

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

PROPOSED COMMAND AND CONTROL CENTER
AND
MAIN GATE ENTRANCE PROJECT



Lake Charles Harbor & Terminal District
(Port of Lake Charles)

Calcasieu Parish
Louisiana

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Lake Charles Harbor & Terminal District, also known as the Port of Lake Charles, has received Grant Award Number 2008-GB-T8-K002 LC – IJ 5 for the construction of a new Command and Control Center (CCC) and Grant Award Number 2009PUR10407 for the reconfiguration of the main entrance gate to the Port (the “City Docks Main Gate Entrance Project”). The Port has designed a single project that incorporates the two facilities. This Environmental Assessment (EA) examines the combined project.

The Port of Lake Charles encompasses 203 square miles along the Calcasieu River Waterway in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The Port of Lake Charles is the 12th largest seaport in the U.S. based on tonnage. In terms of energy importance, the Port is the second largest Strategic Petroleum Reserve facility in the U.S. (219 million barrels of oil or 33 percent of the U.S. total). Approximately 7.5 percent of U.S. oil consumption is supplied by producers on the Calcasieu River Waterway. The Port is a vital element of the U.S. energy infrastructure. The Calcasieu River Waterway is a Strategic Energy Waterway

Because of the national and regional importance of the Port of Lake Charles and the Calcasieu River Waterway, security of facilities is of paramount importance. Liquefied natural gas (LNG) vessels and facilities have been recognized as potential terrorist targets. Currently, the Marine Domain Awareness system monitored by the Harbor Police Department is being upgraded to more effectively monitor the Calcasieu River Waterway. If the I-10 Calcasieu River Bridge, the I-210 Calcasieu River Bridge, Port of Lake Charles, Calcasieu River Waterway, or the rail system feeding the Port were destroyed or heavily damaged, the result would be a crippling effect on interstate commerce and international trade. The economic viability of the region and the nation would be adversely affected if the waterway were crippled and vessels could not move.

The grants for the construction of a new CCC and for the reconfiguration of the main entrance gate to the Port’s City Docks would enhance security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway. The CCC would consolidate security assets, and it is planned to be continuously staffed to allow vessels to be tracked from the Gulf of Mexico to their destination point and to allow anomalies to be quickly addressed through the HPD and other enforcement agencies. The Main Gate Entrance would enable the Port

to more efficiently and effectively comply with the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program for persons and vehicles entering City Docks. Additionally, the Main Gate Entrance would provide barriers to prevent a vehicle from driving through the gates without stopping. The Customs and Border Protection radiation portal located at City Docks would be relocated to the Main Gate Entrance site to facilitate their examination of cargo exiting the Port of Lake Charles.

The Proposed Action is to construct the Command and Control Center and reconfigure the Main Gate Entrance to consolidate and improve security operations as well as improve transportation into and out of the Port. The alternative to the Proposed Action is the No Action Alternative, whereby the security facilities at the Port would remain unchanged and less prepared for terrorist threats.

This EA has been prepared to assess the potential environmental effects of the proposed action on resources in the area, including geology and soils; air and water quality; wetlands; floodplains; biological, cultural, and socioeconomic resources; and hazardous substances. Analyses in the EA show that implementation of the proposed actions would not result in significant adverse environmental effects. Potential short-term effects resulting from construction activities would be mitigated by requirements for a Louisiana Pollution Discharge Elimination System stormwater discharge for the construction area and the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize noise, erosion at unvegetated areas, and the introduction of suspended solids to receiving waters.

Issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate and an Environmental Impact Statement is not required prior to implementation of the proposed action.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	vii
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED	4
2.1 Command and Control Center	4
2.2 Main Gate Entrance	5
3.0 ALTERNATIVES	7
3.1 No Action Alternative	7
3.2 Proposed Action	7
3.3 Considerations	7
3.4 Additional Alternatives Considered.....	7
3.4.1 Main Gate Entrance Locations	7
3.4.2 Command and Control Center Alternatives.....	9
3.4.2.1 Alternative Locations	9
3.4.2.2 Expansion of Existing Facilities	9
4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS	10
4.1 Physical Resources	10
4.1.1 Geology and Soils	10
4.1.1.1 No-Action Alternative	10
4.1.1.2 Proposed Action	11
4.1.2 Air Quality	11
4.1.2.1 No Action Alternative	12
4.1.2.2 Proposed Action	12
4.2 Water Resources	12
4.2.1 Water Quality	12
4.2.1.1 No-Action Alternative	13
4.2.1.2 Proposed Action	13
4.2.2 Wetlands.....	13
4.2.2.1 No-Action Alternative	14
4.2.2.2 Proposed Action	14
4.2.3 Floodplains	14
4.2.3.1 No-Action Alternative	14
4.2.3.2 Proposed Action	17
4.3 Coastal Resources	17
4.3.1 No-Action Alternative	17
4.3.2 Proposed Action	17
4.4 Biological Resources.....	17
4.4.1 Vegetation	17
4.4.1.1 No-Action Alternative	18

4.4.1.2	Proposed Action	18
4.4.2	Wildlife	18
4.4.2.1	No-Action Alternative	18
4.4.2.2	Proposed Action	18
4.4.3	Threatened and Endangered Species	18
4.4.3.1	No-Action Alternative	19
4.4.3.2	Proposed Action	19
4.5	Cultural Resources	19
4.5.1	No-Action Alternative	19
4.5.2	Proposed Action	19
4.6	Socioeconomic Resources	20
4.6.1	Demographics	20
4.6.1.1	No-Action Alternative	20
4.6.1.2	Proposed Action	20
4.6.2	Environmental Justice	20
4.6.2.1	No-Action Alternative	20
4.6.2.2	Proposed Action	20
4.6.3	Noise	21
4.6.3.1	No-Action Alternative	21
4.6.3.2	Proposed Action	22
4.6.4	Transportation	22
4.6.4.1	No-Action Alternative	23
4.6.4.2	Proposed Action	23
4.6.5	Public Services and Utilities	23
4.6.5.1	No-Action Alternative	23
4.6.5.2	Proposed Action	23
4.6.6	Economic Resources	24
4.6.6.1	No-Action Alternative	25
4.6.6.2	Proposed Action	26
4.6.7	Public Health and Safety	26
4.6.7.1	No-Action Alternative	26
4.6.7.2	Proposed Action	26
4.7	Hazardous Materials	26
4.7.1	No-Action Alternative	27
4.7.2	Proposed Action	29
4.8	Cumulative Impacts	29
4.9	Summary Table	30
5.0	AGENCY COORDINATION, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND PERMITS	31
5.1	Agency Coordination	31
5.2	Public Coordination	31
6.0	MITIGATION MEASURES	32
6.1	Permits	32

6.2	Best Management Practices	32
6.2.1	Soil Disturbance	32
6.2.2	Noise.....	32
6.3	Avoidance/Minimization Measures.....	33
6.3.1	Hazardous Materials.....	33
6.3.2	Cultural Resources	33
7.0	CONCLUSIONS	34
8.0	LIST OF PREPARERS	35

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Summary of Louisiana Water Quality Management Plan, Calcasieu River (2004)	12
Table 2.	State and Federal Threatened and Endangered Species in Calcasieu Parish	18
Table 3.	Summary of Waterborne Commodity Tons Handled at Port of Lake Charles, 1995 – 2004.....	24
Table 4.	Summary of Environmental Impacts of Proposed Action	30

LST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Project Overview	3
Figure 2.	Proposed Project.....	8
Figure 3.	Ground-level Photograph, View toward North	15
Figure 4.	Ground-level Photograph, View toward South	15
Figure 5.	Flood Zone Map	16
Figure 6.	Comparison of Foreign Imports for Petroleum and Petroleum Products Traveling on the Calcasieu River	25
Figure 7.	Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) at the Port of lake Charles.	28

APPENDIX A. PUBLIC/AGENCY COORDINATION

Coordination Requests Submitted to Resource Agencies	A-1
Coordination Received from Resource Agencies	A-10

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AQCR	Air Quality Control Region
CCC	Command and Control Center
CCTV	Closed-Circuit Television
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CWA	Clean Water Act
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
CZMP	Coastal Zone management Program
dB	Decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibel scale
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impacts Statement
EO	Executive Order
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
GIWW	Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
HPD	Harbor Police Department
HTRW	Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste
HUD	U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
ICC	Intracoastal Canal
LDEQ	Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
LDNR	Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
LDWF	Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
LNHP	Louisiana Natural Heritage Program
LPDES	Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
PAH	Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons
PCB	Polychlorinated biphenyls
PoLC	Port of Lake Charles
PSGP	Port Security Grant Program
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
REC	Recognized Environmental Condition
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Officer
TWIC	Transportation Worker Identification Credential
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USEPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Through the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Lake Charles Harbor & Terminal District, also known as the Port of Lake Charles (PoLC), has received Grant Award Number 2008-GB-T8-K002 LC – IJ 5 for the construction of a new Command and Control Center (CCC) and Grant Award Number 2009PUR10407 for the reconfiguration of the main entrance gate to the Port (the “City Docks Main Gate Entrance Project”). The Port has designed a single project that incorporates the two facilities. This Environmental Assessment (EA) examines the combined project. The proposed actions are intended to enhance security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway.

The Port of Lake Charles encompasses 203 square miles along the Calcasieu River Waterway in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The Port of Lake Charles is the 12th largest seaport in the U.S. based on tonnage. In terms of energy importance, the Port is the second largest Strategic Petroleum Reserve facility in the U.S. (219 million barrels of oil or 33 percent of the U.S. total). Approximately 7.5 percent of U.S. oil consumption is supplied by producers on the Calcasieu River Waterway. The Port is a vital element of the U.S. energy infrastructure. The Calcasieu River Waterway is a Strategic Energy Waterway.

Refineries and manufacturers within the Port District and located on the Calcasieu River Waterway include:

- CITGO
- Conoco/Phillips
- PPG Industries
- Westlake Petrochemicals
- Trunkline LNG
- Sempra LNG

Because of the national and regional importance of the Port of Lake Charles and the Calcasieu River Waterway, securing its facilities is of paramount importance. Liquefied natural Gas (LNG) vessels and facilities have been recognized as potential terrorist targets. Other industries vital to the U.S. (refineries, chemicals, rubber) are dependent on the vessels that traverse the Calcasieu River Waterway for their raw products (e.g. crude oil). Disruption of the waterway has been shown to have an adverse effect on the overall U.S. economy, as shown by a nine-day closure of the channel in 2006 that resulted in a \$710 million cost to U.S. gasoline consumers and \$313 million to natural gas consumers for a total burden of over \$1 billion to the nation. Further, the Calcasieu River Waterway intersects with the Intracoastal Canal (ICC). The economic viability of the region and the nation would be adversely affected if these two waterways were crippled and vessels could not move.

