



# FEMA

## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

### CITY OF EMORY/RAINS COUNTY TORNADO SHELTER PROJECT RAINS COUNTY, TEXAS PRE-DISASTER MITIGATION PROJECT PDMC-PJ-06-TX-2005-035

#### BACKGROUND

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, an Environmental Assessment (EA) has been 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 (CEQ; 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The purpose of the proposed project is to provide an emergency facility to protect the citizens of the City of Emory and Rains County during severe weather events, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Rains County (County) has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for assistance with a Pre-Disaster Mitigation Project under application number PDMC-PJ-06-TX-2005-035. FEMA grants funds under the Pre-Disaster Mitigation - Competitive (PDM-C) program, under Section 406 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, for pre-disaster mitigation activities which reduce overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations.

For the EA, two project alternatives are considered 1) No Action and 2) Construction of a Safe Room/Tornado Shelter. Under the No Action alternative no designated emergency shelter would be constructed in Rains County. Those residents who have accessible underground shelters would use them for protection during severe weather events; however, the general population would continue to be unprotected during these events. The Proposed Action Alternative will construct of a 6,000-square-foot Safe Room/Tornado Shelter on a 0.9-acre site located at 110 Rhodes Drive in Emory, Texas. The proposed project site is the northern portion of a 1.9-acre parcel which was formerly developed and functioned as a Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) maintenance and storage facility. The proposed Safe Room/Tornado Shelter will be a 60-foot by 100-foot, single-story, above-ground structure constructed with reinforced masonry designed to withstand 250-mile-per-hour winds. The shelter will be accessible 24 hours per day and is designed to accommodate 800 people during daytime emergencies and 200 people at night. The proposed project would also include the construction of a parking area sufficient to accommodate the shelter's capacity. The required site work will consist of the demolition of all structures and the clearance of vegetation within the 0.9-acre project site to minimize the danger of projectiles in the

event of a tornado. The proposed facility will tie into existing public utilities and infrastructure located on-site.

The County notified the public of the availability of the draft EA through publication of a public notice in a local newspaper. The public notice was published on December 18, 2007, and January 1, 8, and 15, 2008, in the *Rains County Leader*. FEMA conducted a 30-day public comment period commencing on the initial publication date of the public notice and ending on January 17, 2008. No comments were received from the public.

## FINDINGS

The proposed project as described in the EA will not impact geology, groundwater, floodplains, wetlands, environmental justice, threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, hazardous materials, public safety, or socioeconomic resources. Positive impacts to public health and safety are expected. Long-term, minor impacts include temporary increases in local traffic levels around the facility during emergency events and the clearing of grass and trees from a portion of the proposed project site. During the construction period, short-term impacts to soils, surface water, transportation, air quality, and noise are anticipated. All short-term impacts require conditions to minimize and mitigate impacts to the proposed project site and surrounding areas.

## CONDITIONS

The County shall comply with all prescribed conditions set forth in the EA, including but not limited to the following conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize the receipt of Federal funding.

1. Excavated soil and waste materials will be managed and disposed of in accordance to applicable local, state, and federal regulations. If contaminated materials are discovered during the construction activities, the work will cease until the appropriate procedures and permits can be implemented.
2. If the proposed action will require additional excavation to groundwater depths, the applicant would consult with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to identify appropriate mitigation of contaminated groundwater.
3. A release to groundwater (contaminated groundwater) was identified on the proposed project site based on the findings of the Phase II ESA. Prior to construction, the applicant will need to conduct additional delineation of the TPH identified at the proposed project site and submit an Affected Property Assessment Report (APAR) to the TCEQ. In accordance with Texas Administrative Code (TAC) 30 TAC 350, an APAR is required when addressing a release of Constituents of Concern (COCs) under the TRRP. The APAR provides notification to the TCEQ of the intent to respond to a release. The purpose of the APAR is to document all relevant affected property information to identify all release sources and COCs, determine the extent of all COCs, identify

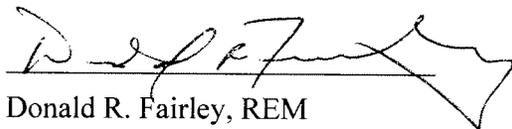
all transport/exposure pathways, and to determine if any response actions are necessary.

4. In the event that archeological deposits, including any Native American pottery, stone tools, bones, or human remains, are uncovered, the project shall be halted. The applicant shall stop all work immediately in the vicinity of the discovery and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. All archeological findings will be secured and access to the sensitive area restricted. The applicant will inform FEMA immediately and FEMA will consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) and Tribes and work in sensitive areas cannot resume until consultation is completed and appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the project is in compliance with the NHPA.

### CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the EA, coordination with the appropriate agencies, comments from the public, and adherence to the project conditions set forth in this FONSI, FEMA has determined that the proposed project qualifies as a major Federal action that will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment, nor does it have the potential for significant cumulative effects. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.9) and the proposed project as described in the attached EA may proceed.

### APPROVAL



Donald R. Fairley, REM  
Regional Environmental Officer  
FEMA Region VI

Date 2/28/2008



William Peterson  
Regional Administrator  
FEMA Region VI

Date 02/28/2008