

Draft Environmental Assessment

# Feed My Sheep Nutrition Center Relocation Project

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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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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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
CWA	Clean Water Act
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
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
MDAH	Mississippi Department of Archives and History
MDEQ	Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
MDMR	Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
MNHP	Mississippi Natural Heritage Program
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
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 <sub>2</sub>	nitrogen dioxide
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
O <sub>3</sub>	ozone
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration



## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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PA	Public Assistance Program
Pb	lead
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	particulate matter less than 2.5 microns
PM <sub>10</sub>	particulate matter less than 10 microns
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SO <sub>2</sub>	sulfur dioxide
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
THPO	Tribal Historic Preservation Office
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound



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## **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 City of Gulfport has submitted an application for Federal Emergency Management Agency (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 City of Gulfport, in conjunction with a local private non-profit organization, operated a nutrition center that provided services to feed disadvantaged people in the Gulfport area. The nutrition center utilized space within the Gaston Hewes Recreational Center, located at 2008 17th Street in Gulfport. The storm surge and associated high winds from Hurricane Katrina severely damaged the recreation center, meeting FEMA's repair/replacement ratio for the demolition and replacement of the structure. In accordance with FEMA's policy for FEMA-1604-DR-MS, the remaining structure will be demolished and site returned to grade and revegetated.

The City of Gulfport has submitted an application for FEMA funding under FEMA's Public Assistance Program being administered in response to FEMA-1604-DR-MS, to relocate the Gaston Hewes Recreation Center to a site approximately 1.14 miles southwest from the existing site in an effort to reestablish the hurricane-damaged Charles Walker Park. As current plans for the new recreation center do not include space for the nutrition center, the City of Gulfport requires a new facility to resume services to support the disadvantaged population.

## **3.0 ALTERNATIVES**

This section describes the alternatives that were considered in addressing the purpose and need stated in Section 2 above. Two alternatives were evaluated further: the No Action Alternative, and the Proposed Action Alternative, for the relocation and construction of the new Feed My Sheep Nutrition Center.

### Alternative 1: No Action

Under the No Action Alternative, the City of Gulfport would not build a facility for the Nutrition Center. The City of Gulfport would not have a facility that would provide services to feed disadvantaged people in the Gulfport area.



## Alternative 2: Relocation and Construction of a New Feed My Sheep Nutrition Center (Proposed Action)

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, the City of Gulfport proposes to relocate and construct the new Feed My Sheep Nutrition Center on a 0.52-acre triangular-shaped site at the intersection of 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Gulfport. The proposed project site is approximately 0.14 mile north of the former Gaston Hewes Recreation Center site and approximately 6 blocks from downtown Gulfport. The Hogue Lumber Company, operating from about 1940-1960, formerly occupied the proposed project site. Currently, only the 8,000-square-foot concrete slab from the former building remains. The proposed project site is bound to the north by 19<sup>th</sup> Street, to the west by 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a rail line, and to the east and south by industrial/commercial warehouses. The proposed project site is located in Flood Zone X (outside the 100-year floodplain) and outside the advisory base flood elevation (ABFE) zone.

The proposed action will accommodate the construction of a 6,000–square-foot one-story structure with a parking capacity to meet the City building code. Access to the proposed project site and connection to public utilities would originate from the north on 19<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **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.

<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Geology and Soils</b>	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.
<b>Surface Water</b>	Temporary impacts to surface water are possible during construction activities.	A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit must be obtained prior to construction; appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils, would minimize runoff.
<b>Floodplains</b>	No impacts to the floodplain are anticipated.	None
<b>Waters of the U.S.</b>	No impacts to Waters of the United	None



<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>including Wetlands</b>	States including wetlands are anticipated.	
<b>Transportation</b>	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.
<b>Public Health and Safety</b>	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 Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations; appropriate signage and barriers should be in place prior to construction activities to alert pedestrians and motorists of project activities.
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	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.
<b>Socioeconomic Resources</b>	No adverse socioeconomic impacts are anticipated.	None
<b>Environmental Justice</b>	No disproportionately high or adverse effect on minority or low-income populations is anticipated. Anticipated positive impact on low-income population.	None
<b>Air Quality</b>	Short-term impacts to air quality would occur during the construction period. No adverse long-term impacts are anticipated	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.



<b>Affected Environment</b>	<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
<b>Noise</b>	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.
<b>Biological Resources</b>	No adverse impacts to biological resources.	None
<b>Cultural Resources</b>	No impacts to archeological or cultural resources are anticipated.	None

#### **4.1 Geology and Soils**

The proposed project site contains soils consisting of Eustis loamy sand, 0 to 5 percent slopes and Plummer loamy sand. The Eustis series consists of deep, somewhat excessively drained soils that formed in coarse-textured marine or fluvial sediments on smooth to strongly dissected parts of the Coastal Plain. The Plummer series have slopes ranging from 0 to 5 percent, consisting of very deep, poorly and very poorly drained, and moderately permeable soils that formed from marine sediments (USGS, 2006a).