This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the President’s Council on Environmental Quality regulations to implement NEPA (Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 1500-1508), and FEMA’s regulations implementing NEPA (44 CFR Part 10). FEMA is required to consider potential environmental impacts before funding or approving actions and projects. The

purpose of this EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. FEMA will use the findings in this EA to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

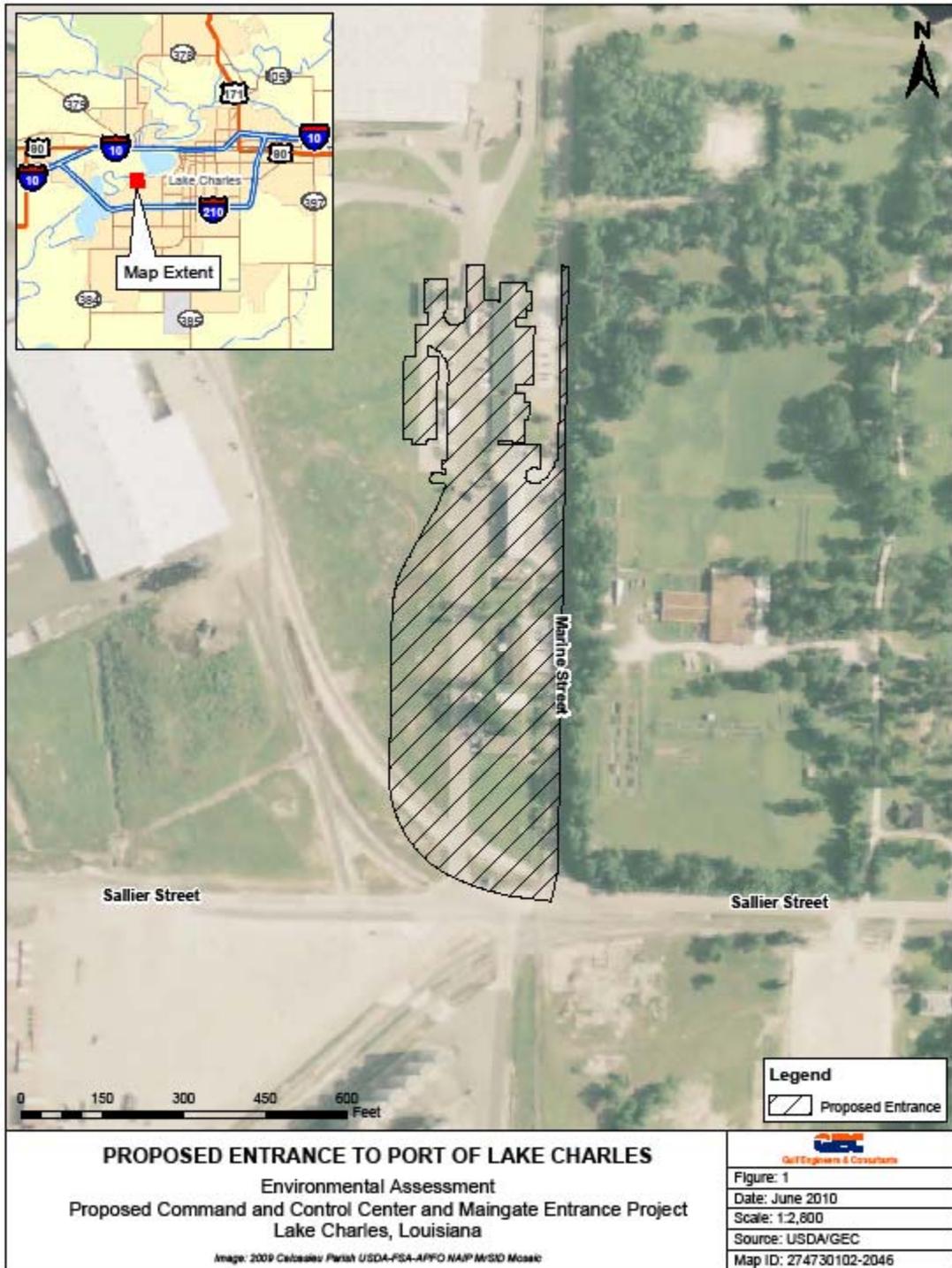


Figure 1. Project Overview

2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The objective of the project is to enhance security at the Port of Lake Charles. The CCC would improve security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway by providing an expanded, centralized, and improved facility for adequately housing security equipment and personnel, control access into the facility, and increase entry and exit efficiencies.

The City Docks Main Gate Entrance would reduce security vulnerabilities. According to the Maritime Security Risk Analysis Model, implementing the Main Gate Entrance is anticipated to enhance safety and security at the entrance to the City Docks.

2.1 Command and Control Center

A Port Vulnerability Assessment revealed that the Port was well prepared for some natural disasters but not for potential terrorist threats to its facilities and tenants. As a result, a 2004 grant provided the assets for closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs), radar, detection, and other capabilities currently in existence. Obtaining these assets allowed the Port to address and improve upon its shortcomings related to potential terrorist threats identified in the Vulnerability Assessment.

However, the 2004 grant did not include funding for a structure to house the monitors and computer systems required for the most effective management of the system. The system is currently located in a facility that is neither consistently manned nor conducive to the optimal maintenance of electronic equipment (for example, excessive dust and humidity). In 2005, Hurricane Rita struck the Port of Lake Charles and extensive damage occurred to the exterior assets, including security cameras and radar equipment. Currently, the Port is in the process of replacing the damaged equipment and enhancing the overall system through a \$3.2 million 2006 grant for computer systems and related software, monitors, alarm systems, and communication capabilities for improving Port security. An improved facility is needed to protect the state-of-the-art equipment from damage.

The Harbor Police Department (HPD) partners with the U.S. Coast Guard in providing waterside security to City Docks, BT-1, and the 34-mile Calcasieu River Waterway as well as coordinating with the Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Office Marine Division in securing the waterside and channel. HPD and contract security officers utilize a Maritime Domain Awareness system made up of radar, CCTV, perimeter alarms and monitors strategically placed around and along the Port's facilities and the Calcasieu River Waterway from the Gulf of Mexico inland to the Port of Lake Charles. Currently, the Maritime Domain Awareness monitored by the HPD does not provide sufficient coverage to effectively monitor the intersection of the Calcasieu River Waterway and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). Additionally, the system is not monitored to immediately identify security alarms on the Calcasieu River Waterway or at the Port of Lake Charles.

Through monitoring of the various assets mentioned above at a central facility, security would be enhanced by improving the capability of HPD officers to share information and collaborate with users of the waterway as well as with governmental entities and emergency responders with an interest in the waterway. With continuous monitoring, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive weapons detection could be

accomplished during 'real time' and response capabilities would be enhanced by providing 'real time' information to the responders.

The ability of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to have access to 'real time' events is of paramount importance for the Incident Commander if NIMS were activated. However, the current Maritime Domain Awareness assets in place are housed in the HPD's office located at the main entrance to the Port's City Docks.

A facility for housing computerized security assets and providing work-efficient space for staffing security personnel would enhance security capabilities. The proposed CCC would provide the opportunity to enhance security capabilities and become an integral part of the HPD's duties to maintain the security and safety of the Calcasieu River Waterway from the Gulf of Mexico to Lake Charles. The CCC would bring all of the assets (radar, CCTV, perimeter alarms, thermal cameras) to one specific location that would be integrated into the Maritime Domain Awareness assets. Input from assets such as radars, detection devices, vessel anomaly alerts, and cameras would be displayed on large screens in the CCC to provide instant, live displays of potential anomalies. Additionally, the assets obtained under the 2006 grant would be installed to enhance the existing software. Personnel would have 'real time' access to the facilities on the Calcasieu River Waterway. Vessels would be tracked by CCC personnel from the Gulf of Mexico to their destination point and any anomalies could be instantly addressed through the HPD, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), the Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Office, or other authority. Additionally, capabilities would exist to provide 'feeds' to other agencies to allow them 'real time' information if and when they respond to a request for assistance. The placement of additional radar and CCTV assets in Cameron, Louisiana, could provide feed to Cameron authorities allowing them to monitor their ferry operations. The CCC would provide space for law enforcement, the U.S. Coast Guard, other federal agencies, and Office of Emergency Preparedness personnel.

The CCC would enhance security for facilities operated by the Port of Lake Charles, CITGO Refinery, Conoco/Phillips Refinery, Trunkline LNG, PPG Industries, Venco, Harrah's Isle of Capri, L'Auberge du Lac Casinos, and Firestone. Authorized personnel at those facilities would be allowed to access feed from the CCC for events particular to their site.

Without the CCC, enhancement would not be realized and existing conditions would continue. As additional vessels (e.g. LNG facilities, crude oil tankers, and cargo) utilize the waterway, the potential for security risks would increase, and the ability to mitigate those risks would decrease.

2.2 Main Gate Entrance

On April 14, 2009, the Port of Lake Charles was mandated to begin requiring a Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) for all persons entering the Port's City Docks or, in lieu of the TWIC, to be escorted by an authorized TWIC escort. The TWIC requisite required the placement of a truck processing center for all trucks entering City Docks whose drivers did not possess a TWIC. This processing center is currently located off site from City Docks and requires the escort to travel from City Docks to the processing center where the truck driver being escorted is met and then escorted back to City Docks. The route from the processing center to the main entrance to City Docks

prevents the escort, truck and driver from being under constant surveillance by Harbor Police or contract security personnel. Additionally, the parking area for the trucks at the truck processing center is located at a non-secure, non-restricted area that is not under constant surveillance.

The Main Gate Entrance would improve the Port's capability to meet the requirements of TWIC and ensure compliance before people or vehicles are allowed to enter City Docks. It would combine the truck processing center with a center for directing passenger vehicles whose drivers and occupants do not possess a TWIC to a central point of entry. This would allow the HPD to move quickly and efficiently to access databases to verify TWIC validity. Currently, validity of a TWIC must occur either through the telephone or police radio to an authorized HPD officer who then must travel to the secure site to access a computer to determine if a TWIC is valid. The proposed project would improve the processing of all persons entering the City Docks.

The Main Gate Entrance would enhance the Maritime Domain Awareness through the placement of CCTV that would be monitored by the HPD on a continuous basis. Additionally, the project would enhance the ability of security personnel to have constant sight of the vehicle and its occupants at the physical point of entry and would provide a specific area for security personnel to investigate suspicious actions.

Further, the Customs and Border Protection unit's radiation portal located at City Docks would be relocated to the Main Gate Entrance site to facilitate the examination of cargo exiting the Port.

In addition to streamlined and enhanced security, the new main gate facility would also serve to improve the current entry practices and reduce traffic on public roads. The new main gate facility would provide a truck parking/queuing area on-site and three entrance lanes through the main gate. Currently, there are only two entry lanes at the existing main gate that periodically causes vehicles to wait on the public road for access. During times of heavy traffic, a smaller queuing area is utilized that is located offsite with the TWIC Escort Parking Area. This area is out of visual contact from the main entrance and security area.

3.0 ALTERNATIVES

3.1 No Action Alternative

Evaluation of the No-Action Alternative, also known as the future-without-project condition, is a requirement of the NEPA regulations (40 CFR Part 1500 *et seq.*).

The No-Action Alternative assumes that neither the construction of the CCC nor the Main Gate Entrance would be implemented. The No Action Alternative would retain the current inefficiency for access and egress to the Port, which causes significant delays. The No Action Alternative would not provide for the centralized housing of computerized security assets, and the entrance gate would remain vulnerable to terrorist activities.

3.2 Proposed Action

The Port of Lake Charles proposes to enhance security by constructing a CCC and reconfiguring the Main Gate Entrance. The CCC would be located along Marine Street within the confines of the Port property and within city limits of Lake Charles. In addition, the main entrance to the City Docks would be reconfigured. The proposed project action would include the use of utilities currently servicing the Port; no new utility lines would be required. Figure 1 shows the location of the proposed action; Figure 2 provides a detailed view of the proposed action.

3.3 Considerations

Considerations for additional alternatives were influenced by several factors and constraints.

1. There are two actions, the CCC and the Main Gate Entrance, that are being considered.
2. While there may be some flexibility in the selection of a location for the CCC within the confines of the Port of Lake Charles, logic, efficiency, and functionality require it to be in close proximity to the Main Gate. The location for the Main Gate Entrance would be restricted to the entrance of the Port.
3. It is in the interest of the federal government and the Port of Lake Charles to enhance security at port facilities and the Calcasieu River Waterway.
4. It is in the interest of the federal government and the Port of Lake Charles to enhance security facilities in the most cost-effective means while constrained by the funds provided through the Port Security Grant Program.

