Final Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact

Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation

Harrison County, Mississippi

May 2007

FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
FEMA-1604-DR-MS
Transitional Recovery Office – Biloxi, MS

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FEMA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

HARPER MCCAUGHAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RELOCATION PROJECT
LONG BEACH, HARRISON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
FEMA-1604-DR-MS

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for assistance with a flood mitigation project for the Harper McCaughan Elementary School (HMES) in Harrison County, Mississippi. The HMES was devastated by storm surges associated with Hurricane Katrina in 2005. FEMA proposes to provide assistance for this project through the Public Assistance Program (PA) under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA-1604-DR-MS.

The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the President's Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508) to implement NEPA, and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regulations (44 CFR § 10.9) to implement NEPA. The purpose of the EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the relocation project, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). In the EA process, FEMA considered two alternatives, the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action Alternative.

The Proposed Action Alternative would relocate and construct a new HMES on higher ground outside of the Category 3 storm surge inundation area and FEMA flood hazard zone. The location of the proposed school is an undeveloped 80-acre site north of Pineville Road and south of Commission Road, approximately 1.3 miles north of the former HMES site. The required work at the site would consist of clearing approximately 13 acres at the southwestern corner of the site for construction of the new HMES. This proposed project as described in the EA was evaluated for any potential significant adverse impacts to existing land use, water resources (surface water, groundwater, waters of the United States, and floodplains), air quality, noise, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, State-and Federally-listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitat), and cultural resources. It was also evaluated for safety and hazardous materials issues as well as for disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low income populations.

FINDINGS

Based on input and consultations with Federal and State resource agencies, and other identified sources documented in the attached EA and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act FEMA regulations (44 CFR part 10) for environmental considerations, and executive orders on floodplains (EO 11988), wetlands (EO 11990) and environmental justice (EO 12898), FEMA has found that the proposed project with the prescribed mitigation measures as defined in the EA will have no significant impact on the natural or human environment. As a result of this Finding of No Significant Impact, an EIS will not be prepared and the proposed project with prescribed conditions may proceed. If a change in the scope of work occurs, the State and FEMA must be notified to evaluate if the proposed change would alter the potential impacts on the environment.

Recommended:

4/30/07

Brent W. Paul — Date

FEMA Environmental Officer

Approved:

4/30/07

J. Randy Walker — Date

FEMA Infrastructure Branch Chief

FEMA-1604-DR-MS

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ABFE	Advisory Base Flood Elevation
ACHP	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
amsl	above mean sea level
APE	Area of Potential Effects
BMP	Best Management Practice
CAA	Clean Air Act
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CO	carbon monoxide
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
dB	decibel
DNL	Day-Night Average Sound Level
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
HMES	Harper McCaughan Elementary School
MDAH	Mississippi Department of Archives and History
MDEQ	Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
MDMR	Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NCA	Noise Control Act
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NISTAC	Nationwide Infrastructure Support Technical Assistance Consultants
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
O_3	ozone
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration

PA	Public Assistance Program
Pb	lead
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns
PM_{10}	particulate matter less than 10 microns
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
STP	shovel test pit
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Office
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound

1.0 INTRODUCTION

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

The Long Beach School District (District) has submitted an application for FEMA funding under FEMA's Public Assistance Program being administered in response to FEMA-1604-DR-MS. In accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 93-288, as amended, and implementing regulations at 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 206, FEMA is required to review the environmental effects of the proposed action prior to making a funding decision. This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared in accordance with FEMA's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations found in 44 CFR Part 10.

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The District operates one high school, one middle school, and three elementary schools, including the Harper McCaughan Elementary School (HMES). Prior to Katrina, HMES provided public education for up to 550 students in grades K-5. HMES was located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue (see Figure 1 in Appendix A). The exceptional storm surge from Katrina severely damaged HMES. The campus received up to eight feet of water in some areas, and the damaged school buildings are scheduled for demolition. In accordance with FEMA's policy for FEMA-1604-DR-MS, the site will be returned to grade and revegetated. In documentation dated June 23, 2006, FEMA determined that the demolition and disposal of the HMES buildings were categorically excluded from NEPA. The FEMA Transitional Recovery Office in Biloxi has on file a Record of State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Consultation dated May 17, 2006, in which FEMA and the Mississippi SHPO determined that HMES was not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as part of a district.

In the short-term, temporary facilities placed at the WJ Quarles Elementary School located at 111 Quarles Street have enabled the District to provide public education for 350 displaced HMES students. These facilities are not expected nor intended to withstand many months of regular use and are not considered a long-term solution. Consequently, there is a need for a new permanent school facility to serve a portion of the District's K-5 students.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES

This section describes the alternatives that were considered in addressing the purpose and need stated in Section 2 above. One alternative, rebuilding and elevating the school at its original location, was dismissed. Two alternatives were evaluated further: the No Action Alternative, and the Proposed Action Alternative, which is the relocation and rebuilding of HMES on higher ground.

3.1 Alternatives Considered and Dismissed

Elevation of HMES at Existing Location

FEMA considered an alternative to rebuild the HMES campus at its original location. The current HMES location is vulnerable to storm surges due to its proximity to the Gulf of Mexico. HMES is at risk of flooding and wind damage during tropical storms and hurricanes. Buildings would be constructed on the pre-disaster footprint and structures would be elevated to or above the 500-year advisory base flood elevation (ABFE), which is approximately 24 feet amsl. Depending on site elevations, buildings would need to be elevated about 9 or 10 feet. This alternative is not considered to be feasible, and was therefore dismissed. Consequently, it is necessary to move HMES to higher ground to reduce repetitive repair costs associated with flooding, and to ensure operational efficiency on a continual basis.

3.2 Alternatives Evaluated

Alternative 1: No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the District would not relocate or rebuild HMES. HMES faculty and students would continue to utilize the temporary facilities located on the WJ Quarles Elementary School property.

Alternative 2: Relocation and Construction of a New Elementary School (Proposed Action)

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, the District proposes to relocate and construct a new HMES on higher ground outside of the Category 3 storm surge inundation area. The location of the proposed school is an undeveloped site north of Pineville Road and south of Commission Road (see Figure 2 in Appendix A). It is bounded to the east by residential communities and to the west by undeveloped forested property. The proposed project site is approximately 1.3 miles north of the former HMES on an approximately 80-acre, mostly forested parcel that is located outside of the FEMA flood hazard zone. The required work at the site would consist of clearing approximately 13 acres at the southwestern corner of the site for construction of the new HMES (see Figure 2). Also, fill material would be brought in to level the school site to an elevation of 22 feet above mean sea level (amsl) (23 feet amsl finished), and the playground would be leveled to an elevation of 20 feet amsl.

The proposed site plan for the new HMES is shown in Figure 3 in Appendix A. The new school would contain one paved linear access road between Pineville Road and Commission Road. A small paved parking lot for faculty and staff and a paved circular bus loop would be located east of the linear access road, near the rear entrance of the building. A small paved visitors' parking lot would be located at the front of the building. Access to the new HMES would be through the linear access road connecting Commission Road and Pineville Road. These access areas are consistent with existing traffic patterns. The new HMES would tie into existing municipal utilities on Pineville Road. Turning lanes may be added to Pineville and Commission Roads for safety.

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACTS

The following table summarizes the potential impacts of the Proposed Action Alternative and conditions or mitigation measures to offset those impacts. Following the summary table, any areas where potential impacts were identified will be treated in greater detail.

Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
Geology and Soils	No impacts to geology; short-term impacts to soils during the construction period	Appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils immediately upon completion of construction to stabilize soils.
Surface Water	Temporary short-term impacts to surface water are possible during construction activities.	A SWPPP and a NPDES permit must be obtained prior to construction; appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils, would minimize runoff.
Groundwater	No impacts to groundwater are anticipated.	None
Floodplains	No impacts to the floodplain are anticipated.	None
Waters of the U.S. including Wetlands	Impacts to approximately 840 linear feet (0.18 acre) of drainage ditch will require approval from the Mobile District of the Corps; it is likely that a Nationwide permit would be required.	A Section 404 CWA permit must be obtained prior to construction.
Transportation	Minor temporary increase in the volume of construction traffic on roads in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site.	Construction vehicles and equipment would be stored on-site during project construction and appropriate signage would be posted on affected roadways.
Public Health and Safety	No impacts to public health and safety are anticipated.	All construction activities would be performed using qualified personnel and in accordance with the standards specified in OSHA regulations; appropriate signage and barriers should be in place prior to construction activities to alert pedestrians and motorists of project activities.

