would not fund the proposed project and the new West Side Community Center to replace the former Gaston Hewes Recreational Center would not be constructed. This would further delay the City of Gulfport from providing the citizens with community and recreational avenues, and delay the city from demonstrating its resolve in healing and rebuilding the community.

*Alternative 2: Relocation of Gaston Hewes Recreational Center (Proposed)*

The City of Gulfport Department of Leisure Services is proposing the permanent relocation of the former Gaston Hewes Recreational Center as an improved project in the form of a new West Side Community Center, which will also be adjacent to a proposed Senior Citizen Community Center. The proposed new West Side Community Center will replace the former Gaston Hewes Recreational Center that was severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Photographs of the former recreation center depict the structural damage. Site photographs are included in Appendix B.

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Geology, Topography and Soils</b>	No impacts to geology or topography. There may be short-term impacts to soils during the construction period.	Area soils would likely be disturbed during construction. Soil loss may occur directly from disturbance or indirectly via wind or water. Best management practices will be developed and implemented, such as erosion and sedimentation control (e.g. silt fences, hay bales, re-vegetating disturbed soils, and maintaining site soil stockpiles, to prevent soils from eroding and dispersing off-site).

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Water Resources</b>	No impacts to groundwater resources are anticipated.	None
<b>Surface Water</b>	Temporary short-term impacts to surface water are possible during construction activities.	Appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and re-vegetating bare soils would minimize surface water runoff.
<b>Floodplains</b>	No impacts to floodplains are anticipated.	None
<b>Groundwater</b>	No impacts to groundwater resources are anticipated. The new facility will use the available public water system.	None
<b>Biological Resources</b>	No impacts to biological resources (e.g. threatened and endangered species) are anticipated. The proposed parcels have contained civic buildings since the mid-1960's (e.g. Mississippi Highway Patrol Offices)	None

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Air Quality</b>	Short-term impacts to air quality may occur during the construction period.	Construction contractors would be required to water down construction areas (e.g. exposed soil) as necessary and fuel-burning equipment running times would be kept to a minimum and engines would be properly maintained.
<b>Transportation</b>	<p>There may be a minor temporary increase in the volume of construction traffic on roads in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site.</p> <p>No impacts to daily traffic are anticipated during normal intended usage. There maybe some increased traffic on occasions when the facility is utilized for community meetings, etc.</p>	<p>Construction vehicles and equipment would be stored on-site during project construction and appropriate signage would be posted on affected roadways.</p> <p>None</p>

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Noise</b>	Short-term impacts to noise may occur at the proposed project site during the construction period.	Construction would take place during normal business hours (e.g. daytime hours) and equipment and machinery installed at the proposed high school would meet all local, state, and federal noise regulations.
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	No impacts to archeological or historic resources are anticipated. No archeological or historic resources were identified on the proposed land parcels.	None
<b>Socioeconomic Resources</b>	No impacts to socioeconomic resources are anticipated.	None
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	No disproportionately high or adverse effects on minority or low-income populations are anticipated.	None

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	No impacts from hazardous materials or wastes are anticipated.	<p>Construction activities could expose or otherwise affect unknown subsurface hazardous wastes or materials. Many elements of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) have been conducted for the site and no recognized environmental conditions were discovered, indicating a minimal risk.</p> <p>Any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during construction would be disposed of and handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.</p>

### **3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENTS AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

#### **3.1 Geology, Seismic Activity and Soils**

##### **Soils Existing Conditions**

A soils classification of the site according to the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on-line data base indicates that the following soils are present on the subject property: Site soils consist of Eutis (EtB) sandy loam soils series mixed with remaining fill materials and concrete slabs of previous structures. The Eutis (EtB) series consists of excessively drained soils on ridge tops with a 0-5 percent slope. It is primarily composed of loamy sands. The soil is strongly acidic or very strongly acidic. Permeability is moderately rapid, and available water capacity is low with little or no run-off.