3.4 Additional Alternatives Considered

3.4.1 Main Gate Entrance Alternative Locations

A reconfiguration of the entrance to the Port with the construction of combined ancillary facilities is desirable to enhance security and traffic flow in and out of the Port, as stated

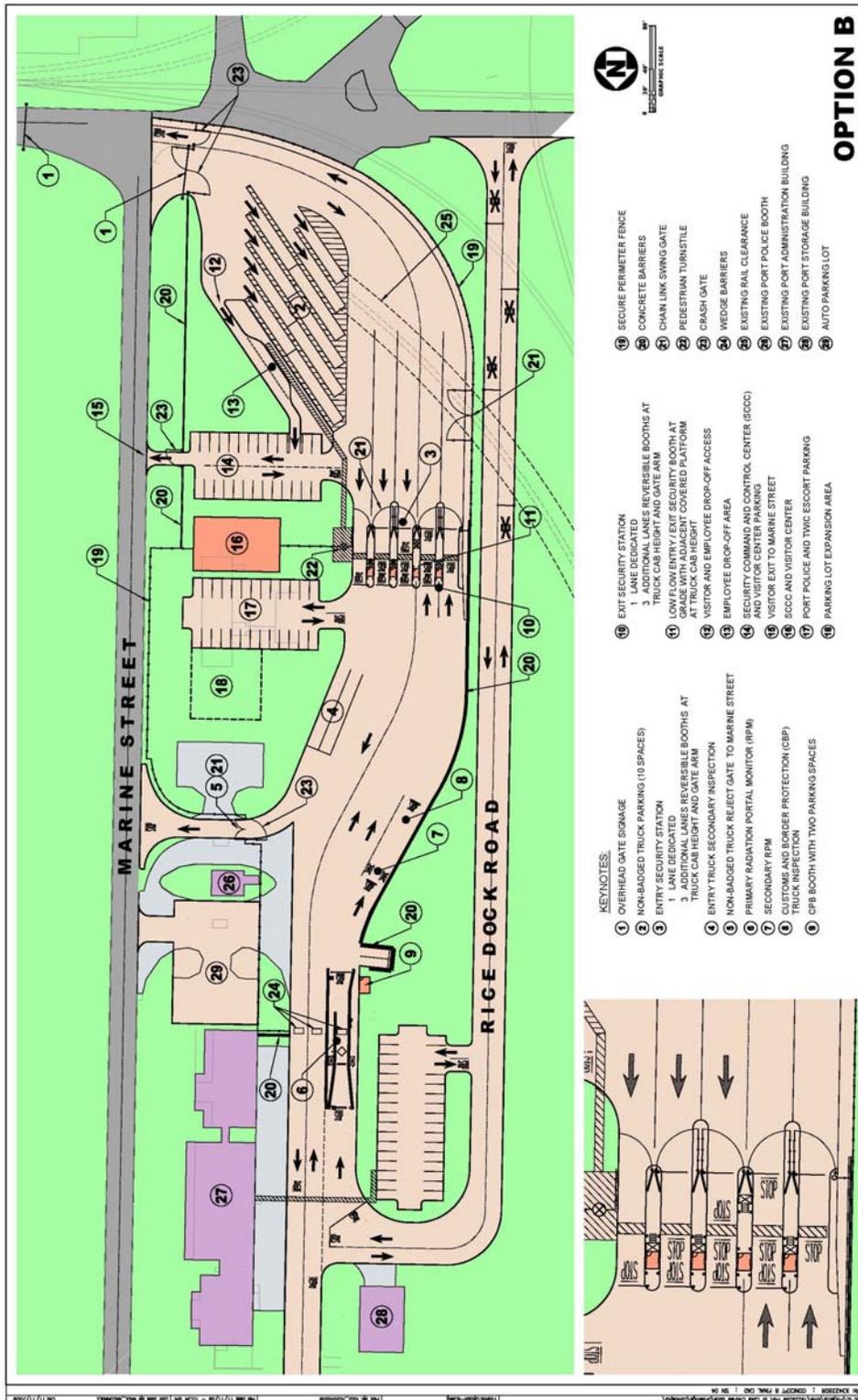


Figure 2. Proposed Project

in Section 2.2. The entrance to the Port is Sallier Street. While it may be theoretically possible to relocate the entrance rather than building a new facility, such relocation would be expensive, disruptive to residential areas, and offer no benefits over the existing entrance. Changing the location of the main gate would require the construction of an additional access road and the acquisition of residential properties, the cost of which would be considerable. Further, a new access road would create disruptions within residential neighborhoods, not only during construction, but also during operations. A relocation of the main gate was deemed neither feasible nor reasonable and was dismissed from further consideration.

The Main Gate Entrance shown in Figure 2 represents a conceptual design that meets the objectives of enhanced security. While there may be some minor adjustments to the design, they would lie within the project area depicted in Figures 1 and 2.

It is concluded that there is no reasonable alternative to the Main Gate Entrance as described in the Proposed Action.

3.4.2 Command and Control Center Alternatives

3.4.2.1 Alternative Locations

Consideration was given to the placement of the CCC at locations other than the location in Figure 2.

The current decentralization of security facilities shows that efficiency is compromised when facilities are dispersed. Locating the CCC near the Main Gate Entrance would consolidate the two security facilities within a common area, provide the greatest benefit to security command and control, and be preferable to having related functions at two or more areas at the Port. Constructing the CCC at another location does not enhance Port security by consolidating security as was proposed in the successful FEMA Security Grant proposal.

Placemen of the CCC at a location other than near the main gate was considered not to be a reasonable solution and was dismissed from further consideration.

3.4.2.2 Expansion of Existing Facilities

Consideration was given to expanding the existing administrative facilities near the main gate to house the CCC. This was determined not to be a practical solution because costs associated with modifying and expanding the existing building would be greater than the cost of constructing a stand-alone CCC. Because it would result in higher costs with no associated benefits, expanding existing facilities to house a CCC was considered not to be reasonable or feasible, and was dismissed from further consideration.

It is concluded that there is no reasonable alternative to the construction of the CCC as described in the Proposed Action.

4.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS

4.1 Physical Resources

4.1.1 Geology and Soils

Geology. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) places the project area within the Atlantic Plain -physiographic geological province and within the Western Gulf Coastal Plain physiographic section. The area is generally flat and at an elevation of approximately 10 feet above sea level. Surface sediments within the project site and the surrounding area are primarily comprised of river alluvium deposited by the Calcasieu River. No significant naturally occurring geomorphologic features are present, and artificial levees comprised of dredge material and riprap are the only significant topographic features within the project area. The surface is underlain by approximately 34,000 feet of sediment and sedimentary rock that consist almost entirely of sandstone, siltstone, and claystone. These sediments record the outward progression of the Gulf Coastal Plain over time as a result of natural erosion and sedimentation processes.

Soils. The Farmland Protection Policy Act (P.L. 97-98, §1539-1549; 7 U.S. Code 4201, *et seq.*) (FPPA) provides that federal actions minimize any unnecessary conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is responsible for protecting significant agricultural lands from irreversible conversions that result in the loss of an essential food or environmental resource. Of particular concern are prime farmland soils. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines prime farmland as land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses but is not urban, built-up land, or water areas. Unique farmland is land, other than prime farmland, that is used for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops. It has the special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high quality or high yields of specific crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.

The soil type located at the project site is of the Mowata-Vidrine silt loam series, which consists of poorly drained, very slowly permeable soils on broad flats and along drainageways. This component occurs on flats, with slopes of 0 to 1 percent. The available water to a depth of 60 inches below the ground surface is very high, and the shrink-swell potential is high. This soil is not flooded or ponded. A seasonal zone of water saturation is at 12 inches from January through April and December.

The Mowata-Vidrine series meets the hydric soil criterion for classification of the site as a wetland (USDA 2008, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [USACE], 1987) and is classified as a prime farmland soil. However, the NRCS has advised that because the proposed action is within an urban area, the proposed action is “exempt from the rules and regulations of...FPPA” (Appendix A).

4.1.1.1 No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would not affect the geology or soils of the project area

4.1.1.2 Proposed Action

Because the proposed action involves only the movement of surface soil, no effect on the overall geology of the area would occur.

Effects on soils would involve their movement and relocation in conjunction with construction. Appropriate erosion control best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented during construction to minimize adverse effects of construction. These may include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Minimize disturbed areas and protect natural features and soil
- Phase construction activity to limit the area of disturbance
- Stabilize soils promptly
- Protect storm drains
- Protect drainage ditches
- Establish perimeter controls
- Retain sediment on-site and control dewatering practices
- Establish stabilized construction exits
- Inspect and maintain construction site
- Establish properly maintained building material storage sites and waste areas

4.1.2 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act Amendment of 1990 directed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for all regulated air pollutants. Federal air quality standards have been established for six criteria air pollutants:

- Carbon monoxide;
- Nitrogen dioxide;
- Ozone;
- Sulfur oxides (commonly measured as sulfur dioxide);
- Lead;
- Particulate matter no greater than 2.5 micrometers (μm) in diameter; and
- Particulate matter no greater than 10 μm in diameter.

The USEPA classifies air quality by Air Quality Control Region (AQCR) defined in the Clean Air Act as a contiguous area where air quality, and thus air pollution, is relatively uniform. An AQCR or portion of an AQCR may be classified as in attainment, nonattainment, or unclassified. A classification of "attainment" indicates that criteria air pollutants within the region are within NAAQS values; a "nonattainment" classification indicates that air pollution levels persistently exceed the NAAQS values; and a classification of "unclassified" indicates that air quality within the region cannot be classified (generally due to lack of data). Calcasieu Parish is currently in attainment for all six criteria air pollutants. .

According to the USEPA's AirData database, which provides annual summaries of air quality for counties, air quality in the project area is generally good, with occasional periods when air quality is classified as unhealthy for sensitive groups due to elevated

levels of ozone or particulate matter of 2.5 µm or less. However, the air quality is within NAAQS limits for these parameters.

4.1.2.1 No Action Alternative

If the proposed action is not implemented, no effect on air quality would occur.

4.1.2.2 Proposed Action

The operation of heavy equipment during construction would produce engine emissions. If dry weather conditions are experienced during construction, there is the potential for soil disturbances to create blowing dust. Best management practices would be implemented during construction: engine emissions would be minimized by maintaining the emission control systems of the equipment in good working order; dust would be minimized through the spraying of water on exposed soil.

These effects, however, would be largely restricted to the construction site and of short duration. Effects on regional air quality would be negligible. Once construction has been completed and exposed soil is revegetated, localized effects on air quality would be resolved.

4.2 Water Resources

4.2.1 Water Quality

The Clean Water Act (CWA) of 1977 established a process for each state to monitor and report on its surface and groundwater quality. Requirements for this process are found in Section 305(b) of the CWA. The Section 305(b) Water Quality Report (2004) prepared by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) summarizes the monitoring data that characterizes the quality of waters in the Calcasieu River Waterway (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of Louisiana Water Quality Management Plan, Calcasieu River (2004)

LDEQ Subsegment Number	Subsegment Description	Type	PCR	SCR	FWP	Suspected Causes of Impairment	Suspected Sources of Impairment
LA030301_00	Calcasieu River and Ship Channel-Saltwater Barrier to Moss Lake	R	F	F	N	Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs) ; Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)	Industrial Point Source Discharge

Abbreviations PCR-Primary Contact Recreation; SCR-Secondary Contact Recreation; FWP-Fish & Wildlife Propagation; R-River; F-fully supported; N-not supported

Section 303(d) of the CWA requires states to identify and list waterbody segments where water quality standards are not met and designated uses are not fully supported. These impairments typically affect waters designated for secondary contact recreation and aquatic life support. The waters near the project area fully support primary and secondary contact recreation, while aquatic life is not supported in others. Waterbody impairments, causes, and effects include:

- a. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs): a group of organic contaminants that are a byproduct of incomplete burning of hydrocarbons in industrial processes. The introduction of PAHs to the Calcasieu River Waterway is attributed to point source discharges from numerous industrial facilities in the area. PAHs can build up in the tissue of local fish through bioaccumulation, which can then be transferred through their consumption to humans or other aquatic life.
- b. Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs): man-made chemicals of varying toxicity, with some being considered carcinogenic. Their introduction to the Calcasieu River Waterway is also attributed to point source discharges from industrial facilities in the area. PCBs commonly bioaccumulate in various fish species, which are then consumed by humans or other aquatic life, causing further contamination.