Affected Environment	Impacts	Mitigation
Hazardous Materials	No impacts to hazardous materials or wastes are anticipated.	Excavation activities could expose or otherwise affect subsurface hazardous wastes or materials; any hazardous materials discovered, generated, or used during construction would be disposed of and handled in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
Socioeconomic Resources	No adverse socioeconomic impacts are anticipated.	None
Environmental Justice	No disproportionately high or adverse effect on minority or low-income populations is anticipated.	None
Air Quality	Short-term impacts to air quality would occur during the construction period.	Construction contractors would be required to water down construction areas when necessary; fuel-burning equipment running times would be kept to a minimum; engines would be properly maintained.
Noise	Short-term impacts to noise would occur at the proposed project site during the construction period.	Construction would take place during normal business hours and equipment would meet all local, state, and federal noise regulations.
Biological Resources	Approximately 13 acres of wildlife habitat would be converted for the proposed school construction.	None
Cultural Resources	No impacts to archeological or cultural resources are anticipated.	None

4.1 Geology and Soils

The proposed project site contains soils consisting of Latonia loamy sand, Ocilla loamy sand, and Ponzer and Smithton soils. The Latonia series soils have slopes ranging from 0 to 5 percent consisting of deep, well-drained, moderately rapidly permeable soils. Ocilla series soils consist of very deep, somewhat poorly drained, moderately permeable soils. The Ponzer series soils consist of very poorly drained, organic soils. The Smithton series soils consist of very deep, poorly drained, moderately slowly permeable soils (USGS, 2006a). The topography at the proposed project site is relatively level with an average of 25 feet amsl.

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) states that federal agencies must “minimize the extent to which federal programs contribute to the unnecessary conversion of farmland to

nonagricultural uses…" The proposed project site does not contain soils classified as prime or unique farmland (USGS, 2006a).

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

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to geology would occur; short-term impacts to soils would occur during the construction period. Appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) would be used, such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils immediately upon completion of construction to stabilize soils.

4.2 Water Resources

4.2.1 Surface Water

The Clean Water Act (CWA), as amended in 1977, established the basic framework for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. The proposed project site slants downward slightly to the southeast; elevations on-site range from 30 feet amsl on the northwestern portion of the site to 20 feet amsl in the southeastern portion of the site. A creek flows southeast from the Number One Canal across the western portion of the proposed project site and freshwater forested wetlands are located on the eastern portion of the proposed project site (USFWS, 2006b). Surface water flows southeast from the proposed project site.

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

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, temporary short-term impacts to downstream surface waters would occur during the construction period due to soil erosion. The applicant would be required to submit a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit application prior to construction. To reduce impacts to surface water, the applicant would implement appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils.

4.2.2 Floodplains

Executive Order (EO) 11988 (Floodplain Management) requires federal agencies to avoid direct or indirect support of development within the 100-year floodplain whenever there is a practicable alternative. FEMA uses Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) to identify the regulatory 100-year floodplain for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Consistent with EO 11988, FIRMs were examined during the preparation of this EA (FEMA, 2006a; Community Panel Number 285257 0004 B).

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to the floodplain would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative – The proposed project site is located in Flood Zone B, moderate flood hazard area, and Zone C, area of minimal flooding, as shown on Figure 3 (FEMA, 2006a). Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to the floodplain are anticipated.

4.2.3 Waters of the U.S. including Wetlands

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

The proposed project site is approximately 0.2 mile northwest of Canal Number One, 0.4 mile north of an unnamed lake, and 1.5 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico. A small stream is located east of the proposed project site, within an area of forested wetland.

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

On November 30, 2006, a letter requesting project review was sent to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR), Bureau of Wetlands Permitting, regarding the proposed project and potential impacts on the coastal zone and wetlands (see Appendix B). A letter requesting project review was not sent to the USACE Mobile District, because the District has a moratorium on conducting jurisdictional wetland determinations and would not be able to review the proposed project (Zedryk, pers. comm.).

A review of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Map for the project area indicates wetlands areas located on or immediately adjacent to the proposed project site (USFWS, 2006b). A site visit was conducted by Nationwide Infrastructure Support Technical Assistance Consultants (NISTAC) biologists on December 14, 2006. Subsequently, on January 17 and 18, 2007, a wetland delineation was conducted by NISTAC wetland biologists to identify potential wetland areas on the proposed project site. Using guidance manuals and procedures set forth by USACE, one nontidal forested wetland area and two drainage ditches were delineated within the property boundary (see Figure 4). The methods and procedures used for this wetland delineation are in accordance with the 1987 *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual*. The manual requires the presence of three parameters (greater than 50% dominance of hydrophytic vegetation, evidence of hydric soils, and presence of hydrologic indicators) for an area to be considered a wetland.

Portions of the project site exhibit a dominance of hydrophytic vegetation, the parameters for hydric soils, and hydrologic indicators; therefore, wetlands are present on the proposed project site. Within the proposed project site boundaries there are 18.8 acres of nontidal forested wetlands and two drainage ditches which comprise approximately 984 linear feet (0.19 acre). These drainage ditches carry surface water runoff during periods of precipitation but are otherwise dry.

<u>No Action Alternative</u> – Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to waters of the U.S., including wetlands, would occur.

<u>Proposed Action Alternative</u> – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, minor adverse impacts to waters of the U.S. including wetlands could occur during construction at the proposed project site. Implementation of BMPs would minimize erosion at the project location. To mitigate potential impacts to water resources, appropriate BMPs would be required at the construction

site. BMPs include, but are not limited to, the installation of silt fences and revegetating bare soils to minimize erosion.

In a letter dated December 11, 2006, MDMR stated that it had no objections to the proposed HMES relocation and rebuilding as long as there are no direct or indirect impacts to coastal wetlands (see Appendix B). Wetlands on the proposed project site are nontidal; therefore, no impacts to coastal wetlands would occur. Nontidal forested wetlands on the proposed project site are outside of the area to be disturbed by grading or filling and would not be impacted by construction. However, approximately 840 linear feet (0.18 acre) of drainage ditch will be filled in; the ditch carries surface runoff from the project site. The impact to the drainage ditch will require approval from the USACE Mobile District. One of the following Nationwide (NW) permits would likely be required for the proposed project under Section 404 of the CWA: an NW-39 permit for Residential, Commercial, and Institutional Developments (discharges or dredge or fill material into non-tidal waters of the U.S. for the construction or expansion of residential, commercial, and institutional building foundations or pads and attendant features necessary for the use and maintenance of the structure), or an NW-41 permit for Reshaping of Existing Drainage Ditch (reshaping cannot increase the original design capacity of the ditch nor can the area it drains be expanded).

4.3 Transportation

The proposed project site is located north of Pineville Road, south of Commission Road, and east of McGuire Drive. The current speed limit on Pineville Road is 35 miles per hour.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no changes to transportation, because school traffic would continue to use the temporary school facilities on the WJ Quarles Elementary School property.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no significant adverse impacts to transportation, site access, or traffic levels are anticipated. The new school would have a paved linear access road paralleling McGuire Drive and extending north-south between Pineville Road and Commission Road. A visitor parking lot would run parallel to Pineville Road and connect to the access road paralleling McGuire Road. Turning lanes may be added to Pineville and Commission Roads for safety.

There would be a minor temporary increase in the volume of construction traffic on roads in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site that could potentially result in a slower traffic flow for the duration of the construction phase. To mitigate potential delays, construction vehicles and equipment would be stored on site during project construction and appropriate signage would be posted on affected roadways.

In an electronic mail message dated December 12, 2006, the Mississippi Department of Transportation stated that it does not have any comments or concerns regarding the proposed project (see Appendix B).

