

# **Record of Environmental Consideration**

REVISED FOR FEMA ENVIRONMENTAL -- LOUISIANA -- April 2007

See 44 Code of Federal Regulation Part 10

**Project Name/Number:** George Washington Carver High School – New Construction  
AI: 2203  
Associated PW: 19166  
FIPS: 033-UA9M2-00  
DR-1603-LA

**Applicant Name:** Recovery School District (RSD)

**Project Locations:** 3059 Higgins Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70126  
Latitude/Longitude: 29.965962, -90.037197

## **Project Description:**

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath caused wind and flood damage to multiple RSD (the Applicant) facilities. Per RSD's and Orleans Parish School Board's (OPSB) "School Facilities Master Plan," these facilities have been approved for repair or replacement. Furthermore, the applicant has been granted a Single Settlement Request (SSR, Project Worksheet 19166) to utilize FEMA grant funding for the reconstruction of the New Orleans Public Schools in accordance with this master plan. This EHP Record of Environmental Consideration (REC) addresses the Applicant's request to amend to the SSR for the construction of a new George Washington Carver High School at 3059 Higgins Blvd, New Orleans, LA 70126.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) have established Alternative Arrangements (AA) to meet the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the CEQ Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Requirements of NEPA to Reconstruct Critical Infrastructure in the New Orleans Metropolitan Area (NOMA). AA will enable the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as a component of DHS, to consider the potential for significant impacts to the human environment from its approval to fund the reconstruction of critical physical infrastructure in NOMA. This proposed project meets AA qualifications for the Reconstruction of Critical Infrastructure in the NOMA. For more information visit [www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/noma/index.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/noma/index.shtm)

FEMA's Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) Department at the Louisiana Recovery Office (LRO) has determined through its Special Considerations review that the RSD's public involvement process meets the requirements of the NEPA and AA. Those requirements comply with the programmatic agreement between the CEQ, DHS, and FEMA. As part of the Greater New Orleans Area critical infrastructure, this project qualifies for expedited considerations under the Alternative Arrangements for NEPA compliance. The AA process ([www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/noma](http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/noma)) has been activated to address the basic elements of NEPA for actions taken to restore critical infrastructure devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

This REC specifically addresses the applicant's proposal to construct a new high school at the location of the former George Washington Carver High School. Carver High School, built in 1957, was located at 3820 St. Claude Ave, New Orleans, LA. The campus consisted of multiple buildings that included classroom space, gymnasium, and an auditorium. All of the buildings on campus were severely damaged during Hurricane Katrina and demolished. The applicant intends to construct a 140,211 square foot replacement facility with the capacity for 917 students. The previous gymnasium and auditorium functions will be replaced with a multi-purpose convocation center that provides similar performance/assembly options in addition to physical education and athletic competitions.

## **National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Determination**

- Statutorily excluded from NEPA review (**Review Concluded**)
- Programmatic Categorical Exclusion - Category (**Review Concluded**)
- Categorical Exclusion -

- No Extraordinary Circumstances exist.  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
- Extraordinary Circumstances exist (see Section IV).  
 Extraordinary Circumstances mitigated. (See Section IV comments)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
- Alternative Arrangements  
 Public Involvement Plan on file (see comments below)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
- Environmental Assessment
- Supplemental Environmental Assessment (Reference EA or PEA in comments)
- Environmental Impact Statement

**Comments:** Based on documentation provided by the applicant, FEMA’s Environmental/Historic Preservation Section and Alternatives Arrangement team determined that the Recovery School District and the Orleans Parish School Board provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate a satisfactory public involvement process for rebuilding schools in Orleans Parish, LA. Any changes to the scope of work will require re-submission through the state to FEMA and requires re-evaluation for compliance with national environmental policies. The applicant is responsible for obtaining and complying with all local, state and federal permits. Non-compliance with this requirement may jeopardize receipt of federal funds. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

- Project is Non-Compliant (see attached documentation justifying selection).