LDEQ has also collected ambient water quality data for the Calcasieu River Waterway for common field parameters, including pH, temperature and dissolved oxygen, along with specific categories of constituents regulated by the USEPA. These results indicate general compliance with water quality criteria, with the exception of copper and zinc, which were occasionally shown to be in concentrations in excess of applicable criteria.

4.2.1.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative will have no impact on water quality.

4.2.1.2 Proposed Action

The site of the proposed action is approximately 1,000 feet from the Calcasieu River. Drainage from the site would enter the municipal drainage system along Marine Street prior to its discharge into the Calcasieu River. During construction, exposed soil could be transported as suspended solids to and through the drainage system during rainfall events, and turbidity levels in receiving waters could be elevated at the point of discharge. Following construction, exposed soil would be minimized and the likelihood for the introduction of suspended solids would be reduced.

For the construction contractor to comply with the CWA and the Louisiana Environmental Quality Act, as amended (L.R.S. 30:2001 et seq.), a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) General Permit is required. This permit authorizes the construction contractor to discharge storm water from the construction site to waters of the State. Per LAR 1000000 Part II, the contractor is required to send a Notice of Intent before construction begins. A site-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan must be prepared, implemented, and maintained before and during construction. A Notice of Termination must be submitted to LDEQ at the completion of construction.

4.2.2 Wetlands

Executive Order No. 11990, Protection of Wetlands, issued May 24, 1977, directs federal agencies "to avoid to the extent possible the long and short term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands and to avoid direct or indirect

support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative.” Wetlands are semiaquatic lands, flooded or saturated by water for varying periods of time. For an area to be delineated as a wetland, it must exhibit appropriate hydrology, contain hydric soils, and support hydrophytic vegetation (USACE 1987).

Wetlands restore and maintain water quality by removing and retaining nutrients contained in stormwater runoff that would otherwise flow directly into the water column. These ecosystems provide critical habitat for a diversity of plants and animals, including fish, shellfish, waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, songbirds, and mammals. Wetlands provide flood control by retaining water that would otherwise flood nearby residential and agricultural areas.

The site of the proposed action has been part of the Port of Lake Charles since 1925, and the surface has likely been disturbed numerous times. The property is cleared and the vegetation is primarily turf grasses that are regularly mowed. A few trees are present. (Figures 3 to 4). The soil type is mapped by NRCS as the Mowata-Vidrine complex, which is a hydric soil in Calcasieu Parish. However, an absence of hydrophytic vegetation and hydrology indicators provides that the location of the proposed action is not a wetland. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Wetland Online Mapper does not show wetlands in the project area. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers(USACE) provided confirmation that no wetlands exist at the site Appendix A).

4.2.2.1 No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative will not affect on wetlands.

4.2.2.2 Proposed Action

No wetlands are apparent at the site of the proposed action. The Proposed Action would not affect wetlands.

4.2.3 Floodplains

According to the Flood Insurance Rate Map produced by FEMA (Map No, 2200400010E, Figure 5), the subject property location is within FEMA Flood Zone X. Flood Zone X is used to identify areas that:

- Are outside the 1% annual chance floodplain;
- Have a 1% annual chance sheet flow flooding where average depths are less than one foot;
- Have 1% annual chance of stream flooding where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile; or
- Are protected from the 1% annual chance flood by levees.

No base flood elevations or depths are given for areas within this zone. Insurance purchase is not required for properties within Zone X.

4.2.3.1 No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative will have no impact on floodplain management in the area.



Figure 3. Ground-level Photograph, View toward North. Port of Lake Charles Command and Control Center would be located north of the building on the right and approximately center of the roadway.



Figure 4. Ground-level Photograph, View toward South. Port of Lake Charles Command and Control Center would be located at the shaded area of the photograph.

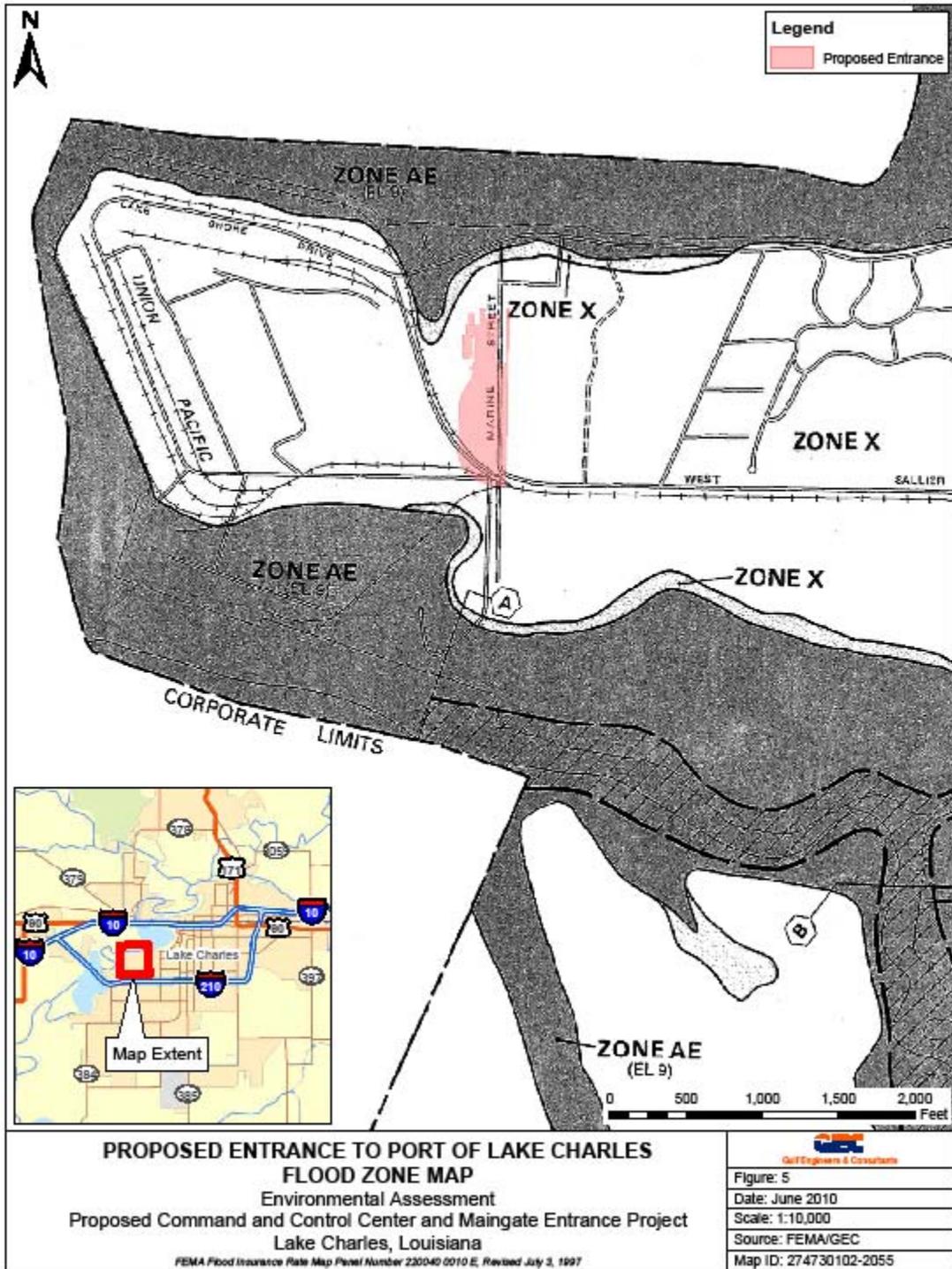


Figure 5. Floodplain Map

4.2.3.2 Proposed Action

The site of the Proposed Action is not within a designated 100-year floodplain (greater than 1% chance of flooding). Consequently, implementation of the Proposed Action is in compliance with FEMA Executive Order 11988: Floodplain Management. The Proposed Action would not adversely affect a designated floodplain.

4.3 Coastal Resources

The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 authorizes the Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP), which is a federal-state partnership dedicated to comprehensive management of the nation's coastal resources. By making federal funds available, the law encourages states to preserve, protect and, where possible, restore or enhance valuable natural coastal resources, such as wetlands, floodplains, estuaries, beaches, dunes, barrier islands, and coral reefs, as well as the fish and wildlife using those habitats. Any federal or state agency whose activities directly affect the coastal zone must, to the maximum extent practicable, be consistent with approved state management programs.

The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) supervises CZMA activities within the Louisiana Coastal Zone. Although the Louisiana Coastal Zone is present in the southern portion of Calcasieu Parish that includes the northern end of Calcasieu Lake, the Coastal Zone does not extend as far north as Lake Charles. The project site is not located within the Louisiana Coastal Zone.

4.3.1 No-Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would have no effect on coastal resources.

4.3.2 Proposed Action

The Proposed Action would have no effect on coastal resources.

4.4 Biological Resources

The Port of Lake Charles is located within the ecosystem identified by the USFWS as the Lower Mississippi River Ecosystem. The LDWF places the project area within the state's Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion. This ecoregion serves as the primary wintering habitat for mid-continent waterfowl populations, as well as breeding and migration habitat for migratory songbirds returning from Central and South America, and also provides habitat for numerous resident wildlife species.

4.4.1 Vegetation

Although located within the Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion, the vegetation in the project area is comprised of vegetated uplands, consisting of mowed turf grasses with some exposed soils (Figures 3-4).

4.4.1.1 No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect vegetation in the project area.

4.4.1.2 Proposed Action

Implementation of the proposed action will require the removal of vegetation within the area of construction.

4.4.2 Wildlife

Common mammals that may be seen in the project area include the Virginia opossum, nine-banded armadillo, raccoon, nutria, and muskrat. Game species include squirrels and rabbits. Reptiles that may be found in the project area include alligators, turtles, lizards, salamanders, snakes, frogs, and rodents. Migratory wildfowl are abundant in the general area. They include several species of ducks and geese that spend the winter on the tidal marshes.

4.4.2.1 No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect wildlife in the project area.

4.4.2.2 Proposed Action

The site of the Proposed Action is a high traffic area and not particularly conducive to many wildlife species. Implementation of the proposed action will require the removal of vegetation within the area of construction. This area of vegetation may be used by some resident wildlife for foraging. However, if the project results in the displacement of those species, there is an abundance of similar habitat surrounding the project area that may be used instead. Wildlife would not be adversely affected by the project.

4.4.3 Threatened and Endangered Species

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program (LNHP) of the LDWF lists threatened and endangered species for each parish in Louisiana. Species listed as threatened or endangered in Calcasieu Parish are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. State and Federal Threatened and Endangered Species in Calcasieu Parish

Scientific Name	Common Name	State Status	Federal Status
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald eagle	Endangered	Delisted
<i>Picoides borealis</i>	Red-cockaded woodpecker	Endangered	Endangered

Source: LDWF, April 2008; USFWS 2010

Note: This list does not include experimental populations.

However, LNHP has reviewed the proposed action (Appendix A) and has concluded, "...no impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species or critical habitats are anticipated for the proposed project."

The USFWS critical habitat mapper indicated that there are no designated critical habitats within Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana (online resource: www.fws.gov, accessed March 22, 2010).