4.4 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations) mandates that federal agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of

their programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations. Socioeconomic and demographic data for the project area were analyzed to determine if a disproportionate number of minority or low-income persons have the potential to be adversely affected by the proposed project.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low-income populations. All populations could potentially be adversely affected by the lack of a permanent school for HMES staff and students.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, there would be no disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority or low-income populations. Implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative would benefit all populations within the HMES attendance area by providing public education for K-5 students.

4.5 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires that states adopt ambient air quality standards. The standards have been established in order to protect the public from potentially harmful amounts of pollutants. Under the CAA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes primary and secondary air quality standards. Primary air quality standards protect the public health, including the health of "sensitive populations, such as people with asthma, children, and older adults." Secondary air quality standards protect public welfare by promoting ecosystems health, and preventing decreased visibility and damage to crops and buildings. EPA has set national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) for the following six criteria pollutants: ozone (O_3), particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$, PM_{10}), nitrogen dioxide (NO_2), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO_2), and lead (Pb). According to the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), the entire state of Mississippi is classified as in attainment, meaning that criteria air pollutants do not exceed the NAAQS (MDEQ, 2006).

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

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, short-term impacts to air quality would occur during the construction of the new school. To reduce temporary impacts to air quality, the construction contractors would be required to water down construction areas when necessary. Emissions from fuel-burning internal combustion engines (e.g., heavy equipment and earthmoving machinery) could temporarily increase the levels of some of the criteria pollutants, including CO, NO_2, O_3, PM_{10}, and non-criteria pollutants such as Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs). To reduce the emission of criteria pollutants, fuel-burning equipment running times would be kept to a minimum and engines would be properly maintained.

4.6 Noise

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound. Sound is most commonly measured in decibels (dB) on the A-weighted scale, which is the scale most similar to the range of sounds that the human ear can hear. The Day-Night Average Sound Level (DNL) is an average measure of sound. The DNL descriptor is accepted by federal agencies as a standard for estimating sound impacts and establishing guidelines for compatible land uses. EPA guidelines, and those of many

other federal agencies, state that outdoor sound levels in excess of 55 dB DNL are "normally unacceptable" for noise-sensitive land uses such as residences, schools, or hospitals.

The proposed project site consists mainly of undeveloped forested land. There are no noise-sensitive areas within a 4-mile radius of the proposed project site.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to noise would occur.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, temporary short-term increases in noise levels are anticipated during the construction period. To reduce noise levels during that period, construction activities would take place during normal business hours. Equipment and machinery installed at the proposed new school site would meet all local, state, and federal noise regulations.

4.7 Biological Resources

The proposed project site consists of a pine, bald cypress, and live oak forest with a fairly developed understory and a shrub layer dominated by Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinense*). The southeastern portion of the project site contains a high quality forested wetland. The project site is bounded by a residential community to the west and an unnamed stream to the east. The proposed project site supports wildlife common to undeveloped suburban areas in Mississippi, including songbirds, reptiles, amphibians, small mammals, and white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists the following federally endangered (E) and threatened (T) animal species for Harrison County (USFWS, 2006a):

Scientific Name	**Common Name**	**Status**
Acipenser oxyrhynchus desotoi	Gulf sturgeon	T
Charadrius melodus	Piping plover	T
Caretta caretta	Loggerhead turtle	T
Chelonia mydas	Green turtle	T
Gopherus polyphemus	Gopher tortoise	T
Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald eagle	T
Pelecanus occidentalis	Brown pelican	E
Ursus americanus luteolus	Louisiana black bear	T
Picoides borealis	Red-cockaded woodpecker	E
Drymarchon corais	Eastern indigo snake	T
Lepidochelys kempi	Kemp's Ridley sea turtle	E
Rana sevosa	Mississippi gopher frog	E
Isoetes louisianensis	Louisiana quillwort	E

According to the USFWS, the Louisiana quillwort is the only federally listed plant species that potentially occurs in Harrison County. It is a rare aquatic plant that occurs on sand and gravel bars, overflow channels, and areas in or near shallow, blackwater streams in riparian woodland and bayhead forests of pine flatwoods and upland pine forests (CPC, 2006).

A site visit conducted by NISTAC biologists on December 14, 2006, confirmed that the proposed project site does not contain habitat for any federally listed flora and fauna species; therefore, it is unlikely that any threatened and endangered species are present. On November 30, 2006, a letter requesting project review was sent to USFWS; to date no response has been received (see Appendix B).

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

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, approximately 13 acres of wildlife habitat would be cleared of vegetation, graded, and converted to school use.

4.8 Cultural Resources

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

A preliminary cultural resources field investigation consisting of a limited pedestrian reconnaissance was conducted by NISTAC on December 5, 2006, to visually assess site conditions in anticipation of a formal request for a Phase I cultural resources survey. An agency consultation letter was submitted to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) on December 13, 2006, requesting a cultural resources assessment for the project (see Appendix B). An agency response letter dated January 6, 2007, from the MDAH identified no reservations with the proposed project and determined that no historic properties listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP will be affected (see Appendix B). On January 30, 2007, the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) requested a formal cultural resources survey be conducted for the proposed project site (see Appendix B).

As part of the Phase I cultural resources survey, a review of archeological site files was undertaken at the MDAH State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in Jackson, Mississippi. This examination showed that no previously recorded archeological sites were present within the proposed project area. A further review of the site files showed that while 11 previous archeological surveys had been conducted within a 2-mile radius of the proposed project site, no archeological sites were recorded as a result of these investigations

The Phase I archeological survey was completed between February 5 and 16, 2007. Field methods for the archeological survey included pedestrian survey and excavation of shovel test pits (STPs) within the proposed project site. The Phase I investigation resulted in the identification of one archaeological resource designated Site 22HR973. Site 22HR973 contains both historic and prehistoric components but primarily consists of a grouping of 77 cement piers

and an associated scatter of twentieth century and modern debris. Site 22HR973 was encountered along the western boundary of the proposed project site and encompasses an area measuring 35 by 60 meters. A map search at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. revealed a 1954 Thomas Brothers Map of Harrison County which shows a former plant nursery (Hahn Brothers Nursery) at this location. The configuration of cement piers discovered during the Phase I survey was most likely the foundation of a large greenhouse. According to the Thomas Brothers Map, only the eastern section of the former nursery structure would have been present within the proposed project site. This structure probably served as the storehouse and supply facility for the nursery and was likely a more substantial building.

A small prehistoric component was also discovered during site testing. This isolated prehistoric component consists of a single, thermally-altered, local chert flake found at TR15/STP2. The flake recovered between 13 and 26 centimeters below ground surface in the second soil stratum. Two STPs spaced at 5 meter intervals were excavated in each of the cardinal directions from the initial find. None of these eight additional STPs yielded additional significant cultural material.

Overall, disturbances resulting from nearby residential construction, greenhouse demolition, and by relatively recent post-Katrina clearing activities have degraded the overall site integrity such that any additional work would not likely provide any significant new information on past occupations at the site. Site 22HR973 does not contain historic or prehistoric artifact distribution patterns useful for further interpretation of past occupations at the proposed project site. Therefore, it appears that Site 22HR973 lacks research potential and should be considered **not eligible** for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. No further work is recommended at the proposed project site.

An architectural survey was completed on December 15, 2006, by a NISTAC architectural historian to assess the project's potential to impact historic properties within the 0.5-mile Area of Potential Effects (APE). The proposed project site is located in a suburban residential-commercial area to the north of historic Long Beach. A search of NRHP and inventory files carried out at the MDAH showed that no buildings in the APE are currently listed in the National Register. Although a pedestrian survey conducted by NISTAC personnel revealed the presence of a few modest 1920s-era houses in the 0.5-mile APE, these buildings do not appear to meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP, either individually or as part of a district. The majority of the buildings in the APE are post-1965 subdivision homes and undistinguished commercial buildings of recent construction.

A draft Phase I cultural resources survey report has been submitted to the THPO and SHPO for review. The report documented the findings of the Phase I survey with the recommendation that no further work be required for the proposed project site (Banguilan et al., 2007). The THPO had no comments on the report; a response from SHPO is pending. The report is on file with the FEMA Transitional Recovery Office (TRO) in Biloxi, Mississippi.