**Reviewer and Approvals**

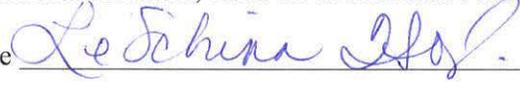
**FEMA Environmental Reviewer:**

Name: Megan Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist, FEMA LRO

Signature  Date 11-5-2013

**FEMA Environmental Liaison Officer or Delegated Approving Official:**

Name: LeSchina Holmes, Lead Environmental Protection Specialist, FEMA LRO

Signature  Date 11/05/2013

**I. Compliance Review for Environmental Laws (other than NEPA)**

**A. National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**

- Not type of activity with potential to affect historic structures or archaeological resources **(Review Concluded)**
- Applicable executed Programmatic Agreement. Activity meets Programmatic Allowance dated August 17, 2009 - **Review Concluded**
- Applicable executed Programmatic Agreement dated August 17, 2009 (RSD/OPSB 2PA). See project review below for historic structures and archaeological resources.
- Other Programmatic Agreement dated \_\_\_\_\_ applies

**HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES**

- No historic properties that are listed or 50 years or older in project area. **(Review Concluded)**
- Building or structure 50 years or older or listed on the National Register in the project area and activity not exempt from review.
  - Determination of No Historic Properties Affected (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
  - Determination of Historic Properties Affected (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)
    - Property a National Historic Landmark and National Park Service was provided early notification during the consultation process. If not, explain in comments
    - No Adverse Effect Determination (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
    - Adverse Effect Determination (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)

- Resolution of Adverse Effect completed (MOA on file)  
Are project conditions required  Yes (see Section V)  No (**Review Concluded**)

**ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

- Project affects only previously disturbed ground – Review Concluded
- Project affects undisturbed ground or grounds associated with a historic structure
  - Project area has no potential for presence of archeological resources
    - Determination of no historic properties affected (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file) (**Review Concluded**)
  - Project area has potential for presence of archeological resources
    - Determination of no historic properties affected (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)  
Are project conditions required  Yes (see Section V)  No (**Review Concluded**)
    - Determination of historic properties affected
      - NR eligible resources not present (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)  
Are project conditions required  Yes (see Section V)  No (**Review Concluded**)
      - NR eligible resources present in project area (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)
        - No Adverse Effect Determination (FEMA finding/ SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No (**Review Concluded**)
        - Adverse Effect Determination (FEMA finding/SHPO/THPO concurrence on file)
          - Resolution of Adverse Effect completed (MOA on file)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No (**Review Concluded**)

**Comments: 10/21/2013--**A review of the current amendment request, for the reduction of the square footage of the proposed replacement facility, was conducted on this date. The previous project review, for PW 15297 and 13902 and subsequently captured in PW 19166 Version 0 (Site Sheet #7), is unchanged. A review of the demolition of (1) George Washington Carver Middle and High School Cafeteria, and (2) George Washington Carver Auditorium Building and potential construction of a new school on the site (undertaking) was conducted in accordance with FEMA's Secondary Programmatic Agreement Regarding Implementation of School Facilities Master Plan for Orleans Parish, dated August 17, 2009 (RSD/OPSB 2PA). The Auditorium and Cafeteria building are the only two of 13 structures on the school campus that were determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by FEMA, in consultation with the SHPO (correspondence dated September 29, 2006). In accordance with 36 CFR§ 800.5, FEMA has determined the demolition of these two structures will adversely affect historic properties. In accordance with Stipulation of IX.A.2 of the RSD/OPSB 2PA, FEMA recommended that the adverse effects resulting from the undertaking will be adequately mitigated through implementation of Standard Mitigation Measures (b) and (d). SHPO concurred with FEMA's proposal to address the proposed adverse effect through the Standard Mitigation Measures and none of the RSD/OPSB 2PA Signatories, Invited Signatories, or Tribes objected within the regulatory timeframe. To remain in compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA and the RSD/OPSB 2PA the mitigation measures (b) and (d), detailed within the Standard Mitigation Measures Agreement dated April 7, 2010 and summarized below, must be carried out. See Conditions.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** K. Wollan, Historic Preservation Specialist

**B. Endangered Species Act**

- No listed species and/or designated critical habitat present in areas affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action. (**Review Concluded**)
- Listed species and/or designated critical habitat present in the areas affected directly or indirectly by the Federal action.
  - No effect to species or designated critical habitat. (See comments for justification)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No (**Review Concluded**)
  - May affect, but not likely to adversely affect species or designated critical habitat (FEMA determination/USFWS/NMFS concurrence on file) (**Review Concluded**)  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No (**Review Concluded**)
  - Likely to adversely affect species or designated critical habitat
    - Formal consultation concluded. (Biological Assessment and Biological Opinion on file)  
Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO (**Review Concluded**)

**Comments:** Project is located in an urban or previously disturbed area. No listed species and/or designated critical habitat present in areas affected directly or indirectly by the federal action. The scope of work for this project does not require U.S.

Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) consultation as per FEMA/USFWS disaster consultation letter dated September 15, 2005. Review concluded.

**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** USFWS emergency consultation provisions determined in letters dated September 15, 2005 for Hurricane Katrina. See also ESA and MBTA Project Review tool ([www.fws.gov/lafayette](http://www.fws.gov/lafayette)) accessed 10/29/2013. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### C. Coastal Barrier Resources Act

- Project is not on or connected to CBRA Unit or Otherwise Protected Area **(Review Concluded)**.
- Project is on or connected to CBRA Unit or Otherwise Protected Area. (FEMA determination/USFWS consultation on file)
  - Proposed action an exception under Section 3505.a.6 **(Review Concluded)**
  - Proposed action not excepted under Section 3505.a.6.
- Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** Project is not within a CBRA zone.

**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** Louisiana CBRS Maps referenced 10/29/2013, M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### D. Clean Water Act

- Project would not affect any waters of the U.S. **(Review Concluded)**
- Project would affect waters, including wetlands, of the U.S.
  - Project exempted as in kind replacement or other exemption. **(Review Concluded)**
  - Project requires Section 404/401 of Clean Water Act or Section 9/10 of Rivers and Harbors Act permit, including qualification under Nationwide Permits.
- Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**
- Project would affect waters of the U.S. by discharging to a surface water body.

**Comments:** No jurisdictional waters of the U.S., including wetlands, occur in or near the project area.

**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** USFWS National Wetlands Inventory map (<http://www.nepassisttool.epa.gov/nepamap.aspx>) queried on 10/29/2013. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### E. Coastal Zone Management Act

- Project is not located in a coastal zone area and does not affect a coastal zone area **(Review concluded)**
- Project is located in a coastal zone area and/or affects the coastal zone
  - State administering agency does not require consistency review. **(Review Concluded)**
  - State administering agency requires consistency review.
- Are project conditions required?  YES (see section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** This project is located within the Louisiana Coastal Zone. See conditions

**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** Louisiana Coastal Zone maps queried 10/29/2013. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### F. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

- Project does not affect, control, or modify a waterway/body of water. **(Review Concluded)**
- Project affects, controls, or modifies a waterway/body of water.
  - Coordination with USFWS conducted
    - No Recommendations offered by USFWS. **(Review Concluded)**
    - Recommendations provided by USFWS.
- Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** Project scope does not include impoundment, diversion, control, or other modification of waters of any stream or body of water.

**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** NEPAAssist Map (<http://www.nepassisttool.epa.gov/nepamap.aspx>) queried on 10/29/2013, M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### G. Clean Air Act

- Project will not result in permanent air emissions. **(Review Concluded)**
- Project is located in an attainment area. **(Review Concluded)**
- Project is located in a non-attainment area.
  - Coordination required with applicable state administering agency.
  - Are project conditions required?  YES (see section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** The proposed project includes activities that would produce a minor, temporary, and localized impact on air quality from vehicle emissions and fugitive dust particles. No long-term air quality impact is anticipated.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### H. Farmland Protection Policy Act

- Project will not affect undisturbed ground. **(Review Concluded)**
- Project has a zoning classification that is other than agricultural or is in an urbanized area. **(Review Concluded)**
- Project does not affect designated prime or unique farmland. **(Review Concluded)**
- Project causes unnecessary or irreversible conversion of designated prime or unique farmland.
  - Coordination with Natural Resources Conservation Service required.
  - Farmland Conversion Impact Rating, Form AD-1006, completed.
  - Are project conditions required?  YES (see section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** The site is located within an existing urban and developed area and FPPA is precluded.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** National Resource Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>) referenced 10/29/2013. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### I. Migratory Bird Treaty Act

- Project not located within a flyway zone **(Review Concluded)**
- Project located within a flyway zone.
  - Project does not have potential to take migratory birds **(Review Concluded)**  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
  - Project has potential to take migratory birds.
    - Contact made with USFWS
    - Are project conditions required?  YES (see section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** The site is an existing disturbed area with little value to migratory birds and would not be included in the USFWS migratory bird management program.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** USFWS guidance letter dated September 27, 2005. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### J. Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