Local topography indicates that drainage in this area is accomplished by infiltration and surface run-off south towards the Gulf of Mexico, located approximately ¼ mile from the proposed project site.

Executive Order 12699 directs Federal agencies to incorporate cost-effective seismic safety measures in all new buildings that are constructed, leased, assisted, or regulated by the Federal Government. The area of southern Mississippi is not in an active seismic area and the concerns of seismic activity as related to this proposed project is relatively low.

## **Impacts to Soils**

### *Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

Normal occurrences of soil erosion would be expected to occur if the site is not developed. The proposed site location is not located within a 100-year floodplain and is not subject to flooding, due to its elevation and topography.

### *Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

Area soils would likely be disturbed during construction. Soil loss would occur directly from disturbance or indirectly via wind or water. Best management practices will be developed and implemented, such as implementing an erosion and sedimentation control plan using silt fences or hay bales, re-vegetating disturbed soils (e.g. part of proposed landscaping activities), and maintaining site soil stockpiles during construction, to prevent soils from eroding and dispersing off-site.

Implementation of appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be required at the construction location. BMPs include, but are not limited to; the installation of silt fences and re-vegetating bare soils to minimize erosion. The proposed project site does not contain soils classified as prime.

### **3.2 Land Use and Zoning**

The proposed project location is located on a vacant parcel and its history has been previously described in this report. The proposed project location and surrounding area is listed zoned R-2 in the City of Gulfport. R-2 zone is defined as Single-family residence district-medium density.

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

No impact.

### **3.3 Floodplain Encroachment**

Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires that a Federal agency 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 (NFIP). The proposed project site for the new West Side Community Center is located in Zone X which is not within a 100-year floodplain per the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map Number 285255 300 76D dated October 4, 2002. The FEMA and FIRM Maps are included in Appendix D. The proposed project site is not in the 3 foot breaking wave zone and just above the ABFE zone as shown in the online City of Gulfport Atlas.

### **3.3.1 Impacts to Floodplains**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

No impact.

### **3.4 Traffic**

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) is responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of the State of Mississippi's Highway System as well as the portion of federal interstate highways within Mississippi's boundaries. Arterials, connectors, rural roads, and local roads are constructed and maintained by county or city governments.

The proposed project site is bounded on the north by 9<sup>th</sup> Street, across which are located single family residences; on the east by 40<sup>th</sup> Avenue, across which are located single family residences; on the south by 8<sup>th</sup> Street, across which are located single family residences; on the west by 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, across which are single family residences. Based on conversations with City of Gulfport personnel, the typical usage of a community center is sporadic throughout the hours of operation, unless a special event is scheduled that may cause a short term influx of vehicles. The normal vehicular traffic at the proposed recreational center should not be in a volume to cause traffic concerns. Increased vehicular traffic associated with an event at the proposed recreational center may cause a brief traffic congestion issue.

### **3.4.1 Impacts to Traffic Patterns**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

The impact to traffic would be short term during the time of active site preparation and construction activities.

### **3.5 Hazardous Materials Current Conditions (Public Health & Safety)**

CERCLA (commonly referred to as Superfund) is the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act. It requires community relations components during the assessment of hazardous substances at inactive waste sites. Key communication pieces include a community relations plan, public access to the complete administrative record, an information repository, and advertisement of public involvement opportunities. Health and ecological impact may be determined requiring worker and public notification. Emergency removal actions may be required.

RCRA is the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, which establishes regulatory standards for the generation, transportation, storage, treatment, and disposal of hazardous wastes. In regulatory terms, a RCRA hazardous waste is a waste that appears on one of the four hazardous wastes lists (F-list, K-list, P-list, or U-list), or exhibits at least one of four characteristics—ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity. Hazardous waste is regulated under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Subtitle C.

Hazardous material means as any material that, because of its quantity, concentration, or physical and chemical characteristics, poses a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or environment.