4.4.3.1 No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect threatened or endangered species in the project area.

4.4.3.2 Proposed Action

Implementation of the proposed action will require the removal of vegetation within the area of construction. This area does not contain habitat used by either the bald eagle or red-cockaded woodpecker. FEMA has determined that the project would have no effect on threatened or endangered species.

While the bald eagle has been delisted by the USFWS, it remains protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. FEMA has determined that the proposed action will have no effect on the bald eagle or its habitat.

4.5 Cultural Resources

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) was reviewed to determine if historical or archaeological resources had been identified on the property, or within the immediate vicinity of the property. The NRHP did not identify the subject property or any nearby properties as eligible for listing in the NRHP.

4.5.1 No-Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect cultural, historical, or archeological resources.

4.5.2 Proposed Action

The project area is not known to contain any resources of historic, cultural, or archeological significance; nor have any eligible properties been identified in the immediate area. Correspondence from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) of Louisiana (Appendix A) stated that "no known historic properties will be affected by this undertaking." Consequently, the proposed project would not adversely affect known cultural, historical, or archeological resources.

In the event that archeological deposits are uncovered, the project shall be halted, and the construction contractor will stop work immediately in the vicinity of the discovery and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The construction contractor will inform Port authorities immediately. The Port will inform FEMA, and FEMA will consult with the SHPO.

4.6 Socioeconomic Resources

4.6.1. Demographics

Population Demographics. The population recorded for Calcasieu Parish in the 2000 census was 183,577 residents. The ratio of males to females and the median age of both parishes compare closely with those of U.S. averages, with approximately one percent more females than males and a median age of about 35. Calcasieu Parish includes approximately 11.5 percent more African-Americans and three percent fewer Asians than the national average. The census tract immediately adjacent to the site of the proposed action had 1,557 households in 2000 with a total population of 3,404. The population was approximately 82% white, 15% African American, and 3% other.

Economic Demographics. The median household recorded for Calcasieu Parish in the 2000 census was \$43,596. These income figures are lower than the U.S. median household income of \$44,687 but higher than the median Louisiana household income of \$39,115.

4.6.1.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no impacts on demographics

4.6.1.2 Proposed Action

The proposed action would not affect demographics.

4.6.2 Environmental Justice

An environmental justice analysis, which is intended to “analyze and address the distributional effects of environmental impacts on certain populations,” is included to address the requirements of Executive Order (EO) 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*. The purpose of the EO is to prevent the impacts of an action from falling disproportionately on a minority or low-income community. Disproportionate impacts occur when, in order to minimize or avoid impacts to another community or environmental resource, the impacts are instead focused on the minority or low-income community.

4.6.2.1 No Action Alternative

Because the No Action Alternative would have no effects on communities, no disproportionate effects on minority or low-income communities would occur.

4.6.2.2 Proposed Action

The project site is located within the perimeter of the PoLC City Docks facility and is not accessible to the general public. Therefore, the public would not be affected by such typical construction actions as street closures, traffic delays, etc. Because the site of the proposed action is located approximately 1,200 feet from the nearest community, noise would be attenuated and concentrations of particulate matter (dust) would be sufficiently diluted to the extent that no adverse effects would be expected. Therefore, there would be no adverse effects on nearby communities. The 2000 census showed that no minority

or low income populations are located near the project site. Therefore, there would be no impacts (including disproportionate impacts) on minority or low income communities.

4.6.3 Noise

Noise is defined as unwanted sound and, in the context of protecting public health and welfare, implies potential effects on the human and natural environment. Noise is a significant concern associated with construction, dredging, and transportation activities and projects. Ambient noise levels within a given region may fluctuate over time because of variations in intensity and abundance of noise sources.

The degree of disturbance or annoyance of unwanted sound depends on (1) the amount and nature of intruding noise, (2) the relationship between the background noise and the intruding noise, and (3) the type of activity occurring at the location where the noise is heard. Human response to noise varies from individual to individual and is dependent on the ambient environment in which the noise is perceived. Wind, temperature, and other conditions can change the sound volume perceived at distances from the noise source.

The magnitude of noise is described by its sound pressure. A logarithmic scale is used to relate sound pressure to a common reference level, as the range of sound pressure varies greatly. This is called the decibel (dB) and a weighted decibel scale is often used in environmental noise measurements (weighted-A decibel scale or dBA). This scale emphasizes the frequency range to which the human ear is most susceptible. A 70-dBA sound level can be moderately loud, as in an indoor vacuum cleaner, a 120 dBA can be uncomfortably loud, as in a military jet takeoff at 50 feet, and a 40-dBA sound level can be very quiet and is the lowest limit of urban ambient sound.

Noise is administered under the Noise Control Act of 1972, as amended. The USEPA has also established noise guidelines recommending noise limits for indoor and outdoor noise activities. Under these guidelines, an average noise level over a 24-hour period of 70 A-weighted decibels (dBA) is listed as the threshold for hearing loss. An outdoor 24-hour average sound level of 55 dBA is recommended for residential areas.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has also developed a noise abatement and control policy codified in 24 CFR Part 51. According to HUD policy, noise at or below 65 dBA is acceptable in all situations, noise between 65 and 75 dBA is generally acceptable, and noise exceeding 75 dBA is unacceptable in all situations. Noise monitoring and impacts are typically evaluated by the local government.

The Calcasieu River Waterway includes significant urban and industrial development. Ambient noise in the area is generated by a broad range of sources, both natural and anthropogenic. Natural noise sources include climatic sources, such as wind and precipitation. Potential sources of anthropogenic sound include commercial shipping, dredging and construction activities, industrial activities, and commercial and residential waterborne and highway traffic. No ambient noise monitoring appears to have been conducted in the project area; consequently, no quantitative data on noise levels within the project area are available for analysis.

4.6.3.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would have no effects on noise levels.

4.6.3.2 Proposed Action

The project site is located approximately 1,200 feet from the nearest residential area. Therefore, noise generated by construction activities would become sufficiently attenuated that no adverse effects from excessive noise would be expected. Low levels of noise from construction equipment would be of a relatively short duration. Best management practices to reduce noise produced by heavy equipment during construction include :

- Conduct work during daytime hours;
- Use standard equipment with noise control devices (e.g., mufflers) that meet manufacturers' specifications;
- Use "quiet" equipment (*i.e.*, equipment designed with noise control elements);
- Install portable barriers to shield compressors and other small stationary equipment where necessary;
- Install sound barriers for pile-driving activity, where practicable, by using an acoustic curtain or blanket around the point of impact;
- Direct equipment exhaust stacks and vents away from buildings, when feasible;
- Route truck traffic away from noise-sensitive areas, where feasible;
- Follow a common-sense approach to vehicle use; and encourage workers to shut off vehicle engines whenever possible;
- Limit pick-up trucks and other small equipment to an idling time of five minutes;
- Identify any noise-sensitive receptors, such as residential areas, churches, schools, recreation areas, etc., that might be disturbed by construction noise and notify them in advance of upcoming work; and
- Respond immediately to complaints raised by nearby residents.

Following construction, noise levels would revert to pre-construction levels. The proposed action would not result in increased operations, additional traffic to or from the Port, or commercial activities that would result in increased noise levels that would exceed HUD or USEPA guidelines.

4.6.4 Transportation

Railroads. Rail service in the area is provided by a full-service Amtrak train station and the Union Pacific railroad in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The Amtrak station operates three times weekly between Los Angeles, California, and Orlando, Florida. The Union Pacific railroad transports industrial cargo between Houston and Lake Charles, and it also services the City Docks and Fournet Street terminal of the Port of Lake Charles.

Highways and Roadways. Interstate 10 (I-10) passes through Lake Charles, connecting the city with Sulphur, Vinton, and eventually the Louisiana-Texas state border to the west; to the east lie the towns of Iowa and Jennings and the City of New Orleans. Interstate 210 loops through the southern half of Lake Charles and provides efficient access to the Port of Lake Charles.

Airports. The Lake Charles Regional Airport provides air travel for southwest Louisiana. Air transportation is provided by Continental Airlines, which provides service to their

global hub in Houston, Texas. Lake Charles' Chennault International Airport, while a fully operational airport, is strictly an industrial and maintenance center.

Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). The GIWW is the portion of the Intracoastal Waterway located along the Gulf Coast. It is a navigable inland waterway running approximately 1,050 miles from Carrabelle, Florida, through Louisiana to Brownsville, Texas. The GIWW intersects the Calcasieu River Waterway 12 miles south of the Port's City Docks.

4.6.4.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect existing transportation corridors or services.

4.6.4.2 Proposed Action

The proposed action would not adversely affect transportation corridors or services, rather the improvement in security facilities may enhance the efficiency of security screening associated with truck, rail, or shipping at Port facilities.

The proposed action would not result in an increase in Port security operations; therefore, no changes in traffic patterns by employees or tenants would occur. No increase in commercial operations would result from improved security facilities; therefore, no additional commercial traffic would result.

The Main Gate Entrance would provide parking areas to process trucks and prevent the need to have escorts and trucks on public streets at peak traffic times. This would promote traffic flow on public streets and reduce the potential for traffic congestion. The Proposed action would provide three entry lanes and a truck parking/queuing area on Port property and off the public road. The current main gate provides only two entry lanes with no immediate parking and queuing areas. Thus, the proposed alternative provides overall improvements in public and port transportation.

4.6.5 Public Services and Utilities

The City of Lake Charles provides water and wastewater service. Solid waste disposal service for non-residential structures is not available from the City of Lake Charles and must be obtained through commercial waste disposal companies. Electrical service to the site is provided through Entergy Corporation.

4.6.5.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative will have no effect on public services or utilities.

4.6.5.2 Proposed Action

Existing public services and utilities servicing the PoLC are adequate for handling the requirements of the new facility. The proposed action would not require any changes in existing public services or utilities.

Wastewater discharged from the facilities would not contain contaminants that would affect the treatment of sewage. Drinking water supplies would not be affected. Solid

waste generated during construction would be collected by commercial haulers and disposed primarily in construction and demolition landfills. The collection and disposal of solid waste following completion of construction would have only a negligible effect on collection schedules and sanitary landfill capacity. No effects on electric power would occur.

4.6.6 Economic Resources

Commercial Navigation Industries. The Calcasieu River Waterway supports several large commercial navigation industries that rely on deep-draft and shallow-draft vessels and barges. As of 1990, the USACE had records for 174 commercial piers, wharves, and docks owned by the Port of Lake Charles on the river. Table 3 summarizes a 10-year time series of Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center data for the annual tonnages of major commodity groups reported to be handled at Calcasieu River docks. The typical year records a total of about 50 million tons of cargo handled at Calcasieu River. The major cargo flows are foreign, typically comprising over 50 percent of total annual tons, with domestic receipts and internal shipments each comprising nearly 15 percent.