- Project not located in or near Essential Fish Habitat **(Review Concluded)**
- Project located in or near Essential Fish Habitat.
  - Project does not adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat **(Review Concluded)**  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
  - Project adversely affects Essential Fish Habitat (FEMA determination/USFWS/NMFS concurrence on file)
    - NOAA Fisheries provided no recommendation(s) **(Review Concluded)**  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
    - NOAA Fisheries provided recommendation(s)
      - Written reply to NOAA Fisheries recommendations completed.
      - Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** Project is not located in or near any surface waters with the potential to affect EFH species.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** NEPAAssist Map (<http://www.nepassistool.epa.gov/nepamap.aspx>) referenced 10/29/2013, M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### K. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

- Project is not along and does not affect Wild or Scenic River (WSR) - **(Review Concluded)**
- Project is along or affects WSR
  - Project adversely affects WSR as determined by NPS/USFS. **FEMA cannot fund the action.** (NPS/USFS/USFWS/BLM consultation on file) **(Review Concluded)**
  - Project does not adversely affect WSR. (NPS/USFS/USFWS/BLM consultation on file)  
Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** Project is not along and does not affect Wild or Scenic River (WSR).  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** National Wild and Scenic Rivers (<http://www.rivers.gov>) referenced 10/29/2013. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### L. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

**Comments:** Unusable equipment, debris and material shall be disposed of in an approved manner and location. In the event significant items (or evidence thereof) are discovered during implementation of the project, applicant must handle, manage, and dispose of petroleum products, hazardous materials (such as asbestos and lead based paint) and/or toxic waste in accordance to the requirements and to the satisfaction of the governing local, state and federal agencies. See conditions.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### M. Other Relevant Laws and Environmental Regulations

## II. Compliance Review for Executive Orders

### A. E.O. 11988 - Floodplains

- No Effect on Floodplains/Flood levels and project outside Floodplain - **(Review Concluded)**
- Located in Floodplain or Effects on Floodplains/Flood levels
  - No adverse effect on floodplain and not adversely affected by the floodplain. **(Review Concluded)**,  
Are project conditions required?  Yes (see Section V)  No **(Review Concluded)**
  - Beneficial Effect on Floodplain Occupancy/Values **(Review Concluded)**.
  - Possible adverse effects associated with investment in floodplain, occupancy or modification of floodplain environment
    - 8 Step Process Complete - documentation on file  
Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**
    - A Final Public Notice is required

**Comments:** 11/05/2013 - FLOODPLAIN - The Parish of Orleans enrolled in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) on 3/13/1970. As per Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel Number 22 071C 0231 F dated 11/9/2012, the site is located within Zone "AE", EI -3, base flood elevation determined. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(3), there shall be no new construction or substantial improvement of structures unless the lowest floor of the structures (including basement) is at or above the level of the base flood. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(6), no project should be built to a floodplain management standard that is less protective than what the community has adopted in local ordinances through their participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. The applicant is required to coordinate with the local floodplain administrator regarding floodplain permit(s) prior to the start of any activities. All coordination pertaining to these activities and applicant compliance with any conditions should be documented and copies forwarded to the LA GOHSEP and FEMA for inclusion in the permanent project files. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(9), for the replacement of building contents, materials and equipment, where possible, disaster-proofing of the building and/or elimination of such future losses should occur by relocation of those building contents, materials and equipment outside or above the base floodplain. In compliance with Executive Order 11988, an 8-step process was completed, is attached and on file.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** J. Renne, CFM, Floodplain Specialist

### B. E.O. 11990 - Wetlands

- No Effects on Wetland(s) and/or project located outside Wetland(s) - **(Review Concluded)**
- Located in Wetland or effects Wetland(s)
  - Beneficial Effect on Wetland - **(Review Concluded)**
  - Possible adverse effect associated with constructing in or near wetland
    - Review completed as part of floodplain review
    - 8 Step Process Complete - documentation on file
  - Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** A review of the National Wetland Inventory (NWI) online mapper for the site indicates that the area is not located within a designated wetland.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** U.S. FWS NWI map accessed at NEPAassist Map (<http://www.nepassisttool.epa.gov/nepamap.aspx>) 10/29/2013. M. Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### C. E.O. 12898 - Environmental Justice for Low Income and Minority Populations

