



FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Louisiana Recovery Office
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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for the
WHARTON HALL DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA
FEMA-1786-DR-LA

BACKGROUND

The city of Lafayette is located in central Lafayette Parish. The center of the proposed project area is located approximately .68 miles northwest of the Vermilion River. The proposed action for this project includes drainage improvements at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette Campus along Boucher Drive, McKinley Street, and in Girard Park. The existing subsurface drainage system in the project area is ineffective, incapable of handling even the two- year storm (storm that has a 50% chance of occurring in any given year). The continuation of intense rainfall events has repeatedly caused several buildings within the campus to flood, along with flooding near student housing and inundation of the streets within the immediate area. These frequent flooding events often affect daily operations at the University, while also potentially placing the lives of students and faculty in danger due to unsafe driving conditions caused by the lack of drainage. As a result, Lafayette Parish (Applicant) has requested federal funding through Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA)'s 404 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to construct the proposed drainage improvements along Boucher Dr. and McKinley Dr.

In accordance with 44 CFR Part 10, FEMA regulations to implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared. The purpose of the EA was to analyze the potential environmental impacts associated with construction of drainage improvements, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The need for the proposed action is to protect the southeastern section of the University of Louisiana- Lafayette Campus from flooding events. The proposed action would reduce the risk of future damage from flooding. The alternatives considered include: (1) No Action, (2) Construction of a drainage pump station and force main in place of a gravity system (eliminated from further consideration), and (3) The proposed action, which consists of removing a large section of the existing storm drainage pipe along McKinley Street, Boucher Drive, and in Girard Park in order to expand the capacity of the subsurface drainage system in the project area. The Parish does not plan to acquire any additional right-of-way land to complete the proposed action. The Parish also proposes to install ten culverts and twelve manholes, which are required to meet the intended goal of the proposed action.

FINDINGS

FEMA has evaluated the proposed project for significant adverse impacts to geology, soils, water resources (surface water, groundwater, and wetlands), floodplains, coastal resources, air quality, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, Federally-listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitats), cultural resources, socioeconomics (including minority and low income populations), safety, noise, and hazardous materials. The results of these evaluations as well as consultations and input from other federal and state agencies are presented in the EA.

CONDITIONS

The following conditions must be met as part of the implementation of the project. Failure to comply with these conditions may jeopardize federal funds:

- In order to minimize impacts to Waters of the U.S., the contractor is required to implement BMPs that meet the LDEQ permitting specifications for storm water discharge regulated under Section 402 of the CWA. This includes designing the site with specific construction measures to reduce or eliminate run-off impacts. LDEQ has stormwater general permits for construction areas equal to or greater than five acres. It is recommended that the LDEQ Water Permit Division be contacted at (225) 219-3181 to determine whether the proposed improvements require one of these permits.
- The contractor would be responsible for keeping all excavated areas periodically sprayed with water, all equipment maintained in good working order, and all construction vehicles would be limited to 15 mph to minimize pollution/fugitive dust.
- Any changes or modifications to the proposed project would require a revised determination. Off-site locations of activities such as borrow; disposals, haul-and detour-roads and work mobilization site developments may be subject to the Department of the Army regulatory requirements and may have an impact to a Department of Army project.
- If any solid or hazardous wastes, or soils and/or groundwater contaminated with hazardous constituents are encountered during the project, notification to LDEQ's Single-Point-of-Contact (SPOC) at (225) 219-3640 is required. Additionally, precautions should be taken to protect workers from these hazardous constituents.
- Construction traffic should be closely monitored and controlled as appropriate. All construction activities would be conducted in a safe manner in accordance with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements. To alert motorists and pedestrians of project activities, appropriate signage and

barriers should be used during construction. During construction activities, the construction site(s) would be fenced off to discourage trespassers.

- If archaeological artifacts or features (prehistoric or historic) are discovered during the course of FEMA funded work at the project site, the Applicant must ensure that their Contractor stops work in the vicinity of the discovery and takes all reasonable measures to avoid and minimize harm to the discovery. The Applicant shall inform the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) and FEMA of the discovery, and FEMA would deploy an archaeologist to the location to conduct a site condition assessment. The Applicant would not proceed with work until FEMA has completed consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) on the treatment of the discovery.
- In addition, if human remains are discovered during the course of FEMA funded work, the Applicant and the Applicant's Contractor are responsible for immediately halting work within the vicinity of the human remains finding. The Applicant would immediately notify GOHSEP, FEMA, the local Police Department, and the local Coroner's Office of the discovery. The local Coroner's Office would assess the nature and age of the human skeletal remains. If the Coroner's Office determines that the human skeletal remains are older than 50 years of age, the Louisiana Division of Archaeology would take jurisdiction over the remains. Within twenty-four (24) hours, FEMA would notify the Louisiana Division of Archaeology (225-342-8170) of the finding. Within seventy-two (72) hours, FEMA would take the lead in working with the Louisiana Division of Archaeology and other interested parties, as necessary, to ensure compliance with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act (R.S. 8:671 *et seq.*) and other applicable laws. In addition, the Applicant must afford FEMA the opportunity to comply with the "Human Remains Policy" set forth by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP).

CONCLUSIONS

Based upon the incorporated EA, and in accordance with Presidential Executive Orders 12898 (Environmental Justice), 11988 (Floodplain Management), and 11990 (Wetland Protection), FEMA has determined that the proposed action implemented with the conditions and mitigation measures outlined above and in the EA will not have any significant adverse effects on the quality of the natural and human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.8) and the proposed action alternative as described in the EA may proceed.

APPROVALS

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Date

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Date

DRAFT