<u>No Action Alternative</u> – Under the No Action Alternative, no impacts to archeological or cultural resources would occur.

<u>Proposed Action Alternative</u> – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to archeological or cultural resources are anticipated.

5.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

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

No actions by others were identified as occurring or proposed in the vicinity of the proposed project site; therefore, no cumulative impacts are anticipated.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

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

The Long Beach School District notified the public of the availability of the draft Environment Assessment through publication of a public notice in a local newspaper. The public notice was published on April 4 and 11, 2007, in The Sun Herald (see Appendix C). FEMA conducted an expedited public comment period commencing on the initial date of publication of the public notice and ending on April 19, 2007.

7.0 AGENCY COORDINATION AND PERMITS

The following agencies and organizations were contacted by letter requesting project review during the preparation of this EA. If required for NEPA documentation, agencies (marked with *) were asked to submit a formal response. Responses received to date are included in Appendix B.

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

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

The Proposed Action Alternative would relocate the HMES outside of the surge zone to an undeveloped site. At the proposed project site, impacts to approximately 840 linear feet (0.18 acre) of drainage ditch will require approval from the Mobile District of the USACE; it is likely that a Nationwide permit would be required.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

No impacts to geology, groundwater, floodplains, wetlands, public health and safety, hazardous materials, socioeconomic resources, environmental justice, and cultural resources are anticipated with the Proposed Action Alternative. During the construction period, short-term impacts to soils, surface water, air quality, noise, and transportation are anticipated. All short-term impacts require conditions to minimize and mitigate impacts to the proposed project site and surrounding areas. At the proposed project site, impacts to approximately 840 linear feet (0.18 acre) of drainage ditch will require approval from the Mobile District of the Corps; it is likely that a Nationwide permit would be required. Impacts to biological resources include conversion of approximately 13 acres of wildlife habitat to HMES use.

9.0 REFERENCES

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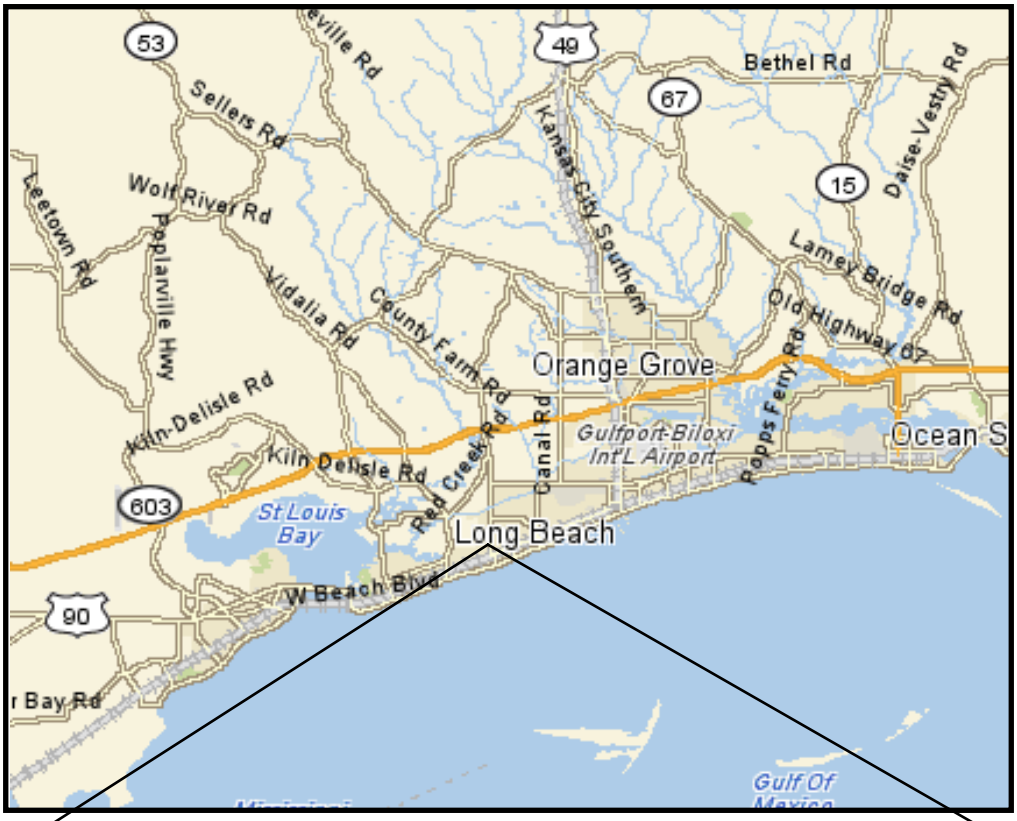
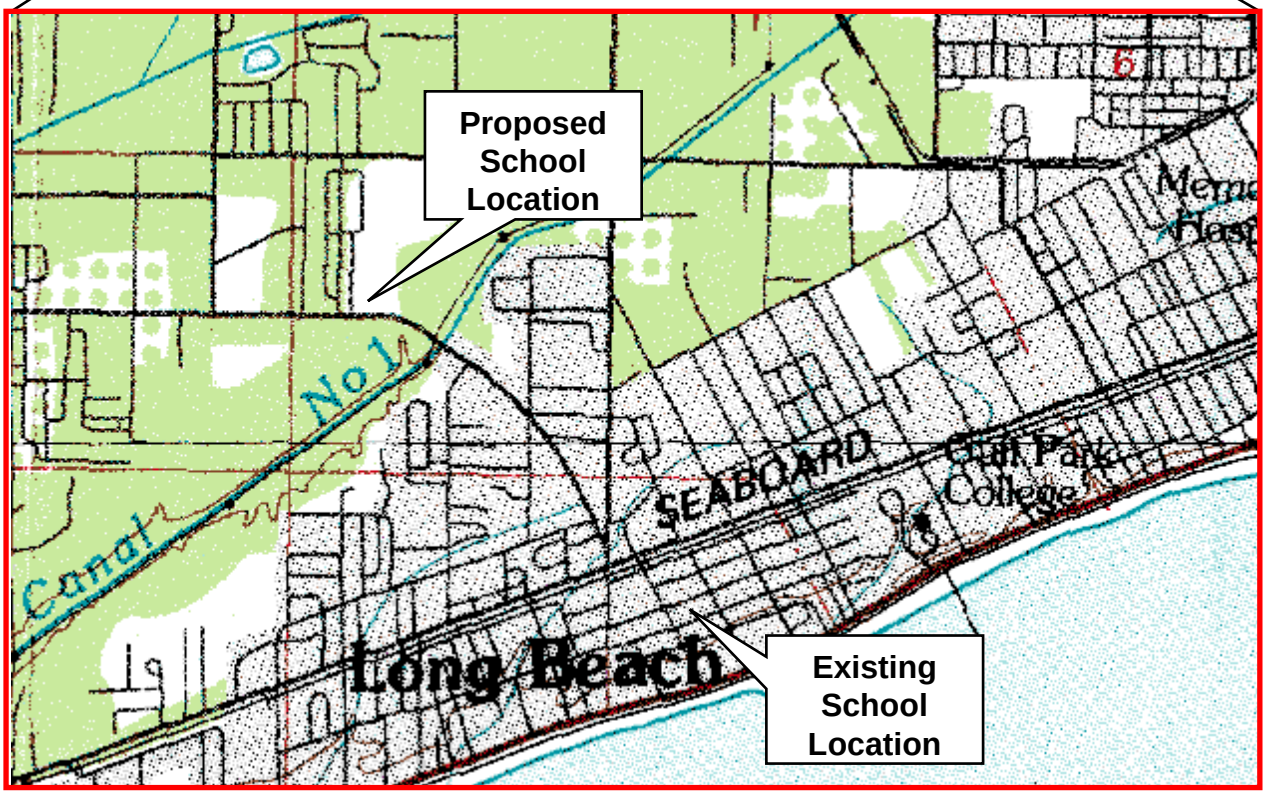
Appendix A

Figures





CLIENT	Long Beach School District			
PROJ	Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project			
REVISION NO		DES BY		
SCALE	NTS	DR BY	KRS	11/29/06
FILE		CHK BY	X	X