- Project scope of work has no potential to adversely impact any population **(Review Concluded)**
- No Low income or minority population in, near or affected by the project based on information gathered from <http://factfinder.census.gov>. **(Review Concluded)**
- Low income or minority population in or near project area
  - No disproportionately high and adverse impact on low income or minority population **(Review Concluded)**
  - Disproportionately high or adverse effects on low income or minority population
  - Are project conditions required?  YES (see Section V)  NO **(Review Concluded)**

**Comments:** The populations within zip code 70126 are: 34.8% White, 60.4% Black, and 5.3% Hispanic. The median household income in 2012 was \$37,325 and 25.7 % of persons are below poverty level. A comprehensive master plan has been prepared for Orleans Parish, *The School Facilities Master Plan for Orleans Parish (Master Plan)*, which supports OPSB's compliance with NEPA and Executive Order 12898 (EO) considering Environmental Justice (EJ). This Master Plan identified effects to low-income and minority populations and potential effects to Indian Tribes (See Attached Master Plan document detailing the NEPA EJ efforts). The RSD and OPSB admit students regardless of socioeconomic status, race, color, creed, or origin, and provide equal access to resources for all schools and students.  
**Correspondence/Consultation/References:** *Amended School Facilities Master Plan for Orleans Parish, February 23, 2012*, Megan Myers, Environmental Protection Specialist

### III. Other Environmental Issues

Identify other potential environmental concerns in the comment box not clearly falling under a law or executive order (see environmental concerns scoping checklist for guidance).

**Comments:** None  
**Correspondence/Consultation/Reference:**

### IV. Extraordinary Circumstances

**Yes**

- (i) Greater scope or size than normally experienced for a particular category of action
- (ii) Actions with a high level of public controversy
- (iii) Potential for degradation, even though slight, of already existing poor environmental conditions;
- (iv) Employment of unproven technology with potential adverse effects or actions involving unique or unknown environmental risks;
- (v) Presence of endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat, or archaeological, cultural, historical or other protected resources;
- (vi) Presence of hazardous or toxic substances at levels which exceed Federal, state or local regulations or standards requiring action or attention;
- (vii) Actions with the potential to affect special status areas adversely or other critical resources such as wetlands, coastal zones, wildlife refuge and wilderness areas, wild and scenic rivers, sole or principal drinking water aquifers;

- (viii) Potential for adverse effects on health or safety; and
- (ix) Potential to violate a federal, state, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.
- (x) Potential for significant cumulative impact when the proposed action is combined with other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions, even though the impacts of the proposed action may not be significant by themselves.

**Comments:**

## **V. Environmental Review Project Conditions**

### **Project Conditions:**

#### **The following conditions apply as a condition of FEMA funding reimbursement:**

1. This project is located within the Louisiana Coastal Zone. The applicant is responsible for coordinating with and obtaining any required permit(s) from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources' (LDNR) Coastal Management Division (CMD) prior to initiating work. Projects may be coordinated by contacting LDNR at 1-800-267-4019. All coordination activities should be documented and copies forwarded to GOHSEP and FEMA for inclusion in the permanent project files.
2. Unusable equipment, debris and material must be disposed of in an approved manner and location. In the event significant items (or evidence thereof) are discovered during implementation of the project, applicant must handle, manage, and dispose of petroleum products, hazardous materials (such as asbestos and lead based paint) and/or toxic waste in accordance to the requirements and to the satisfaction of the governing local, state and federal agencies.
3. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(3), there shall be no new construction or substantial improvement/repair of structures unless the lowest floor of the structure (including the basement) is at or above the level of the base flood. Furthermore, per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(6), no project should be built to a floodplain management standard that is less protective than what the community has adopted in local ordinances through their participation in the National Flood Insurance Program. The applicant is required to coordinate with the local floodplain administrator regarding floodplain permit(s) prior to the start of any activities. All coordination pertaining to these activities and applicant compliance with any conditions should be documented and copies forwarded to the LA GOHSEP and FEMA for inclusion in the permanent project files. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(9), for the replacement of building contents, materials and equipment, where possible, disaster-proofing of the building and/or elimination of such future losses should occur by relocation of those building contents, materials and equipment outside or above the base floodplain.
4. If human bone or unmarked grave(s) are present with the project area, 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.
5. If during the course of work, archaeological artifacts (prehistoric or historic) 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.
6. The following mitigation measures are required for compliance with section 106 of the NHPA:
  - a. Three archival copies of the existing plans and elevations for the auditorium and cafeteria presently archived at the New Orleans Public Library will be either photographed with large-format negatives or photographically reproduced on Mylar and archived.