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, 2007a).

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 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 slopes downward slightly to the south; elevations on-site range from 27 feet above mean sea level (amsl) on the northwestern portion of the site to 25 feet amsl in the southern portion of the site. A drainage ditch is located approximately 320 feet south of the proposed project site. The drainage ditch runs east to west from along 18<sup>th</sup> Street, interconnecting with the railroad drainage system draining south toward the Gulf of Mexico. There are no streams or ponds located on or adjacent to the proposed project site. A Nationwide



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Infrastructure Support Technical Assistance Consultants (NISTAC) biologist conducted a site visit on April 3, 2007, and verified these findings.

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 could occur during the construction period due to soil erosion. The applicant would be required to submit SWPPP and NPDES permit applications 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, 2007a; Community Panel Number 285253 0076 D). The proposed site is located in Flood Zone X, which is outside the 100-year floodplain. In addition, Hurricane Katrina Surge Inundation and Advisory Base Flood Elevation Maps (FEMA, 2007b) were examined. The proposed project site is located outside ABFE zone.

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

Proposed Action Alternative – 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 0.4 mile south of a tributary of Brickyard Bayou, and 0.7 mile north of the Gulf of Mexico. According to the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) map, no wetlands are located on or adjacent to the proposed project site (USFWS, 2007a). A site visit conducted by a NISTAC biologist on April 3, 2007, verified these findings.

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 (NOAA), the proposed project site is located within the Mississippi Coastal Zone (NOAA, 2007).

On June 15, 2006, a letter requesting project review was sent to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) 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



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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.).

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

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to waters of the U.S. including wetlands would occur. Temporary impacts to downstream surface waters could occur during the construction period from erosion of soils. To reduce impacts to surface water, the applicant would implement appropriate BMPs, such as installing silt fences and revegetating bare soils.

An agency response letter from the MDMR identified that the project will have no effect on the coastal zone (see Appendix B).

### **4.3 Transportation**

The proposed project site is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Gulfport. Access to the proposed project site would be from the north on 19<sup>th</sup> Street.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, no construction would occur and there would be no impacts to transportation.

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no significant adverse impacts to transportation or site access are anticipated. 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. No road closures are anticipated.

### **4.5 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.

No Action Alternative – Under the No Action Alternative, low-income populations would suffer disproportionately high and adverse impacts due to the continued lack of a facility that would provide services to feed disadvantaged people in the Gulfport area.

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 low-income populations by providing services to feed disadvantaged people in the Gulfport area.



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## 4.6 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<sub>3</sub>), particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>), nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), 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, 2007).

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 construction. 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<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>, 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.

In a letter dated June 21, 2006, MDEQ concluded that the proposed project would cause no significant adverse ambient air quality impacts (see Appendix B).

## 4.7 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.

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 site would meet all local, state, and federal noise regulations.



#### 4.8 Biological Resources

The proposed project location for the Feed My Sheep Nutrition Center has been highly disturbed over a period of many years. It consists of a cleared city parcel with weedy vegetation, construction debris, crushed asphalt and a large concrete pad. The site is bounded by 19<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a rail line to the west, and industrial/commercial warehouses to the east and south. A NISTAC biologist verified these site conditions during a site visit on April 3, 2007. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) lists the following federally endangered (E) and threatened (T) species for Harrison County (USFWS, 2007a):

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

According to the Mississippi National Heritage Program (MNHP), the only federally listed threatened or endangered species recorded as occurring within 2 miles of the proposed project site is the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*). The proposed project site does not provide habitat for the piping plover, as the species prefers over-wintering and nesting sites that consist of bare to sparsely vegetated sandy beaches, sandbars, tidal flats, mud flats, sand flats, dunes, etc. Therefore, no impacts to the piping plover or its habitats are anticipated.

MNHP identified 4 other state species of concern that have been reported to occur within 2 miles of the proposed project site (MNHP, 2007):

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Rank
<i>Laterallus jamaicensis</i>	Black Rail	S2N
<i>Egretta rufescens</i>	Reddish Egret	SZN



<i>Lilaeopsis carolinensis</i>	Carolina lilaeopsis (grasswort)	S2S3
<i>Sterna maxima</i>	Royal Tern	S1B, S4N

Note: S1 – Critically imperiled in Mississippi because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences or very few remaining individuals or acres) or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extirpation.  
 S2 – Imperiled in Mississippi because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals or acres) or because of some factor(s) making it vulnerable to extirpation.  
 S3 – Rare or uncommon in Mississippi (on the order of 21 to 100 occurrences).  
 S4 – Widespread, abundant, and apparently secure in the state, but with cause for long-term concern (more than 101 occurrences).  
 SZ – Zero occurrences in the state. Not of practical conservation concern in the state, because there are no definable occurrences, although the taxon is native and appears regulatory in the state.  
 B – Breeding Status  
 N – Non-breeding Status

A site visit conducted by a NISTAC biologist on April 3, 2007 confirmed that the proposed project site has been highly disturbed and does not contain habitat for any federally listed or state species of concern; therefore, it is unlikely that any threatened and endangered species are present. In a letter dated June 27, 2006, MNHP concluded that if BMPs are implemented, the proposed project likely poses no threat to the piping plover, black rail, reddish egret, Carolina lilaeopsis, or royal tern, or any of their habitats (see Appendix B).

