



FEMA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

EAST WARD TECHNOLOGY CENTER RELOCATION PROJECT GULFPORT, HARRISON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI FEMA-1604-DR-MS

The Gulfport School District has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for assistance with a relocation project for the East Ward Technology Center in Gulfport, Harrison County, Mississippi. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina's storm surge severely damaged the Gulfport School District's East Ward Community Education and Technology Support Service Center (Center) in Gulfport, Mississippi. The Center, located at 1525 Thornton Avenue in Gulfport, was utilized as the District's computer technology hub and the community education center. Damages to the Center met FEMA's repair/replacement ratio for the demolition and replacement of the structure. FEMA proposes to provide assistance for this project through the Public Assistance Program (PA) under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA-1604-DR-MS.

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The purpose of the EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the 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 the facility outside the advisory base flood elevation (ABFE) zone and construct a new Technology Center and parking lot on a 0.83-acre parcel located at 2014 Pass Road in Gulfport. An additional parking lot would be constructed on an adjacent 0.34-acre parcel located on 21st Avenue. The proposed project site is approximately 0.80 mile northwest of the existing Technology Center. The District intends to construct a new 21,000-square-foot, 2-story building on the southern portion of the 0.83-acre parcel of the proposed project site.

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:

Approved:

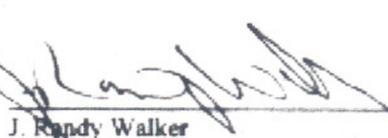


6-26-07

Michael Grisham

Date

FEMA Environmental Liaison Officer



6/26/07

J. Randy Walker

Date

FEMA Infrastructure Branch Chief
FEMA-1604-DR-MS