- b. Large Format Photographs (see National Park Service Guidelines for Architecture and Engineering Documentation, Federal Register/Vol. 68, no. 139/Monday, July 21, 2003) of the distinctive exterior features of the Cafeteria and Auditorium Building will be taken and archived.
- c. Digital photographs, meeting the requirements in Appendix E of the RSD/OPSB 2PA, of the distinct interior character defining features will be taken and archived.
- d. The development and construction of a permanent interpretive plan is required, which, in general terms, shall include a brief written description of the history of school, photographs of the campus, people and events that illustrate the history.

**RECOVERY SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**George Washington Carver Senior High School**  
**FEMA Disaster 1603-DR-LA**

Executive Order 11988 - FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT  
Executive Order 11990 - WETLAND PROTECTION

**8-STEP DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

Date: 10/28/2013

Prepared By: John D. Renne' (CTR), CFM, Floodplain Specialist

Project: On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath caused wind and flood damages to multiple Recovery School District (RSD, the Applicant) facilities. Per the RSD's and Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) "School Facilities Master Plan," these facilities have been approved for repair or replacement. Furthermore, the applicant has been granted a Single Settlement Request (SSR, Project Worksheet 19166) to utilize FEMA grant funding for the reconstruction of the New Orleans Public Schools in accordance with this master plan. This EHP Record of Environmental Consideration (REC) addresses the Applicant's request for an amendment to the SSR for FEMA grant funding for replacement at George Washington Carver Senior High School at the proposed site located at 3059 Higgins Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126.

The applicant has submitted an application for an Alternate Project requesting approval to replace a permanent school facility with the function and capacity to serve high school students. A scope of work narrative has been provided to FEMA Environmental and Historic Preservation as part of the amended application package (attached herein). Final plans are under development and will be provided to FEMA at a later date.

This project must be conducted in accordance with conditions for federal actions in the floodplain and/or wetlands as set forth in presidential Executive Order (EO) 11988, *Floodplains* and presidential Executive Order 11990, *Wetlands* and the implementing regulation found at 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 9, *Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands*. These regulations apply to all direct and indirect Agency actions which have the potential to affect floodplains or wetlands or their occupants, or which are subject to potential harm by location in floodplains.

Public Assistance grant funded projects carried out in the floodplain or affecting the floodplain must be coordinated with the local floodplain administrator for a floodplain development permit prior to the undertaking. The action must be carried out in compliance with relevant, applicable, and required local codes and standards, thereby reducing the risk of future flood loss, minimize the impacts of floods on safety, health, and welfare, and preserving and restoring beneficial floodplain values as required by Executive Order 11988.

Restoration projects conducted with Public Assistance (PA) grant funds must be carried out in accordance with the local floodplain management plan and ordinance and shall utilize the current locally adopted digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE) map, or draft Preliminary FIRM as a minimum standard and in no case, build to a standard lower than the revised Preliminary DFIRM released by FEMA 11/9/2012. Per 44 CFR 9.11(d)(6), no project should be built to a floodplain management standard that is less protective than what the community has adopted in local ordinances through their participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.

**STEP 1 Determine whether the proposed actions are located in a wetland and/or the 100-year floodplain (500-year floodplain for critical actions [44 CFR 9.4]), or whether they have the potential to affect or be affected by a floodplain or a wetland (see 44 CFR 9.7).**

The project is located in relation to floodplains as mapped by:

**Latitude:** 29.996333 **Longitude:** -90.034650  
3059 Higgins Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70126

**Revised Preliminary DFIRM Panel (November 9, 2012):** 22 071C 0231 F  
**Flood Zone:** "AE", (Flood from Ponding)  
**Base Flood Elevation:** EL -3 feet NAVD88

**Advisory Base Flood Elevation Map Panel (June 5, 2006):** LA-DD32  
**Flood Zone:** "AE"  
**Base Flood Elevation:** -1.5 feet NGVD29

The project is located in a wetland as identified by:

**STEP 2 Notify the public at the earliest possible time of the intent to carry out an action in a floodplain or wetland, and involve the affected and interested public in the decision making process (see 44 CFR 9.8).**

Not applicable - Project is not located in a floodplain or in a wetland.