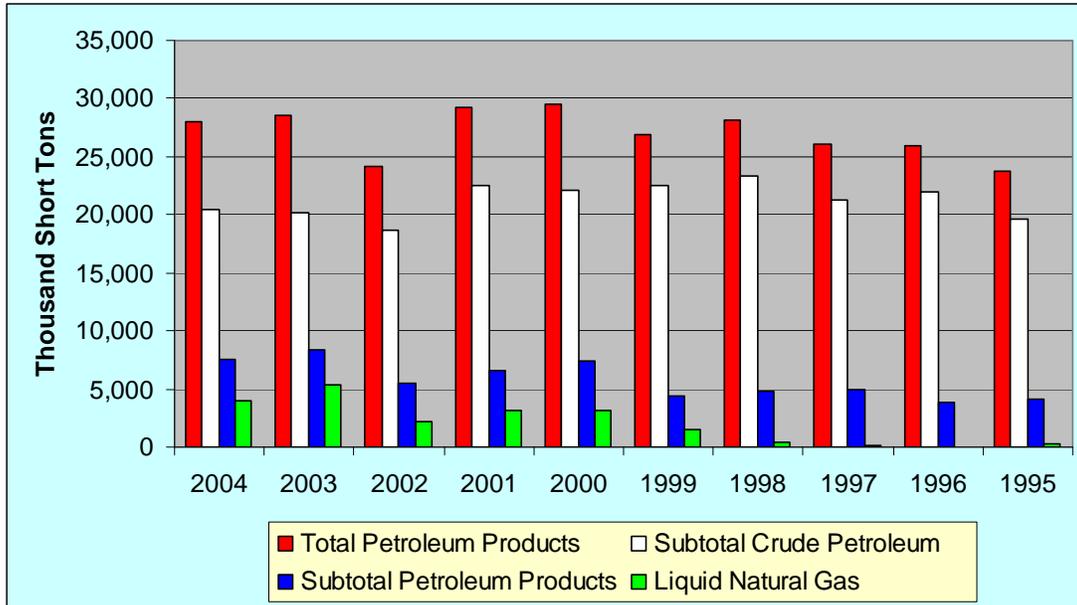
Table 3. Summary of Waterborne Commodity Tons Handled at Port of Lake Charles, 1995 – 2004

Commodity	Total									
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total Coal	63	131	144	85	118	163	149	169	190	239
Total petroleum and petroleum products	37,787	39,707	40,707	42,413	40,785	77,926	44,056	39,017	44,865	45,503
Total chemicals and related products	3,168	3,354	3,433	3,405	3,303	3,473	3,035	3,027	3,029	3,691
Total crude materials, inedible except fuels	2,598	2,940	3,236	3,577	2,800	2,147	2,021	2,553	2,651	2,574
Total primary manufactured goods	442	520	492	543	621	387	432	389	270	275
Total food and farm products	1,870	1,220	1,124	1,273	1,074	933	792	1,011	781	641
Total all manufactured equipment, machinery, and products	552	1,147	1,915	2,156	1,740	2,427	2,278	1,247	1,485	1,668
Total waste and scrap	0	81	147	115	91	72	75	74	82	62
Total unknown or not elsewhere classified	3	1	1	0	12	1	2	35	7	114
Total	46,483	49,101	51,281	53,567	50,544	87,529	52,840	47,522	53,360	54,767

Source: Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center.

The major cargo by volume handled at the port is petroleum products – mostly crude oil and LNG, which constitute nearly 80 percent of total annual tons. Foreign imports were over one-half of the total volume of petroleum product tonnages. Figure 6 compares trends in foreign imports of crude petroleum, petroleum products, and LNG.

According to PoLC data for the period March through June 2006, the major shippers and receivers of the port include CITGO (1.1 million metric tonnes/month), Conoco (0.9 million tonnes/month), and the Trunkline LNG plant (400,000 metric tonnes/month).



Source: G.E.C., Inc., from Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center.

Figure 6. Comparison of Foreign Imports for Petroleum and Petroleum Products Traveling on the Calcasieu River

The major refineries operated by CITGO and Conoco are heavily committed to sourcing oil from foreign sources, primarily Venezuela.

Liquefied natural gas is natural gas that has been frozen, reducing its volume by a factor of 610. There are four onshore regasification facilities constructed in the U.S. and only one offshore facility completed worldwide. It is located offshore, almost directly south of Lake Charles. In recent years, there has been increased interest in LNG terminals because of rising natural gas prices, decreases in domestic natural gas production, technological advances, and changes in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission policies. LNG imports are projected by the Energy Information Administration's to grow from 650 billion cubic feet in 2004 to 4.4 trillion cubic feet in 2030.

Occupational and Industry Statistics. The industries in Calcasieu Parish employing the greatest percentage of workers are the manufacturing industry (14.9 percent of workers) and the educational, health, and social services industry (19.9 percent of workers). The majority of manufacturing in Calcasieu Parish consists of petroleum, coal, chemical, aerospace and transportation equipment manufacturing.

More than a quarter of Calcasieu Parish's labor force holds a job in a management or professional occupation (27.2 percent). Sales and office occupations employ 25.6 percent of workers.

4.6.6.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect existing economic resources.

4.6.6.2 Proposed Action

Although the proposed action would not directly affect economic resources, an improvement in security facilities would not increase commercial use of the PoLC or the Calcasieu River Waterway. The proposed action would enhance the efficiency of security screening associated with commercial activities.

4.6.7 Public Health and Safety

Safety and security issues that were considered in this EA include the health and safety of area residents and businesses, the public at-large, and the protection of personnel involved in activities related to the implementation of the proposed project.

The site of the proposed action is located on the property within the secure boundary of the Port of Lake Charles. Security and police services are provided by the HPD. Fire response is provided by the Fire Department of the City of Lake Charles. Emergency medical response is provided by ambulance services and hospitals of the area.

The Port of Lake Charles has prepared a comprehensive Safety and Health Manual, most recently revised in June 2009 that provides detailed information regarding requirements for ensuring that the health and safety of employees and contractors is protected.

4.6.7.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative would not affect public health, safety or security.

4.6.7.2 Proposed Action

Implementation of the proposed project would improve security at the Port of Lake Charles, indirectly enhancing public health and safety by providing improved vigilance for preventing terrorist activities.

Construction activities would be conducted in a secure area, thereby reducing the exposure of the general public to accidents and injury.

4.7 Hazardous Materials

Hazardous waste, as defined by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), is defined as “a solid waste, or combination of solid wastes, that because of its quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics may: (1) cause, or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible illness; or (2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of, or otherwise managed.”

A Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste (HTRW) assessment was conducted for the project area. The goal of the HTRW assessment was to identify whether any of the following recognized environmental conditions (RECs) exist:

1. Indications that hazardous substances or petroleum products exist, or have existed, on or adjacent to the subject property;
2. The possibility that violations of environmental regulations have occurred on the subject property;
3. The potential for spilled, leaked, disposed, or otherwise released hazardous substances or petroleum products to migrate to the subject property from nearby properties containing such materials; and
4. The existence of unsafe conditions in connection with the subject property.

REC sites were evaluated for their potential to pose constraints to the project design process. An environmental database report developed by Banks Information Solutions, Inc. reports the cause(s) for listing and the current status of each REC site. This information was used to determine which, if any, sites warrant further scrutiny for the potential presence of HTRW. As part of the Banks reports, seven federal databases, listed below, were reviewed in 2009 to assess the area:

- NPL – National Priority List. The USEPA’s list of confirmed or proposed Superfund sites
- CERCLIS – The USEPA’s Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System
- NFRAP – A CERCLIS designation indicating that to the best of the USEPA’s knowledge, assessment of a site has been completed and the USEPA has determined no further remedial action is planned
- RCRA TSD – The USEPA’s list of Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System (RCRIS) – Treatment, Storage and Disposal facilities
- RCRA COR – The USEPA’s list of Corrective Action Sites
- RCRA GEN – The USEPA’s list of large and small quantity hazardous waste generators
- ERNS – The USEPA’s list of emergency response actions (Emergency Response Notification System)

State databases examined were:

- SCL – The LDEQ list of facilities and/or locations recognized with potential or existing environmental contamination
- SWL – Solid waste landfills and transfer stations registered by LDEQ
- LUST – The LDEQ list of all leaking underground storage tanks
- RUST – The LDEQ list of all registered underground or above storage tanks

Based on the records review, interviews, and best engineering judgment, the HTRW assessment revealed evidence of two potential REC sites at the Port of Lake Charles facility. However, the Port has indicated that both sites have been remediated, and neither site is near the project area (Figure 7).

4.7.1 No Action Alternative

The No-Action Alternative would have no effect on hazardous materials.



Figure 7. Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) at the Port of lake Charles.

4.7.2 Proposed Action

The construction of the new CCC and the Main Gate Entrance would not disturb any hazardous materials or create any potential hazard to human health. If hazardous constituents are unexpectedly encountered in the project area during the proposed construction operations, Port authorities will be immediately notified, and appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation and management of the contamination would be initiated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations. Liquid materials and chemicals, such as fuels, lubricants and paints will be stored on site during construction, in accordance with all applicable regulations and requirements. The site contractor will be required to take appropriate measures to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area.

4.8 Cumulative Impacts

This environmental assessment has identified no adverse impacts on the human environment associated with the implementation of the proposed action. Therefore, there are no incremental effects of the proposed action that, when combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, would contribute to adverse cumulative impacts.

4.9 Table 4. Summary of Environmental Impacts

Affected Environment/ Resource Area	Proposed Action			No Action
	Impacts	Agency Coordination/ Permits	Mitigation/ BMPs	
Geology & Soils	None	None	BMPs to reduce soil erosion	None
Air Quality	Localized and temporary during construction	None	BMPs to reduce engine emissions and minimize dust	None
Water Quality	None	LPDES Stormwater Permit	BMPs to reduce erosion and suspended solids in runoff	None
Wetlands	None	None	None	None
Floodplains	None	None	None	None
Coastal Resources	None	None	None	None
Vegetation	None	None	None	None
Wildlife	None	None	None	None
Protected Species	None	None	None	None
Cultural Resources	None	None	(Note)	None
Demographics	None	None	None	None
Environmental Justice	None	None	None	None
Noise	Localized and temporary during construction	None	BMPs to reduce construction noise emissions	None
Transportation	Improved ingress/egress at Port entrance	None	None	None
Public Service & Utilities	None	None	None	None
Economic Resources	None	None	None	None
Public Health & Safety	Enhanced security at Port	None	None	None
Hazardous Materials	None	None	(Note)	None

Note: If the construction contractor discovers suspected cultural resources or hazardous materials during earth-moving activities, construction will be halted and the Port advised. The Port will then notify the appropriate resource agency for guidance.

5.0 AGENCY COORDINATION, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND PERMITS

5.1 Agency Coordination

The USACE, NRCS, SHPO, and LDWF were invited to provide input into the assessment of environmental effects of the project. Copies of the letters inviting coordination are included in Appendix A. Responses from the NRCS, SHPO, and LDWF are also included in Appendix A. No response had been received from the USACE at the time of preparation of this document.

5.2 Public Coordination

FEMA is the lead agency for ensuring environmental compliance for the proposed Command and Control Center and the Main Gate Entrance Project at the Port of Lake Charles. It is the goal of the lead agency to be responsive to the needs of the community and the purpose and need of the proposed action while meeting the intent of federal environmental and cultural resource laws, including NEPA, and complying with all necessary provisions.

The Port of Lake Charles will notify the public of the availability of the draft EA through publication of a notice in the local newspaper of record. The draft EA will be available at both a local repository and at FEMA.gov. A 30-day public comment period will commence on the initial date of the public notice. FEMA will consider and respond to all public comments either individually or in the Final EA.

6.0 MITIGATION MEASURES

6.1 Permits

The Port would obtain local building and/or construction permits as required by the local government.

The construction contractor would require a LPDES General Permit, which authorizes the contractor to discharge storm water from the construction site. The contractor is required to send a Notice of Intent to LDEQ before construction begins, prepare, implement, and maintain a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan before and during construction, and submit a Notice of Termination at the completion of construction.