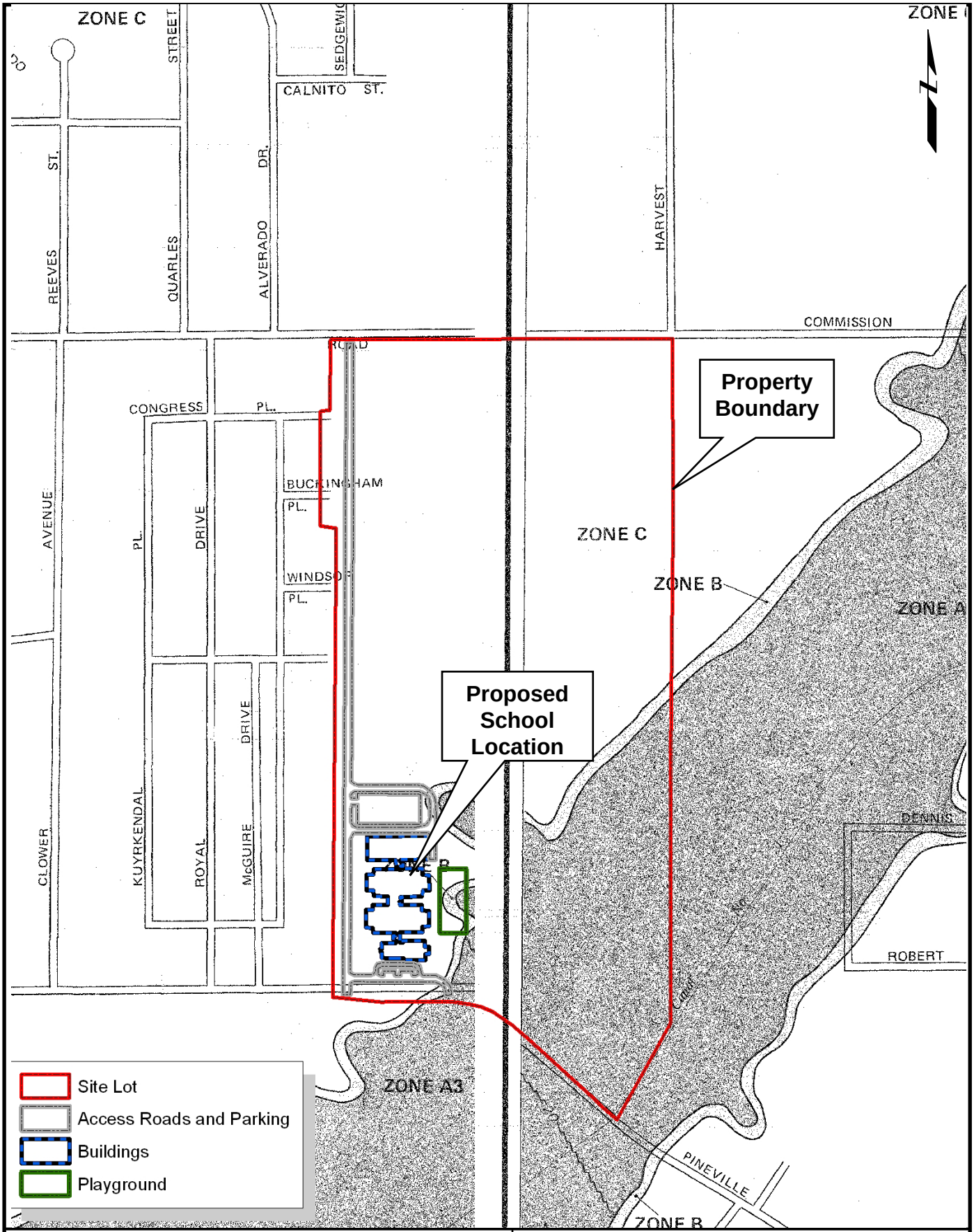
TITLE

PROJECT AREA

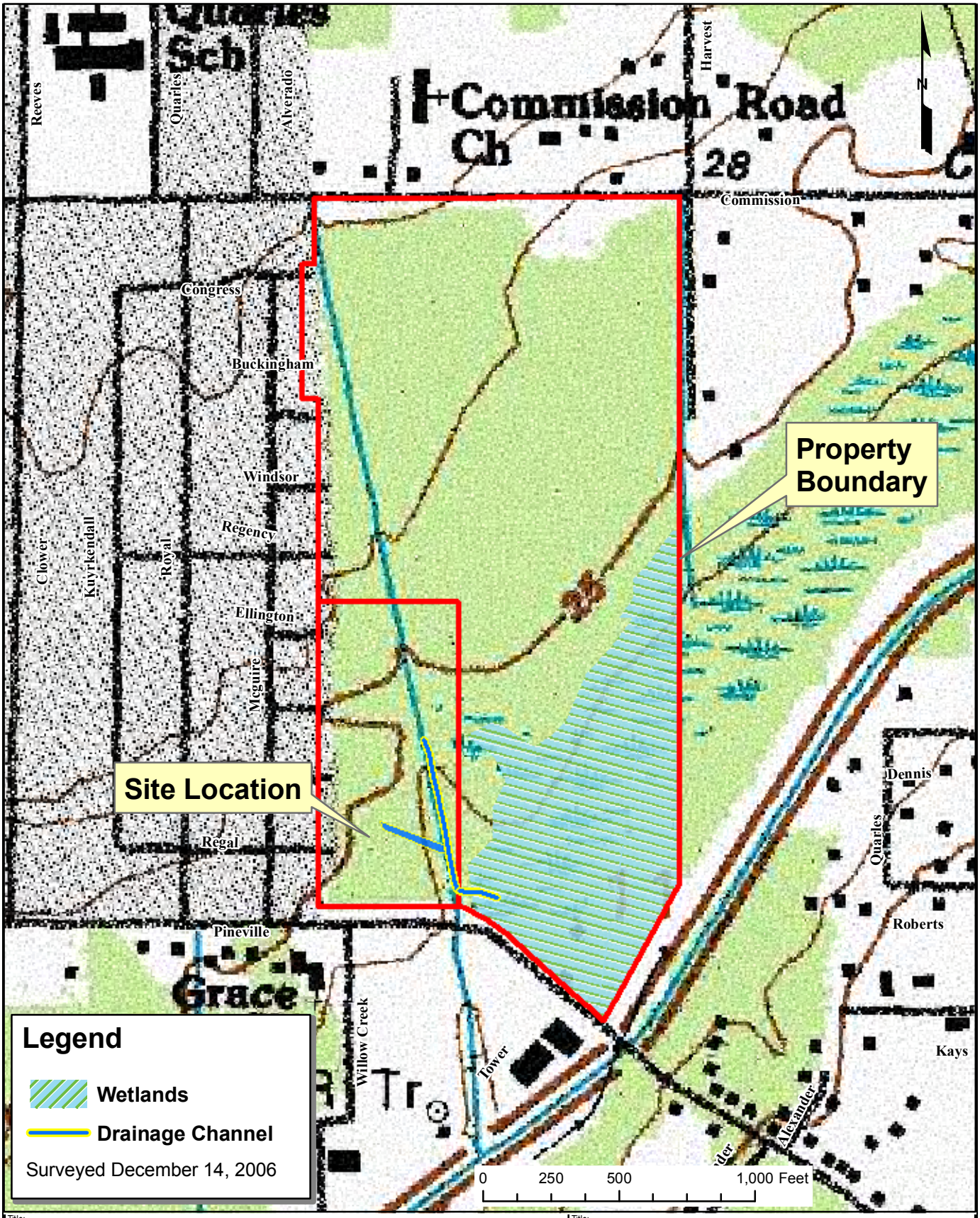
PROJ NO 15708003

FIGURE 1

CLIENT	Long Beach School District			TITLE PROJECT LOCATION
PROJ	Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project			
REVISION NO		DES BY		PROJ NO 15708003
SCALE	NTS	DR BY	KRS	11/29/06
FILE		CHK BY	X	X
				FIGURE 2



CLIENT	Long Beach School District			TITLE	SITE PLAN
PROJ	Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project				
REVISION NO		DES BY			PROJ NO 15708003
SCALE	NTS	DR BY	KRS	11/29/03	FIGURE 3
FILE		CHK BY	X	X	



Title:	Long Beach School District			
Project:	Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project			
Scale:	As Shown	DR BY	RR	03/07/07
File:	Base.mxd	CHK BY		

Title: WETLAND DELINEATION

Project No.: 15708003

Figure: 4

Appendix B

Agency Coordination

URS

November 30, 2006

Mr. Ray Aycock
Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson Field Office
6578 Dogwood View Parkway
Suite A
Jackson, MS 39213

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Aycock:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

The District proposes to relocate the school out of the surge zone to an 80-acre site located on Pineville Road (see Figures 1 and 2). The proposed relocation site is approximately 1.3 miles northwest of the existing school and is owned by the Long Beach School District. The District intends to construct the new facility on the southwest portion of the property. Access to the proposed site would utilize Commission Road and Pineville Road, which run parallel to the north and south of the proposed property limit respectively (see Figure 3). The proposed site is also bound by a residential community to the west and an undeveloped forested land and unnamed stream to the east.