Applicable - Notice will be or has been provided by:

In general, FEMA has an obligation to provide adequate information to enable the public meaningful input on the decision for all actions having the potential to affect or be affected by floodplains or wetlands that it proposes. FEMA shall provide the public with adequate information and opportunity for review and comment at the earliest possible time and throughout the decision-making process; and upon completion of this process, provide the public with an accounting of its final decision (see 44 CFR §9.12). A Cumulative Initial Public Notice was published statewide 11/7/2005-11/9/2005. Additional public notice shall be provided as required by the Executive Order.

STEP 3

**Identify and evaluate practicable alternatives to locating the proposed action in a floodplain or wetland (including alternative sites, actions and the "no action" option) [see 44 CFR 9.9]. If a practicable alternative exists outside the floodplain or wetland, FEMA must locate the action at the alternative site.**

- Not applicable - Project is not located in a floodplain or in a wetland.
- Applicable - Alternatives identified as described below:

The school facilities provide functions to serve the local community, which depends on the availability of appropriate resources and facilities to meet its needs effectively. In order to meet these needs it is imperative that the facility be located such that reasonable access and coverage is provided to all areas served. In order to meet this demand, the school facilities must be located centrally to the student population served.

**Alternative 1: No Action** – With the no action alternative, there would be no repair or refurbishment of the damaged facilities. No action would leave the community without the function of the damaged facilities. Additionally, this would leave the damaged facility and its environs in an unsafe condition, which would represent a safety hazard to the public and nearby properties. This alternative has been determined not practicable by the applicant and GOHSEP.

**Alternative 2 (Proposed Alternative): - Replace School in the Base Floodplain** – This alternative would replace facilities in the proposed location in the area of the 1% annual chance flood. Detailed design drawings and rationale for this alternative, including proposed mitigation, will be provided by the applicant in the amendments to the alternate project.

**Alternative 3: - Reconstruct outside the Base Floodplain** – This alternative would rebuild the damaged facilities outside the base floodplain. This alternative requires identification of a suitable site not subject to flooding. Grading and grubbing of the site would be necessary to prepare for reconstruction. Additional sewage, electricity, and drainage for each building might also be necessary. Each facility would be constructed to be compliant with current codes and standards (e.g., American with Disabilities Act, building codes, local floodplain ordinances, etc.).

Reconstruction of the facilities outside the base floodplain is not a practicable option because it has been determined by the applicant to not be economically feasible or socially acceptable. Community leaders have also indicated this choice would not serve the best interests of the entire community.

STEP 4

**Identify the potential direct or indirect impacts associated with, the occupancy or modification of floodplains and wetlands and the potential direct and indirect support of floodplain and wetland development that could result from the proposed action (see 44 CFR 9.10).**

Not applicable - Project is not located in a floodplain or in a wetland.

Applicable - Alternatives identified as described below:

**Alternative 2 (Proposed Alternative):** - Replace School in the Base Floodplain – Refurbishment of school facilities per the plans to be provided in the alternate project would represent investment at risk subject to damage from ponding in future floods. Facilities damaged in future flooding may result in the need for disaster assistance payments. Incorporation of mitigating measures to protect against future floods will lessen the likelihood of flood damage.

STEP 5

**Minimize the potential adverse impacts and support to or within floodplains and wetlands to be identified under step # 4, restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains, and preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values served by wetlands (see 44 CFR 9.11).**

Not applicable - Project is not located in a floodplain or in a wetland.

Applicable - Mitigation measures identified as described below:

**Alternative 2 (Proposed Alternative):** - Replace School in the Base Floodplain - Replacement shall be in accordance with local floodplain ordinances with applicable building codes and standards applied to mitigate and minimize adverse effects (compliance with minimum National Flood Insurance Program standards and requirements). Building utilities will be protected by methods including elevation and component protection in place.