An environmental database review, historic aerial photograph review, a telephone interview with former parcel occupant and site reconnaissance was conducted by Covington and Associates personnel in February 2007. The site visit and records review revealed no evidence of *recognized environmental conditions* on the subject property. The records database report is included as Appendix E of this report.

The former Mississippi Highway Patrol Office present on the project site was listed as having an Underground Storage Tank (UST). The UST was a 1,000 gallon tank for gasoline dispensing of repaired vehicles, it was not utilized as a primary fuel dispensing point for fleet vehicles. The UST was removed in December 1989 and no reported violations were listed for the above referenced facility. Refer to EDR regulatory records search included in Appendix E.

### **3.5.1 Impacts from Hazardous Materials**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No Impact

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action):*

The impact of the proposed action would be negligible with respect to the presence of hazardous materials and potential exposure, because no hazardous or toxic materials or wastes have been identified for the proposed project site. No impact anticipated.

### **3.6 Socioeconomic Issues**

EO12898 is the Executive Order 12898 Environmental Justice in Minority Populations. This requires federal agencies, departments, and their contractors to consider any potentially disproportionate human health or environmental risks their activities, policies, or programs may pose to minority or low-income populations.

EO 13045 (Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks) required federal agencies to identify and assess health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children. As with EO 12898, FEMA and most federal lead agencies determine impacts to children as part of the NEPA compliance process. Agencies must ensure that its policies, programs, activities, and standards address disproportionate risks to children that results from environmental health risks or safety risks.

Based on U.S. Census Bureau information for the year 2005, the percent populations of zip code 39501 (which is the zip code for the proposed new West Side Community Center) are 75% White, 12.7% Black or African American, 2% Asian, 10.4% Hispanic or Latino, and 0.7% American Indian or Alaska Native. The median household income (in 2005 adjusted dollars) for the area is \$55,832 and 10.2 % of all families are below the poverty level.

#### **3.6.1 Socio-Economics Impacts**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

Although there is no requirement for compliance with EOs 12898 and 1304 when there are no federal actions, low-income and minority families and children would be adversely affected if the West Side Community Center were not constructed, due to insufficient

permanent community and recreational facilities in the City of Gulfport from the damage caused by Hurricane Katrina.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

The proposed action will benefit the community by providing a permanent facility for recreational and community activities.

### **3.7 Air Quality**

Under the Clean Air Act, 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, preventing decreased visibility, and damage to crops and buildings. EPA has set national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for six of the following criteria pollutants; ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub> and 10), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and lead (Pb). According to the MDEQ, the entire state of Mississippi is classified as in attainment, meaning criteria air pollutants do not exceed the NAAQS.

#### **3.7.1 Impacts to Air Quality**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

Increase in vehicle exhaust emissions and dust is anticipated during construction. Federal and state air attainment levels would not be exceeded. Best management practices would be developed and implemented to cover and/or wet area soils during construction to minimize dust. This proposed project site is located in an attainment area.

### **3.8 Noise**

#### **Noise Current Conditions**

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.

Noise, defined herein as undesirable sound, is federally regulated by the Noise Control Act of 1972 (NCA). Although the NCA gives the EPA authority to prepare guidelines for acceptable ambient noise levels, it only charges those federal agencies that operate noise-producing facilities or equipment to implement noise standards. 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 such as residences, schools, and hospitals.

The proposed project site is an area of primarily single family residences. A noise ordinance does exist for the City of Gulfport, City Ordinance: Chapter 7, Article 1, Section 7-10.

The general language of the City of Gulfport, Noise Ordinance refers to an exceedance as: “noises interfering with enjoyment of property or public peace and comfort prohibited”. A copy of the City of Gulfport Noise Ordinance is included as Appendix G.

### **3.8.1 Impacts to Noise Conditions**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

Construction noise impacts would be short-term and limited to the duration of construction activities. The increase in vehicles from recreational center use may increase the level of vehicular noise in the area throughout operating hours, but the increase in noise level from vehicle traffic and from outside activities at the recreational center should not exceed the city noise ordinance.