URS Group, Inc. has been retained by FEMA to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed relocation project. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, URS requests that your agency review the proposed project and provide comments and any available information on resources under your agency's jurisdiction within the project area. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact me by telephone at 301.670.3379 or electronic mail at angela_chaisson@urscorp.com.

Sincerely,

URS Group, Inc.

Angela M. Chaisson

Angela M. Chaisson
Senior NEPA Specialist

Cc: Brian Mehok, FEMA Transitional Recovery Office – Biloxi, MS

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www.urscorp.com

URS

November 30, 2006

Mr. James D. Giattina
Director
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, Water Management Division
Sam Nunn Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street, SW
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Giattina:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

The District proposes to relocate the school out of the surge zone to an 80-acre site located on Pineville Road (see Figures 1 and 2). The proposed relocation site is approximately 1.3 miles northwest of the existing school and is owned by the Long Beach School District. The District intends to construct the new facility on the southwest portion of the property. Access to the proposed site would utilize Commission Road and Pineville Road, which run parallel to the north and south of the proposed property limit respectively (see Figure 3). The proposed site is also bound by a residential community to the west and an undeveloped forested land and unnamed stream to the east.

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URS

November 30, 2006

Mr. Homer L. Wilkes
State Conservationist
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
100 W. Capitol Street
Suite 1321 Federal Bldg.
Jackson, MS 39269

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Wilkes:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

The District proposes to relocate the school out of the surge zone to an 80-acre site located on Pineville Road (see Figures 1 and 2). The proposed relocation site is approximately 1.3 miles northwest of the existing school and is owned by the Long Beach School District. The District intends to construct the new facility on the southwest portion of the property. Access to the proposed site would utilize Commission Road and Pineville Road, which run parallel to the north and south of the proposed property limit respectively (see Figure 3). The proposed site is also bound by a residential community to the west and an undeveloped forested land and unnamed stream to the east.

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Sincerely,

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URS

November 30, 2006

Mr. Claiborne Barnwell
Chief
Mississippi Department of Transportation, Environmental Division
Administration Building
P.O. Box 1850
Jackson, MS 39215-1850

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Barnwell:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

The District proposes to relocate the school out of the surge zone to an 80-acre site located on Pineville Road (see Figures 1 and 2). The proposed relocation site is approximately 1.3 miles northwest of the existing school and is owned by the Long Beach School District. The District intends to construct the new facility on the southwest portion of the property. Access to the proposed site would utilize Commission Road and Pineville Road, which run parallel to the north and south of the proposed property limit respectively (see Figure 3). The proposed site is also bound by a residential community to the west and an undeveloped forested land and unnamed stream to the east.

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URS

November 30, 2006

Dr. William Walker
Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Bureau of Wetlands Permitting
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, MS 39530

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Dr. Walker:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

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URS

November 30, 2006

Ms. Michelle Vinson
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control, Environmental Permits Division
P.O. Box 10385
Jackson, MS 39289-0385

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Ms. Vinson:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

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URS

November 30, 2006

Mr. Patrick Sullivan
Director of Market Development
Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce
P.O. Box 1609
Jackson, MS 39215

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

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URS

November 30, 2006

Mr. Don Underwood
Executive Director
Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission
P.O. Box 23005
Jackson, MS 39225-3005

Re: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Underwood:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

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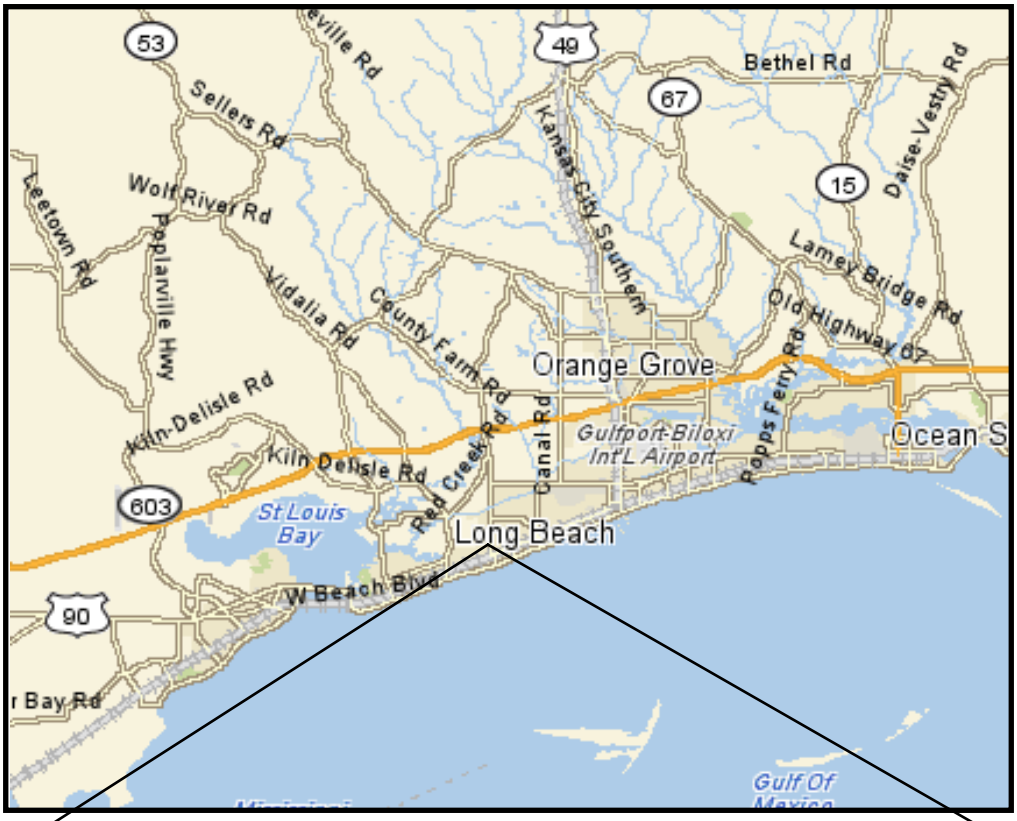
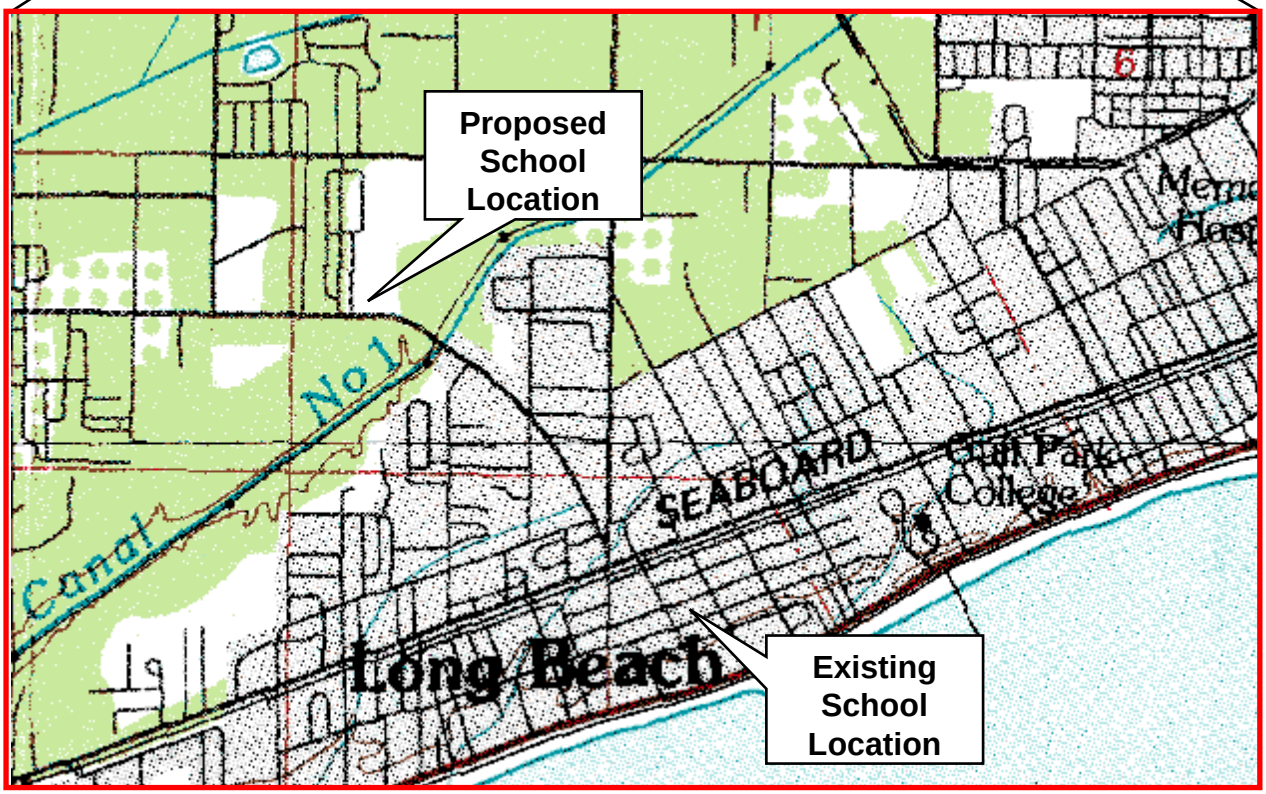
www.urscorp.com