6.2 Best Management Practices

6.2.1 Soil Disturbance

BMPs for minimizing soil erosion and preventing the introduction of sediments and suspended solids to surface waters include (See Section 4.1.1.2):

- Phase construction activity to limit the area of disturbance
- Stabilize soils promptly
- Protect storm drains
- Protect drainage ditches
- Establish perimeter controls
- Retain sediment on-site and control dewatering practices
- Establish stabilized construction exits
- Inspect and maintain construction site
- Establish properly maintained building material storage sites and waste areas

6.2.2 Noise

Best management practices to reduce noise produced during construction include (See section 4.6.3.2):

- Conduct work during daytime hours;
- Use standard equipment with noise control devices (*e.g.*, mufflers) that meet manufacturers' specifications;
- Use "quiet" equipment (*i.e.*, equipment designed with noise control elements);
- Install portable barriers to shield compressors and other small stationary equipment where necessary;
- Install sound barriers for pile-driving activity, where practicable, by using an acoustic curtain or blanket around the point of impact;
- Direct equipment exhaust stacks and vents away from buildings, when feasible;
- Route truck traffic away from noise-sensitive areas, where feasible;
- Follow a common-sense approach to vehicle use; and encourage workers to shut off vehicle engines whenever possible;
- Limit pick-up trucks and other small equipment to an idling time of five minutes;

- Identify any “sensitive receptors” that might be disturbed by construction noise and notify them in advance of upcoming work; and
- Respond immediately to complaints raised by nearby residents.

6.3 Avoidance/Minimization Measures

6.3.1 Hazardous Materials

If hazardous constituents are unexpectedly encountered in the project area during the proposed construction operations, Port authorities will be immediately notified, and appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation and management of the contamination would be initiated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

Liquid materials and chemicals, such as fuels, lubricants and paints, will be stored on site during construction, in accordance with all applicable regulations and requirements. The site contractor will be required to respond appropriately to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials in the construction staging area (See Section 4.7.2).

6.3.2 Cultural Resources

In the event that archeological deposits, including any Native American pottery, stone tools, bones, or human remains, are uncovered, the project shall be halted and 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 SHPO or THPO and Tribes. 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 National Historic Preservation Act.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

Two alternatives were evaluated in this EA: the No Action Alternative and the Proposed Action. The No-Action Alternative assumes that neither the Command and Control Center nor the Main Gate Entrance would be implemented. The No Action Alternative would retain the current inefficiency for access and egress to the Port, which causes significant delays. The No Action Alternative would not provide for the centralized housing of computerized security assets. The entrance gate would remain vulnerable to terrorist activities.

The Proposed Action is to reconfigure the main entrance to enhance security for monitoring persons and vehicles entering the Port's City Docks. In addition, a security Command and Control Center would be constructed within the confines of the Port property adjacent to the reconfigured main gate along Marine Street within the city limits of Lake Charles. The proposed action would enhance and improve security and transportation in and out of the Port.

The assessment of the Proposed Action revealed that there would be no significant environmental impact to the air, water, wetlands, wildlife, socioeconomics, or other natural or cultural resources. A Finding of No Significant Impact as prescribed by the regulations of the President's Council on Environmental Quality, 40 CFR Part 1500 *et seq.* is justified.

8.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

Name	Organization	Role in Document Preparation
Channing Hayden	Port of Lake Charles	Document Review
Dana Cheney	Gahagan & Bryant Associates	Contract Management, Document Review
Laura Carnes	GEC, Inc.	Project Management, Document Preparation
Michael Loden	GEC, Inc.	Document Preparation

APPENDIX A. PUBLIC/AGENCY COORDINATION

COORDINATION REQUESTS SUBMITTED TO RESOURCE AGENCIES



**Lake Charles
Harbor
& Terminal
District**

Post Office Box 3753
Lake Charles, LA 70602
Phone 337-439-3661
Facsimile 337-493-3593

April 1, 2010

Ms Patti Faulkner
Louisiana Natural Heritage Program
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
2000 Quail Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70808

RE: NEPA Coordination, Environmental Assessment,
Proposed Harbor Police Command Center and Main Entrance Relocation Port
of Lake Charles

Dear Ms. Faulkner:

Through the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District (Port of Lake Charles) has received Grant Award Number 2008-GB-T8-K002 LC - IJ 5 for the construction of a new Command and Control Center and Grant Award Number 2009PUR10407 for the relocation of the main entrance gate to the Port (the "City Docks Maingate Project"). The proposed facilities are intended to enhance security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway.

The Port has combined the two facilities into a single action. An Environmental Assessment is being prepared for the proposed combined action to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Title 44, Section 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which covers environmental considerations required for FEMA actions.

The location for the proposed action is on the property of the Port of Lake Charles City Docks at 30°12'47.60" N, 93°15'00" W, within the City of Lake Charles. The street address is 150 Marine Street, Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601.

Attached is a brief description of the proposed action and an aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed Harbor Police Command Center and relocated Main Entrance. In addition, ground-level photographs showing existing conditions are provided. The site of the proposed action is well developed and maintained, and it contains largely turf grasses that are periodically mowed.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Port of Lake Charles requests that your agency provide comments relevant to the proposed project. We would particularly appreciate comments regarding rare, threatened and/or endangered species of plants or animals that have a potential to be affected by the project.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael K. Dees
Interim Port Director

Enclosure (1)

vv:mgb



**Lake Charles
Harbor
& Terminal
District**

Post Office Box 3753
Lake Charles, LA 70602
Phone 337-439-3661
Facsimile 337-493-3523

April 1, 2010

Mr. Kevin Norton
State Conservationist
Natural Resource Conservation Service
1221 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302

RE: NEPA Coordination, Environmental Assessment,
Proposed Harbor Police Command Center and Main Entrance Relocation Port
of Lake Charles

Dear Mr. Norton:

Through the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District (Port of Lake Charles) has received Grant Award Number 2008-GB-T8-K002 LC - IJ 5 for the construction of a new Command and Control Center and Grant Award Number 2009PUR10407 for the relocation of the main entrance gate to the Port (the "City Docks Maingate Project"). The proposed facilities are intended to enhance security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway.

The Port has combined the two facilities into a single action. An Environmental Assessment is being prepared for the proposed combined action to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Title 44, Section 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which covers environmental considerations required for FEMA actions.

The location of the proposed action is on the property of the Port of Lake Charles City Docks at 30°12'47.60" N, 93°15'00" W, within the City of Lake Charles. The street address is 150 Marine Street, Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601.

Attached is a brief description of the proposed action and an aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed Harbor Police Command Center and relocated Main Entrance. In addition, ground-level photographs showing existing conditions are provided. The site of the proposed action is well developed and maintained, and it contains largely turf grasses that are periodically mowed. The Calcasieu Parish Soil Survey shows that the soil is of the Mowata-Vidrine Silt Loams.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Port of Lake Charles requests that your agency provide comments relevant to the proposed project. We would particularly appreciate comments regarding the potential for the site to be prime or unique farmlands as defined by the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael K. Dees
Interim Port Director

Enclosure (1)

vv:mgb



**Lake Charles
Harbor
& Terminal
District**

Post Office Box 3753
Lake Charles, LA 70602
Phone 337-439-3661
Facsimile 337-493-3593

April 1, 2010

Mr. Scott Hutcheson
State Historic Preservation Officer
Louisiana Office of Cultural Development
P.O. Box 44247
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-44247

RE: NEPA Coordination, Environmental Assessment,
Proposed Harbor Police Command Center and Main Entrance Relocation
Port of Lake Charles

Dear Mr. Hutchinson:

Through the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District (Port of Lake Charles) has received Grant Award Number 2008-GB-T8-K002 LC - IJ 5 for the construction of a new Command and Control Center and Grant Award Number 2009PUR10407 for the relocation of the main entrance gate to the Port (the "City Docks Maingate Project"). The proposed facilities are intended to enhance security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway.

The Port has combined the two facilities into a single action. An Environmental Assessment is being prepared for the proposed combined action to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Title 44, Section 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which covers environmental considerations required for FEMA actions.

The location of the proposed action is on the property of the Port of Lake Charles City Docks at 30°12'47.60" N, 93°15'00" W, within the City of Lake Charles. The street address is 150 Marine Street, Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601.

A review of the National Register of Historic Places revealed no historic resources located in or near the site of the proposed action. There are no existing structures located at the site, and no cultural resources are known to be present.

Attached is a brief description of the proposed action and an aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed Harbor Police Command Center and relocated Main Entrance. In addition, ground-level photographs showing existing conditions are provided.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Port of Lake Charles requests that your agency review the proposed project and provide comments and any available information or resources under your agency's jurisdiction that might be affected by the proposed action. We are particularly interested in comments regarding potential effects on historic or cultural resources.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael K. Dees
Interim Port Director

Enclosure (1)

vv:mgb

April 1, 2010

Mr. Pete Serio
Chief, Regulatory Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-New Orleans District
CEMVN-OD-S
Post Office Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160-0267

RE: NEPA Coordination, Environmental Assessment,
Proposed Harbor Police Command Center and Main Entrance Relocation Port of
Lake Charles

Dear Mr. Serio:

Through the Port Security Grant Program (PSGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) the Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District (Port of Lake Charles) has received Grant Award Number 2008-GB-T8-K002 LC - IJ 5 for the construction of a new Command and Control Center and Grant Award Number 2009PUR10407 for the relocation of the main entrance gate to the Port (the "City Docks Maingate Project"). The proposed facilities are intended to enhance security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway.

The Port has combined the two facilities into a single action. An Environmental Assessment is being prepared for the proposed combined action to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and Title 44, Section 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations, which covers environmental considerations required for FEMA actions.

The location of the proposed action is on the property of the Port of Lake Charles City Docks at 30°12'47.60" N, 93°15'00" W, within the City of Lake Charles. The street address is 150 Marine Street, Lake Charles, Louisiana 70601.

Attached is an aerial photograph showing the location of the proposed Harbor Police Command Center and relocated Main Entrance, as well as ground-level photographs showing existing conditions. Also provided is a conceptual design of the command Center and Main Entrance.

The site of the proposed action has been part of the Port of Lake Charles since 1925, and the surface has likely been disturbed numerous times. The property is cleared and the vegetation is primarily turf grasses that are regularly mowed. A few trees are present. (Figures 3 to 4). The soil type is mapped by NRCS as the Mowata-Vidrine complex, which is a hydric soil in Calcasieu Parish. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Wetland Online Mapper indicates that the area is non-wet.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Port of Lake Charles requests that your agency provide comments relevant to the proposed project. We would particularly appreciate comments regarding the potential for the site to contain jurisdictional wetlands that might be affected by the project.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Michael K. Dees
Interim Port Director

Enclosure (1)

vv:mgb



**Lake Charles
Harbor
& Terminal
District**

Post Office Box 3753
Lake Charles, LA 70602
Phone 337-439-3661
Facsimile 337-493-3523