STEP 6

**Reevaluate the proposed action to determine first, if it's still practicable in light of its exposure to flood hazards, the extent to which it will aggravate the hazards to others and its potential to disrupt floodplain and wetland values and second, if alternatives preliminarily rejected at step # 3 are practicable in light of the information gained in steps # 4 and # 5. FEMA shall not act in a floodplain or wetland unless it's the only practicable location.**

Not applicable - Project is not located in a floodplain or in a wetland.

Applicable - Action proposed is located in the only practicable location as described below:

Replacement of the school facilities as proposed has been determined by the applicant and GOHSEP to be a practicable option because it is economically feasible, socially acceptable, and has been determined by the community leaders to meet their needs and serve the best interests of the community. This alternative enables the applicant to rebuild in an area centrally located with respect to the school community served and will enable reduced travel times for the use of the school facilities.

STEP 7

**Prepare and provide the public with a finding and public explanation of any final decision that the floodplain or wetland is the only practicable alternative (see 44 CFR 9.12).**

Not applicable - Project is not located in a floodplain or in a wetland.

Applicable - Finding is or will be prepared as described below:

Replacement of the school facilities in the floodplain has been determined to be a practicable alternative with significant benefits to the community, which overrides the prudence of location outside the floodplain. This review and analysis of this proposed action was documented through the required 8-step public participation and decision-making process.

STEP 8

**Review the implementation and post-implementation phases of the proposed action to ensure that the requirements of the order are fully implemented. Oversight responsibility shall be integrated into existing processes.**

Not applicable - Project is not located in a floodplain or in a wetland.

Applicable - Approval conditioned on review of implementation and post-implementation phases to ensure compliance with the order(s).

Project shall be reviewed by FEMA at grant closeout to ensure the project was completed in accordance with all relevant and applicable floodplain ordinances, codes and standards and that all project actions were undertaken in accordance with terms and conditions stipulated to mitigate and minimize adverse effects in or to the floodplain and wetlands.

## Recovery School District Update to the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) in Support of NEPA Environmental Justice Compliance

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### Identifying & Coordinating with Existing Minority and Low Income Populations

Amendments to the *School Facilities Master Plan for Orleans Parish* (Master Plan) will affect low-income and minority populations and potentially Indian Tribes. The majority of students and their families that participate in the K-12 public education system are people of color, of whom between 74% (OPSB) and 95% (RSD) are African American. Between 66% (OPSB) and 91% (RSD) of students are from low-income households based and free and reduced lunch rate eligibility. (See school data synopsis in Appendix 9.)

Outreach included meeting notices to the following types of groups:

- Community-based and social service organizations
- Education organizations
- Religious organizations
- Disadvantaged business associations
- Neighborhood and tenants' groups
- Federal, State and local government
- Universities and colleges, including New Orleans' Historically Black College (Xavier)
- Local school communities
- The public library

Interested parties who participated in prior capital project related meetings were contacted via email. Meeting schedules with logistics and maps were posted in local neighborhoods surrounding existing or proposed school locations. Prior to public meetings, meetings were held with local government and community groups to provide advance information about the roll out of the proposed Summer 2011 Amendments in order to cultivate public participation.

### Meaningful Public Outreach & Information

It was critically important that the public comment, particularly from those affected by the proposed Amendments to the Master Plan, be meaningfully solicited and considered in the Amendments to the Master Plan. Significant public participation in the development of the 2008 Master Plan improved its quality and comprehensiveness and aided in the implementation of Phase I Schools in New Orleans' post-Katrina recovery. It was in this same spirit that the proposed 2011 Amendments were vetted.

RSD and OPSB jointly held 9 public meetings concerning the proposed Amendments to the Master Plan. Meetings were held at schools, community organizations and local colleges. (See Summer 2011 proposed Amendments in Appendix 6.) The first meeting on July 9, 2011 introduced the proposed (Summer 2011) Amendments to the Master Plan to a City-wide audience. (See City-wide public comments and sign-in sheets in Appendix 10.)

Materials distributed to the public described the actions proposed in the Master Plan Amendments. In addition to comparing the 2008 Master Plan to the proposed Amendments along with levels of recommended funding, the materials included a listing of those sites that would be used for campus swing space or future use as well as land bank/potential opportunity sites. (See proposed Amendments in Appendix 6 and information handbook disseminated at public meetings in Appendix 8.)

Demographic data was presented along with GIS maps of current and proposed school locations.