

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



FEMA

DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for
PEEBLES/GRAND MARAIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RELOCATION
IBERIA PARISH, LOUISIANA
FEMA-1607-DR-LA

BACKGROUND

As a result of high winds and storm surge from Iberia Port caused by Hurricane Rita in September 2005, Peebles Elementary School was flooded and wind-damaged. The third graders from Peebles Elementary have been attending school at Grand Marais Elementary School, and the fourth, fifth, and sixth graders have been attending Belle Place Middle School. Peebles and Grand Marais are in the same attendance zone, while Belle Place is in a different attendance zone. Iberia Parish School Board (IPSB) has applied to FEMA under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 93-288 for Public Assistance funding for an improved project to restore the function and capacity of the IPSB Peebles/Grand Marais attendance zone.

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 construction of a new elementary school to accommodate students from Peebles and Grand Marais 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 provide a school facility outside of the 100-year floodplain, with predisaster capacity (approximately 560 students), and within the same geographic area that the students were previously drawn from. The alternatives considered include 1) No Action, and 2) Construction of a New Elementary School Relocating Peebles and Grand Marais Elementary Schools (Proposed Action).

The project proposed by the IPSB involves the construction of a 66,778-square-foot school building serving students in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade. The location for the proposed new elementary school is a 15-acre parcel northwest of the intersection of US 90 and Parish Road 211 (Darnell Road) in New Iberia, Iberia Parish, Louisiana. The site had previously been used for sugarcane production but has otherwise remained undeveloped and is located in an agricultural/residential area. The proposed structure is to be rough-faced cinder blocks with exterior brick veneer and with a metal roof. The foundation would be a post tension concrete slab. Water service would require

connection to existing lines located approximately 1.5 miles from the site. Currently the IPSB is considering two options for the handling and disposal of wastewater from the school. The first option is construction of a wastewater treatment plant and lift station on the school property, with treated effluent discharge to a drainage ditch. The second option is to connect to an existing municipal wastewater treatment system through the construction of 2,200 feet of sanitary sewer lines. At the time of preparation of this draft EA and draft FONSI, neither option had been selected.

PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

A legal notice is posted in the local newspaper, *The Daily Iberian*, and the Draft EA was made available for public review at Iberia Parish Library and Iberia Parish School Board from April 9, 2007, to April 25, 2007. 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.

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:

- If the wastewater treatment option involving 2,200 feet of trenching and pipe-laying were selected by the School Board, additional archaeological clearance would be required before the project could proceed, because this area was not included in the original Area of Potential Effect (APE) reviewed by FEMA and SHPO.
- If the wastewater option involving 2,200 feet of piping to connect to the local municipal wastewater treatment system were chosen, a permit would be required from the local wastewater treatment plant system for discharge to its system would be required.

- If the wastewater option for construction of a wastewater treatment plant and pump station were chosen, then a permit would be required from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality before discharge of effluent from the onsite plant to the ditch. This permit would set parameters such as flow, pH, and conventional pollutants that would need to be met, and periodic reporting of these parameters would be required.
- If during the course of construction, unanticipated archaeological artifacts (prehistoric or historic) or human remains are discovered, the applicant must follow the procedures set forth in Section 4.5.2 of this document.
- Hazardous materials used in construction of the new facility 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.

APPROVAL

Brent Paul
 FEMA Environmental Officer
 FEMA Headquarters

Date

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

Date

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

Date