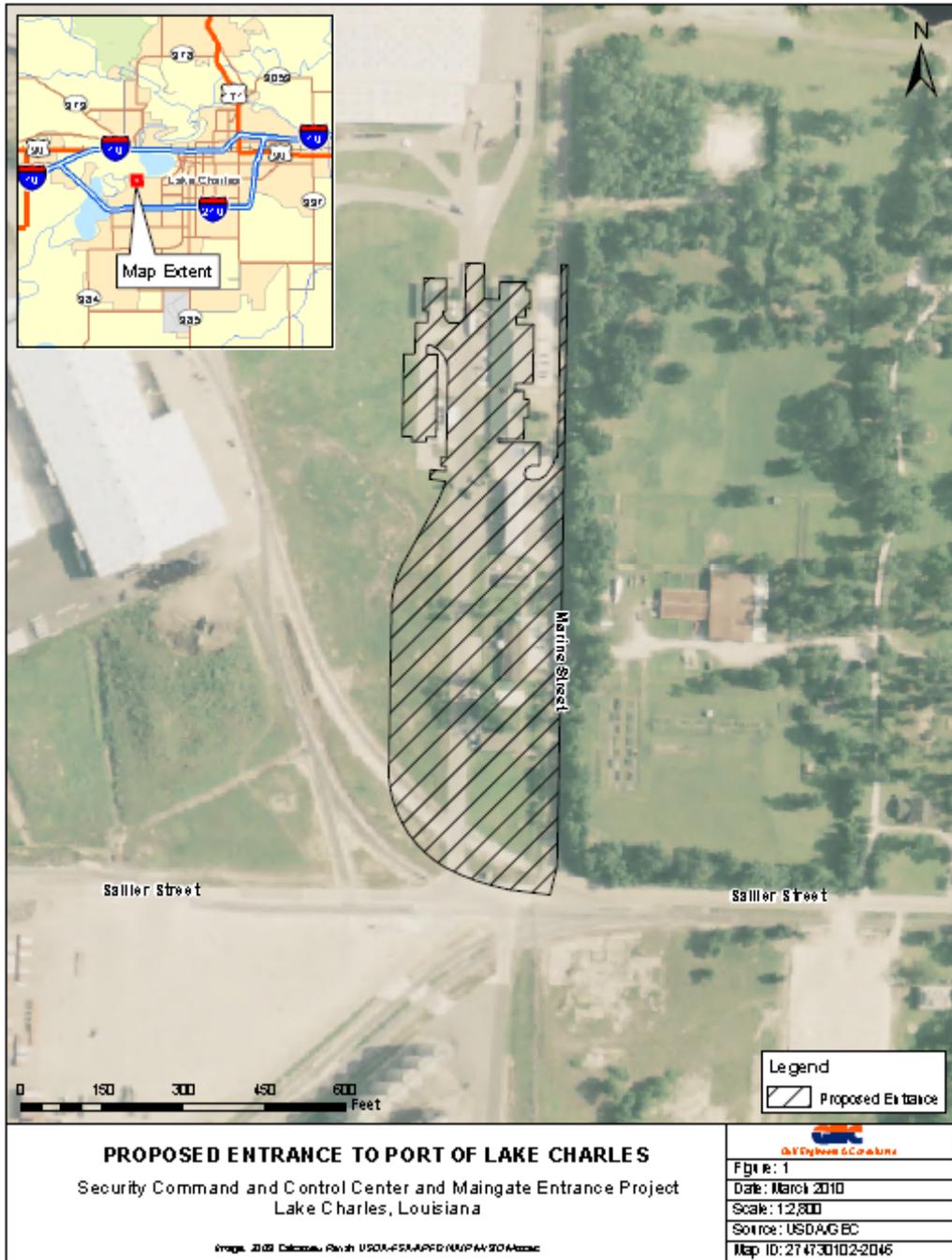
Fact Sheet Accompanying Requests for Coordination

The Lake Charles Harbor & Terminal District, also known as the Port of Lake Charles, encompasses 203 square miles along the Calcasieu River Waterway in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The Port of Lake Charles is the 11th largest seaport in the U.S. based on tonnage, the fourth largest liner service seaport, and a major West Gulf container load center. In terms of energy importance, the Port is the second largest Strategic Petroleum Reserve facility in the U.S. (219 million barrels of oil or 33 percent of the U.S. total). Approximately 4.5 percent of all U.S. motor fuel is supplied by producers on the Calcasieu River Waterway. The Port is a vital element of the U.S. energy infrastructure. The Calcasieu River Waterway is a Strategic Energy Waterway.

Because of the national and regional importance of the Port of Lake Charles and the Calcasieu River Waterway, security of facilities is of paramount importance. Currently, the Marine Domain Awareness system monitored by the Harbor Police Department cannot provide the coverage needed to effectively monitor the Calcasieu River Waterway or its intersection with the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Destruction or heavy damage to the I-10 Calcasieu River Bridge, I-210 Calcasieu River Waterway bridge, Port of Lake Charles, Calcasieu River Waterway, or the Port's rail system would have a crippling effect on interstate commerce and international trade. The economic viability of the region and the nation would be adversely affected if the waterways were crippled and vessels could not move. A Port Vulnerability Assessment revealed that the Port was well prepared for some natural disasters but not for potential terrorist threats to its facilities and tenants.

The Port of Lake Charles has received FEMA grants for the construction of a new Command and Control Center (CCC) and for the relocation of the main entrance gate to the Port's City Docks to enhance security for the Port and the Calcasieu River Waterway. The CCC would consolidate security assets and would be continuously staffed to allow vessels to be tracked from the Gulf of Mexico to their destination point, and anomalies would be quickly addressed through the HPD and other enforcement agencies. The Main Gate Entrance would enable the Port to comply with the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program for persons and vehicles entering City Docks. Additionally, the Main Gate Entrance Project would provide barriers to prevent a vehicle from driving through the gates without stopping. Enhanced security would allow all vehicles and occupants to be under constant surveillance from the time of entrance to the main gate until they exit the Port. The Customs and Border Protection unit located at City Docks would have the ability to utilize the Main Gate Entrance's "search site" to examine cargo arriving at the Port of Lake Charles.

Attached figures show the layout of the proposed construction, aerial photography with the construction footprint, and photographs of the proposed site.





Ground-level Photograph, View Toward North. Port of Lake Charles Command and Control Center would be located north of the building on the right and approximately center of the roadway.



Ground-level Photograph, View Toward South. Port of Lake Charles Command and Control Center would be located at the shaded area of the photograph.

COORDINATION RECEIVED FROM RESOURCE AGENCIES



BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
OFFICE OF WILDLIFE

ROBERT J. BARHAM
SECRETARY
JIMMY L. ANTHONY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Date May 7, 2010
Name Michael S. Loden
Company GEC, Inc.
Street Address 9357 Interline Ave.
City, State, Zip Baton Rouge, LA 70809
Project Port of Lake Charles
Proposed Harbor Police Command Center & Main Entrance
Project ID 1352010
Invoice Number 10050701

Personnel of the Habitat Section of the Coastal & Nongame Resources Division have reviewed the preliminary data for the captioned project. After careful review of our database, no impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species or critical habitats are anticipated for the proposed project. No state or federal parks, wildlife refuges, scenic streams, or wildlife management areas are known at the specified site within Louisiana's boundaries.

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program (LNHP) has compiled data on rare, endangered, or otherwise significant plant and animal species, plant communities, and other natural features throughout the state of Louisiana. Heritage reports summarize the existing information known at the time of the request regarding the location in question. The quantity and quality of data collected by the LNHP are dependent on the research and observations of many individuals. In most cases, this information is not the result of comprehensive or site-specific field surveys; many natural areas in Louisiana have not been surveyed. This report does not address the occurrence of wetlands at the site in question. Heritage reports should not be considered final statements on the biological elements or areas being considered, nor should they be substituted for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. LNHP requires that this office be acknowledged in all reports as the source of all data provided here. If at any time Heritage tracked species are encountered within the project area, please contact the LNHP Data Manager at 225-765-2643. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please call 225-765-2357.

Sincerely,


 Gary Lester, Coordinator
Natural Heritage Program

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
3737 Government Street
Alexandria, LA 71302

318-473-7751
318-473-7626

April 14, 2010

Michael S. Loden, PH.D.
Senior Environmental Consultant
G.E.C., Inc.
9357 Interline Avenue
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809

RE: Harbor Police Command Center & Main Entrance Relocation Port of Lake Charles

Mr. Loden:

I have reviewed your request for comments relative to impacts to Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance resulting from construction of roadway enhancements for the following project in Lake Charles, Louisiana:

1. Harbor Police Command Center & Main Entrance Relocation Port of Lake Charles

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)—Subtitle I of Title XV, Section 1539-1549 final rules and regulations were published in the Federal Register on June 17, 1994. These rules state that projects are subject to FPPA requirements if they may irreversibly convert farmland (directly or indirectly) to nonagricultural use and are completed by a Federal agency or with assistance from a Federal agency. For the purpose of FPPA, farmland includes prime farmland, unique farmland, and land of statewide or local importance. Farmland subject to FPPA requirements does not have to be currently used for cropland. It can be forest land, pastureland, cropland, or other land, but not water or urban built-up land.

NRCS policy clarifies the Rule by stating that activities not subject to FPPA include:

- Federal permitting and licensing
- Projects planned and completed without the assistance of a Federal agency
- Projects on land already in urban development or used for water storage
- Construction within an existing right-of-way purchased on or before August 4, 1984
- Construction for national defense purposes
- Construction of on-farm structures needed for farm operations
- Surface mining, where restoration to agricultural use is planned
- Construction of new minor secondary structures such as a garage or storage shed.

The project maps submitted with your request indicate that the proposed construction areas are within urban areas. Therefore the third exception item listed above can be cited as reason to determine that both the proposed project(s) are exempt from the rules and regulations of the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)—Subtitle I of Title XV, Section 1539-1549.

Further, we do not believe there will be an adverse effect on the surrounding environment provided appropriate erosion control measures are taken during construction.

Please direct all future correspondence to me at the address shown above.

Respectfully,  ACTING FOR

Kevin D. Norton
State Conservationist

Attachment

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



9357 Interline Avenue
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809
(225) 612-3000 Fax (225) 612-3015
Verdi Adam, P.E., President

April 6, 2010

Mr. Scott Hutcheson
Assistant Secretary, Office of Cultural Development
Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
P.O. Box 44247
Baton Rouge, LA 70807-44247

RE: NEPA Coordination, Environmental Assessment
Proposed Harbor Police Command Center and Main Entrance Relocation
Port of Lake Charles

Dear Mr. Hutcheson:

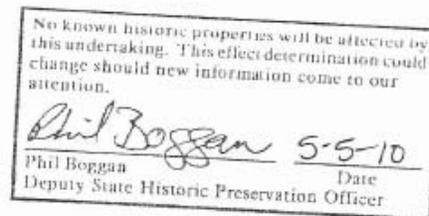
The Port of Lake Charles has received grants from FEMA for upgrading their security facilities. Because this is a federal action, an Environmental Assessment (EA) must be prepared for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. GEC, Inc., is the consultant providing assistance to the Port in preparing the EA.

Attached is a letter from the Port requesting your comments regarding the project. It would be most helpful if you could provide your comments to us at GEC so that we can address any issues in the EA. Your comment letter will be attached to the EA as part of the public/agency coordination appendix.

Thanks very much,


Michael S. Loden, Ph.D.
Senior Environmental Consultant

Enclosure (1)



APR - 7 2010



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 90267
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AUG 17 2010

Operations Division
Operations Manager,
Completed Works

Mr. Michael S. Loden, Ph.D.
G.E.C., Inc.
9357 Interline Avenue
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70809

Dear Mr. Loden:

This is in response to the Solicitation of Views request dated April 6, 2010, on behalf of the Port of Lake Charles, concerning the proposed Harbor Police Command Center and Main Entrance Relocation at 150 Marine Street, at Lake Charles, Louisiana, in Calcasieu Parish.

We have reviewed your request for potential Department of the Army regulatory requirements and impacts on any Department of the Army projects.

We do not anticipate any adverse impacts to any Corps of Engineers projects.

Based on review of recent maps, aerial photography, soils data, and the information provided with your application, we have determined that the specific site of your project is not in a wetland subject to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' jurisdiction. A DA permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act will not be required for the deposition or redistribution of dredged or fill material on this site. Any changes or modifications to the proposed project will require a revised determination.

You are advised that this approved jurisdictional determination is valid for a period of 5 years from the date of this letter unless new information warrants revision prior to the expiration date or the District Commander has identified, after public notice and comment, that specific geographic areas with rapidly changing environmental conditions merit re-verification on a more frequent basis.

Please contact Mr. Robert Heffner, of our Regulatory Branch by telephone at (504) 862-1288, or by e-mail at Robert.A.Heffner@usace.army.mil for questions concerning wetlands determinations or need for on-site evaluations. Questions concerning regulatory permit requirements may be addressed to Mr. Ronnie Duke by telephone at (504) 862-2261 or by e-mail at Ronnie.W.Duke@usace.army.mil.

Future correspondence concerning this matter should reference our account number MVN-2010-01480-SZ. This will allow us to more easily locate records of previous correspondence, and thus provide a quicker response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen L. Oberlies".

Karen L. Oberlies
Solicitation of Views Manager