### **3.9 Public Services and Utilities**

The proposed project location and surrounding area has all normal public services and utility services available. The water, sanitary sewer, storm water drainage, police, fire and emergency medical services are provided by the City of Gulfport. The electric power service is provided Mississippi Power. Natural Gas is provided by Center Point Gas.

### **3.9.1 Impact Public Services and Utilities**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construction of the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Alternative)*

Any impact would be short term during active site preparation and construction activities. All normal construction permits and best management practices will be undertaken to minimize and/or eliminate any disruption to public utility services in the area.

## **3.10 Water Resources/Water Quality**

### **3.10.1 Groundwater Existing Conditions**

The proposed project site is located above the coastal lowlands aquifer system. Recharge of the aquifer in the vicinity of the proposed project site occurs in areas of higher elevations because water flows southwest toward the Gulf of Mexico. Dissolved solids, such as salinity, increase as the velocity of the water decreases as it approaches the water of the Gulf of Mexico. Freshwater parts of the aquifer are typically located about 500 feet below sea level.

### **3.10.1.1 Impacts to Groundwater**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Alternative)*

The water supply for the proposed West Side Community Center will tie into the public utilities; therefore it will be not impact existing groundwater conditions.

### **3.10.2 Surface Water Existing Conditions**

The Clean Water Act (CWA), as amended in 1977, established the basic framework for regulating discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States. Based on the local topography, excessive stormwater run-off would drain from the proposed project location site to the south towards the Mississippi Sound (Gulf of Mexico). There are no on-site surface water features (e.g. ponds, lakes or drainage ditches) present at the proposed project location.

#### **3.10.2.1 Impacts to Surface Waters**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

There are no anticipated impacts to nearby surface water. A storm water drainage system will consist of both a sheet and sub-surface drainage component.

### **3.11 Biological Resources**

#### **3.11.1 Wetlands Existing Conditions**

A wetlands determination was performed for the 1.5-acre project site in February 2007, and is included in Appendix D of this report. The wetlands determination was performed in accordance with appropriate US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) Section 404 wetlands delineation procedures. The conclusion of the wetlands determination is that the COE and other agencies would consider none of the project site to be “jurisdictional” wetlands. Based on the wetlands determination conducted, no further permit coordination is required from the Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District nor the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

#### **3.11.1.2 Impacts to Wetlands**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

There were no wetlands identified in the wetlands determination survey. No Impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

There were no wetlands identified in the wetlands determination survey. No impact anticipated.

### 3.11.2 Threatened or Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lists 14 federally protected species for Harrison County, Mississippi. However, further review of the list shows that six of the species are directly related to the Mississippi Sound, beach and associated riverine habitats. These six species are in italics and are eliminated from further analysis.

Harrison County (source: <http://southeast.fws.gov/es/county%20lists.htm>)

E – Red-cockaded woodpecker Picoides borealis

T – Bald eagle Haliaeetus leucophalus

T – Eastern indigo snake Drymarchon corais couperi (P)

E – *Brown pelican* *Pelecanus occidentalis*

T – Gopher tortoise Gopherus polyphemus

T – Louisiana black bear Ursus a. luteolus

T – *Piping Plover* *Charadrius melodus*

E – *Kemp's ridley* *Lepidochelys kempii*

T – *Green turtle* *Chelodania mydas* (P)

T – *Loggerhead turtle* *Caretta caretta*

T- *Gulf sturgeon*, *Acipenser oxyrhynchus desotoi*

E – Louisiana quillwort *Isoetes louisianensis*

PE – Mississippi gopher frog (proposal under review)

C – Black pine snake *Pituophis mealanoleucus* ssp. *Lodingi*

A Threatened and Endangered Species survey was conducted by PAC Services LLC for Covington & Associates Corporation (CAC) on the proposed project location on February 8, 2007. None of the listed species for Harrison County were recorded during the survey. The Threatened and Endangered Species survey report is provided in Appendix B.