CLIENT	Long Beach School District			
PROJ	Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project			
REVISION NO		DES BY		
SCALE	NTS	DR BY	KRS	11/29/06
FILE		CHK BY	X	X

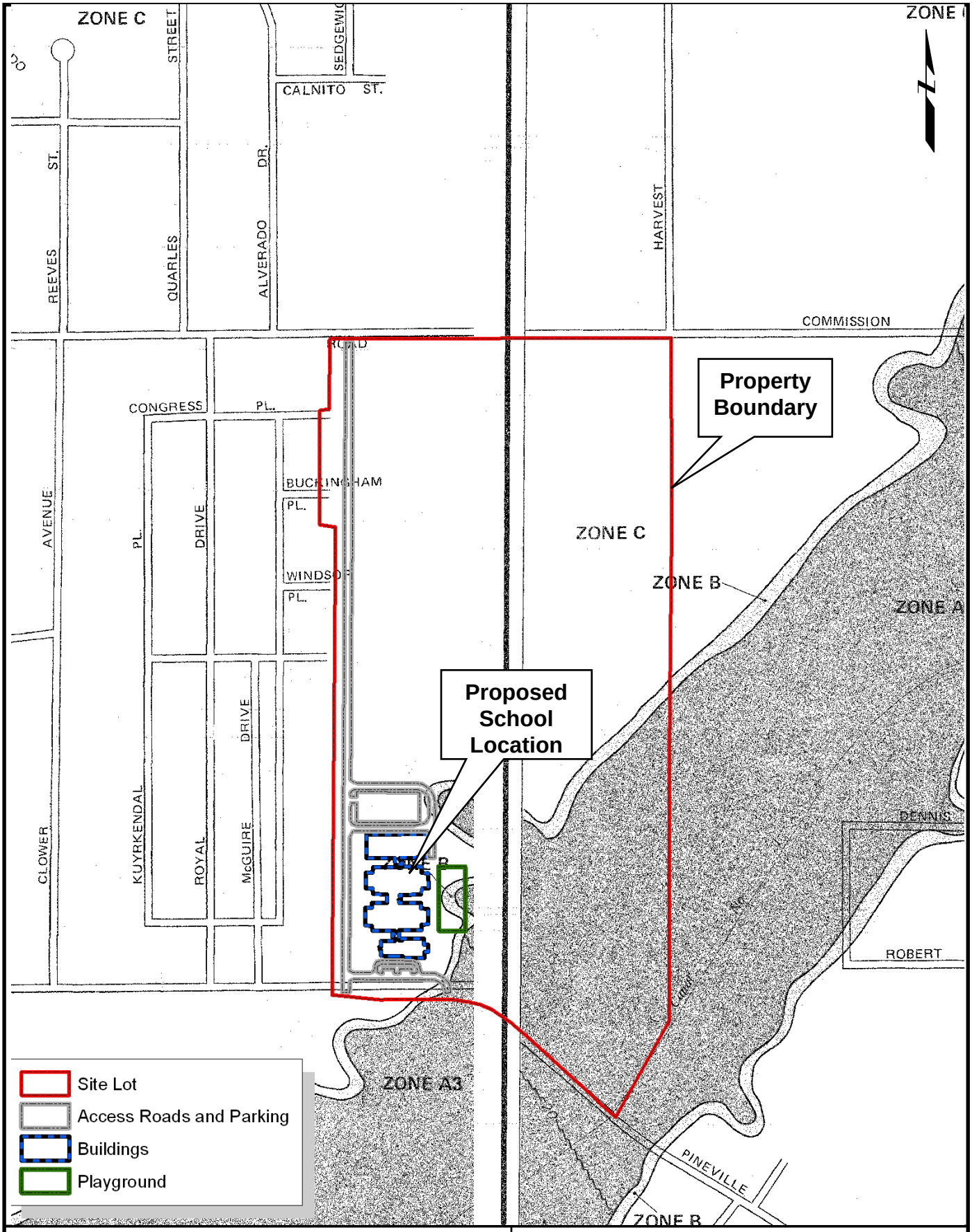
TITLE **PROJECT AREA**

URS

PROJ NO 15708003

FIGURE 1

CLIENT	Long Beach School District			TITLE	PROJECT LOCATION
PROJ	Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project				
REVISION NO		DES BY		URS	PROJ NO 15708003
SCALE	NTS	DR BY	KRS 11/29/06		FIGURE 2
FILE		CHK BY	X X		



CLIENT	Long Beach School District			TITLE	SITE PLAN
PROJ	Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project				
REVISION NO		DES BY		URS	PROJ NO 15708003
SCALE	NTS	DR BY	KRS 11/29/03		FIGURE 3
FILE		CHK BY	X X		

Hamilton.John@epamail.epa.gov

12/11/2006 03:01 PM

To angela_chaisson@urscorp.com
cc Hamilton.John@epamail.epa.gov
bcc
Subject Resend with Correction: URS Request for Project Review Harper-McCaughan School, Long Beach, Harris Co, Miss.

Dear Ms. Chaisson:

Thank you for your letter and project description/map data of November 30, 2006, and request for comments on the proposed school relocation project.

The proposed new site appears to be in an urbanized/residential area situated north of Pineville Road. EPA requests that FEMA coordinate with the Mobile District Corps of Engineers, 334-690-2658, Wetland Regulatory, to determine if Section 404 jurisdictional wetlands are present on the proposed site. Absent wetlands being on the site , we have no further addition comments. EPA appreciates the opportunity to review this action.

Please call me if more information is needed.