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

Proposed Action Alternative – There is no suitable habitat for any federally listed or state species of concern at the proposed project site. The site contains is heavily disturbed and contains very little vegetation that would provide habitat for wildlife. Therefore, under the Proposed Action Alternative, there would be no impacts to biological resources.

#### 4.9 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 NISTAC archeologist and architectural historian, both qualified in their respective disciplines under *Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards* (36 CFR Part 61), conducted an assessment of the project's potential to affect historic properties within the Area of Potential Effects (APE). The APE is the geographic area within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if such properties exist.



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The proposed project site for the construction of the new Feed My Sheep Nutrition Center is located six blocks north of the central business district of Gulfport in an area known locally as Warehouse Row. Most of the extant buildings are warehouse buildings constructed in the 1950s and 1960s of steel framing covered by galvanized sheet metal. A number of the buildings front a side car railway line that is no longer in use. Many of the buildings were demolished through the years and replaced by similar light industry structures. Most of those dating to the 1950s are in a bad to moderate state of repair. The area is outside the parameters of the Harbor Square Historic District and does not contribute to the ambience of downtown Gulfport. Therefore, no historic properties would be affected by the undertaking.

A pedestrian survey was executed to identify the existence of visible archeological remains or features on the ground surface. The survey demonstrated that this site has been highly disturbed over a period of many years and is covered almost in its entirety by a concrete slab. A defunct railroad track runs through the eastern boundary and the remainder of the exposed ground surface contains construction trash, crushed asphalt aggregate and small rocks possibly used as a parking surface by the previous business owner. Several archaeological surveys, most notably, 98-088, 99-173, and 94-236 have taken place within a 2-mile radius, all with negative results. Due to extensive disturbance, both manmade and natural, the proposed structure will have no adverse effect on any culturally significant resources.

Agency consultation letters were submitted concurrently to the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) and the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO) for the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, requesting a cultural resources assessment for the project (see Appendix B). An agency response letter dated May 10, 2006, from the MDAH identified no reservations with the proposed project (see Appendix B). No response to date has been received from the THPO.

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

Proposed Action Alternative – Under the Proposed Action Alternative, no impacts to archeological or cultural resources are anticipated. If, during the course of the work, archeological artifacts or human remains are inadvertently discovered, the applicant shall stop work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize further harm to the finds. Work will not proceed until FEMA Historic Preservation staff have completed consultation with the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the THPO.

## **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



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EA considered the combined effect of the Proposed Action Alternative and other actions occurring or proposed in the vicinity of the proposed project site.

Gulfport and the entire Mississippi Gulf coast are undergoing recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina caused extensive damages. The recovery efforts in Gulfport include demolition, reconstruction, and new construction. These projects and the proposed project may have a cumulative temporary impact on air quality in Gulfport by increasing criteria pollutants during construction activities. No other cumulative effects are anticipated.

## **6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

FEMA is the lead federal agency for conducting the NEPA compliance process for the construction of the City of Gulfport's Feed My Sheep Nutrition Center in Gulfport, 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 City of Gulfport will notify the public of the availability of the draft Environment Assessment through publication of a public notice in a local newspaper. FEMA will conduct an expedited public comment period commencing on the initial date of publication of the public notice.

## **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 Transportation, Federal Aviation Administration
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
- Mississippi Department of Archives and History\*
- Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Coastal Zone Management
- Mississippi Natural Heritage Program
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control
- Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Mississippi Band or Choctaw Indians
- City of Gulfport, Building Code Services, Floodplain Management
- City of Gulfport, City Inspector
- City of Gulfport, City Engineering
- City of Gulfport, Fire Department

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.



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## 8.0 CONCLUSIONS

No adverse impacts to geology, groundwater, floodplains, waters of the U.S. including wetlands, public health and safety, hazardous materials, socioeconomic resources, environmental justice, biological resources, or cultural resources are anticipated with the Proposed Action Alternative. During the construction period, short-term impacts to soils, surface water, transportation, air quality, and noise are anticipated. All short-term impacts will require conditions to minimize and mitigate impacts to the proposed project site and surrounding areas.



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## 9.0 REFERENCES

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## Appendix A

### Figures

## Appendix B

### Agency Coordination