In addition a protected species data request was made to the Mississippi Natural Heritage Program (MNHP), Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. The MNHP response letter indicated no State threatened or endangered species present within or adjacent to the proposed project site. The Mississippi Natural Heritage Program response is contained in Appendix B.

### **3.11.2.1 Impacts to Threatened or Endangered Species**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construct the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

No threatened and endangered species were observed during the survey conducted by PAC Services LLC for CAC on the proposed project site. The Mississippi Natural Heritage Program, Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks response concurred that there were no threatened and endangered species present on the proposed project site. No impacts are anticipated.

## **3.12 Cultural Resources**

### **3.12.1 Cultural Resources Historic Properties and Archaeological Resources Current Conditions**

A cultural resource survey was not conducted, because the proposed project site formerly contained the MS Highway Patrol, Troop K administrative offices and auto maintenance

facility from the mid 1960's (e.g. after Hurricane Camille) to August 2005. According to an interview with Mississippi Highway Patrol Captain Jimmy O'Banner, the Highway Patrol facility housed administrative offices and a vehicle maintenance facility until it was severely damaged by Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005. The above referenced structures have since been demolished and removed; the parcel is vacant and cleared. The above information was confirmed based on review of historic aerial photographs. A cultural resource assessment was requested and conducted by the Mississippi Department of Archives & History (MDAH). The MDAH cultural resource assessment had no reservations with the proposed project. The MDAH cultural resource assessment letter is contained in Appendix C.

### **3.12.1.2 Impacts to Cultural Resources, Historic Properties and Archaeological Resources**

*Alternative 1-No Action Alternative:*

No impact.

*Alternative 2 – Construction of the new West Side Community Center (Proposed Action)*

No impacts anticipated.

### **3.13 Coordination and Permits**

All necessary permits and coordination with governing agencies will be the responsibility of

the architect and/or the contractor selected for site construction. All construction and required regulatory permits will be maintained and posted at the construction site.

Building permits will be obtained from the Harrison County Code Office.

#### State

- Mississippi Department of Archives & History (MDAH) letter report regarding construction affecting cultural resources for the proposed project location has been issued and is included in Appendix C. The MDAH letter report states no reservations with the proposed project site.
- Mississippi Natural Heritage Program (MNHP), Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks letter report regarding any state or federally listed species or species of special concern within a two mile radius of the proposed project has been issued and is included in Appendix C. The MNHP letter report states no records of occurrences of State threatened or endangered species within or adjacent to the proposed project site.

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

#### **4.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES CONSULTED AND REFERENCES**

The proposed action will be publicized during a fifteen-day public comment period in a local newspaper and will be made available to the public at the local Gulfport Library and City Hall. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA will become final and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.

## REFERENCES

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<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

USGS 7.5-Minute Topographic Quadrangle Map for "Gulfport North, MS" (1994).

Site Photographs taken during site visit in February, 2007.

An on-site Wetlands Determination and Threatened & Endangered Species Assessment were conducted by PAC Services LLC on February 8, 2007.

Historic aerial photographs dated 1957, 1966, 1972, 1976, 1981, 1982 and circa 2004-2005 were obtained and reviewed.

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FEMA-1604-DR-MS

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix A	Site Location Map, Aerial Photographs, Tax Parcel Map, Proposed Site Plan and Topographic Map
Appendix B	Site Photographs
Appendix C.1	Wetland Determination & Threatened and Endangered Species Survey
Appendix C.2	Mississippi Natural Heritage Program Threatened and Endangered Species Response
Appendix C.3	Mississippi Department of Archives & History Cultural Resources Response
Appendix D	FEMA & FIRM Flood Maps
Appendix E	EDR Regulatory Database
Appendix F	EDR NEPA Database
Appendix G	City of Gulfport Noise Ordinance