John B. Hamilton
US Environmental Protection Agency
NEPA Program Office EAD/13
Office of Policy and Management
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-562-9617
Fax 404-562-9598

MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

December 11, 2006

Angela M. Chaisson, Senior NEPA Specialist
URS Corporation
200 Orchard Ridge Drive, Suite 101
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

RE:DMR-070245, Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Ms. Chaisson:

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources has no objections to the proposed Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi provided that there are no direct or indirect impacts to coastal wetlands. If any impacts to coastal wetlands are anticipated for this project, a Joint Application and Notification Form should be submitted to the DMR for review.

For additional information, please contact me at (228) 523-4102.

Sincerely,

Jan Boyd,
Director, Coastal Ecology

"Barnwell, Claiborne" <cbarnwell@mdot.state.ms.us>

12/12/2006 09:38 AM

To <angela_chaisson@urscorp.com>

cc

bcc

Subject Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach

History: This message has been forwarded.

Ms. Chaisson,

The MS Dept. of Transportation does not have any comments or concerns for this project.

E. Claiborne Barnwell, P.E.
Mississippi Dept. of Transportation
Environmental Division Engineer
phone: (601) 359-7920 fax: (601) 359-7355 cell: (601) 946-7854
cbarnwell@mdot.state.ms.us

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all copies from your system.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Biloxi - Transitional Field Office

Mailing Address	Physical Address
P.O. Box 4517	2350 Beach Blvd.
Biloxi, MS 39540	Biloxi, MS 39531

FEMA

December 13, 2006

Mr. Jim Woodrick
FEMA Point of Contact
Mississippi Department of Archives and History,
Historic Preservation Division
P.O. Box 571
Jackson, MS 39205-0571

RE: Request for Project Review – Relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, Harrison County, Mississippi

Dear Mr. Woodrick:

The Long Beach School District (District) has applied for the receipt of federal funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School located at 301 Jeff Davis Avenue, Long Beach, Mississippi (see Figure 1).

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School. The school was constructed in the 1950s and housed as many as 550 students from Grades K-5. The school is located in a flood zone C; however, it was within the Hurricane Katrina surge inundation zone, receiving up to 8 feet of water in some areas on the school campus.

The District proposes to relocate the school out of the surge zone to an 80-acre site located on Pineville Road (see Figures 1 and 2). The proposed relocation site is approximately 1.3 miles northwest of the existing school and is owned by the Long Beach School District. The District intends to construct the new facility on the southwest portion of the property. Access to the proposed site would utilize Commission Road and Pineville Road, which run parallel to the north and south of the proposed property limit respectively (see Figure 3). The proposed site is also bound by a residential community to the west and an undeveloped forested land and unnamed stream to the east.

URS Group, Inc. has been retained by FEMA to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed relocation project. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended, URS requests that your agency review the proposed project and provide comments and any available information on resources under your agency's jurisdiction within the project area. If you have any questions or need additional information please contact Claudia Watson by telephone at 937.689.9157 or at claudia.watson@dhs.associates.gov.

Sincerely,

Michael Grisham
Environmental Liaison Officer
FEMA-1604-DR-MS

Attachments

MISSISSIPPI Department of
MDAH
ARCHIVES & HISTORY

PO Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205-0571
601-576-6850 • Fax 601-576-6975
mdah.state.ms.us
H. T. Holmes, Director

January 6, 2007

Mr. Michael Grisham
Environmental Liaison Officer
FEMA-1604-DR-MS
P.O. Box 4517
Biloxi, Mississippi 39540

RE: Proposed relocation of Harper McCaughan Elementary School, Long Beach, MDAH Project Log #12-069-06, Harrison County

Dear Michael:

We have reviewed your December 13, 2006, request for a cultural resources assessment for the above referenced project in accordance with our responsibilities under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800. After reviewing the information provided, it is our determination that no properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places will be affected. Therefore, we have no reservations with the proposed project.

There remains a possibility that unrecorded cultural resources may be encountered during the project. Should this occur, we would appreciate your contacting us immediately so that we may take appropriate steps under 36 CFR 800, part 13.

If you have any questions, please contact us at 601-576-6940.

Sincerely,

Jim Woodrick
Review and Compliance Officer

FOR: H.T. Holmes
State Historic Preservation Officer

c: Clearinghouse for Federal Programs

Cyril Baxter Mann, Jr.

Deputy Environmental Liaison Officer
FEMA-1604-DR-MS
TRO-Biloxi, Ms 39531
228-594-2946 Desk
337-281-5870 Cell
228-385-7884 FAX

-----Original Message-----
From: Carleton, Ken [mailto:KCarleton@choctaw.org]
Sent: Friday, March 02, 2007 10:56
To: Mann jr, Cyril
Subject: RE: Harper McCaughn DEA - Cultural Resource Section

Baxter,

I would like to see a Phase I archaeological survey of this site. It is in an area which has not had a lot of survey done and since it is an elevated area, it would seem to have a high potential for there being an archaeological site present. The same features which make it a good site for relocation of this school also made it a good site for people to have lived for the last several thousand years.

Ken

Kenneth H. Carleton
Tribal Historic Preservation Officer/Archaeologist
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
P.O. Box 6257 or 101 Industrial Road
Choctaw, MS 39350
601.650.7316
FAX: 601.650.7454

Appendix C

Public Notice of Draft EA

PROOF OF PUBLICATION

Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA)
For the Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project, Harrison County, Mississippi
FEMA-1604-DR-MS
Interested persons are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is proposing to assist in the funding of Harper McCaughan Elementary School Relocation Project in Harrison County, Mississippi. On August 29, 2005 Hurricane Katrina struck the Mississippi Gulf Coast, causing a storm surge that severely damaged the Harper McCaughan Elementary School (HMES) formerly located at 300 Jeff Davis Avenue in Long Beach, Mississippi.
The Long Beach School District has proposed to relocate and construct a new HMES on higher ground outside of the Category 3 storm surge inundation area and FEMA flood hazard zone. The location of the proposed school is an undeveloped 80 acre site north of Pineville Road and south of Commission Road, approximately 1.3 miles north of the former HMES site. The required work at the site would consist of clearing approximately 3.9 acres at the southwestern corner of the site for construction of the new HMES.
In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and the implementing regulations of FEMA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared to access the potential impacts of the Proposed Action on the human and natural environment. The Draft EA summarizes the purpose and need, alternatives, affected environmental, and potential environmental consequences for the proposed action. The Draft EA and its associated Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) are available for comment and can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website at http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/ea-region4.shtm or viewed and copied at the following locations:
- Long Beach School District Office, 19148 Commission Road, Long Beach, MS 39560
- Long Beach Public Library, Klondyke Road, Long Beach, MS 39560

The comment period will end 15 days from the notice publication date, which is Wednesday, April 4, 2007. Written comments on the Draft EA can be mailed or faxed to the contact below. If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA and associated FONSI will become final. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.
Michael Grisham
FEMA Environmental Liaison Officer
FEMA/State Transitional Recovery Office
220 Popps Ferry Road, Building A South
Biloxi, MS 39565
FAX: (228) 385-7984
X40:adv4,11,2wed.
1149669

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
COUNTY OF HARRISON

Before me, the undersigned Notary of Harrison County, Mississippi personally appeared Tahirah Crawford who, being by me first duly sworn, did depose and say that she is a clerk of The Sun Herald, a newspaper published in the city Gulfport, in Harrison County, Mississippi, and the publication of the notice, a copy of which is hereto attached, has been made in said paper 2 times in the following numbers and on the following dates of such paper, viz:

Vol. 123 No., 183 dated 4th day of April, 20 07
Vol. 123 No., 190 dated 11th day of April, 2007
Vol. _____ No., _____ dated _____ day of _____, 20 _____
Vol. _____ No., _____ dated _____ day of _____, 20 _____
Vol. _____ No., _____ dated _____ day of _____, 20 _____
Vol. _____ No., _____ dated _____ day of _____, 20 _____
Vol. _____ No., _____ dated _____ day of _____, 20 _____

Affiant further states on oath that said newapaper has been established and published continuously in said country for a period of more than twelve months next prior to the first publication of said notice.

Commission Expires on:
October 15, 2007

Clerk

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 11th day of April, A.D., 20 07

Notary Public

Printer's Fee ..... $_____
Furnishing proof of publication ..... $_____
TOTAL..... _____