Draft Environmental Assessment

Office Building / Storage Shed
Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7
Alternate Project

Cameron Parish, Louisiana
September 2011

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region VI
Louisiana Recovery Office
1 Seine Court
New Orleans, Louisiana 70114

FEMA

SECTION **PAGE**

APPENDICES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

APE	Area of Potential Effect
BFE	Base Flood Elevation
CAA	Clean Air Act
CBRA	Coastal Barrier Resources Act
CBRS	Coastal Barrier Resources System
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
cm	Centimeter
CUP	Coastal Use Permit
CWA	Clean Water Act
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
DFIRM	Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map
EA	Environmental Assessment
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EO	Executive Order
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FPPA	Farmland Protection Policy Act
ft	Feet
GOHSEP	Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
HP	Historic Preservation
LDEQ	Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
LDNR	Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
LGS	Louisiana Geological Survey
LSU	Louisiana State University
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tank
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
NWS	National Weather Service
PA	Programmatic Agreement
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
SFHA	Special Flood Hazard Area
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office/Officer
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Authority

Hurricane Rita made landfall on September 24, 2005, between Sabine Pass Texas and Johnson's Bayou Louisiana, as a Category 3 storm. Maximum sustained winds at landfall were estimated at 120 miles per hour and were accompanied by strong and damaging storm surge well above normal high tide. President Bush declared a major disaster for the State of Louisiana and signed a disaster declaration (FEMA-1607-DR-LA) on September 24, 2005, authorizing the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to provide federal assistance in designated areas of Louisiana.

Cameron Parish requested through the State of Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) that FEMA provide disaster assistance through the provision of federal grant funding pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), PL 93-288, as amended. Section 406 of the Stafford Act authorizes FEMA's Public Assistance Program to fund projects to repair, restore and replace facilities damaged as a result of the declared event.

Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 was deemed eligible by FEMA for federal disaster public assistance as an eligible applicant serving the needs of the general public. The Waterworks District #7 office building was utilized for administrative functions. Additionally, a storage shed was utilized to store equipment and supplies. Both the office and storage buildings, along with their contents, were destroyed as a result of the declared event and FEMA has deemed them eligible for replacement.

Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 determined that replacement of the facility in its current location would not best meet the needs of the community. Instead, Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 relocated their administrative functions to the Creole Fire Station building. Therefore, Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 requested approval and federal grant funds for an alternate project to purchase capital equipment (generators, cargo trailers, and an excavator) and construct a storage pavilion in lieu of replacing the destroyed facilities. The proposed storage pavilion will be located approximately 750 feet southwest of the former office location and within the original site of the former storage shed.

In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B – Agency Implementing Procedures, Section 10.9, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). This EA will determine if the proposed alternate construction of a storage pavilion and the purchase of capital equipment in lieu of replacing the Waterworks District #7 office and storage buildings will have the potential for significant adverse effects on the quality of the human and natural environment. The results of this EA will be used to make a decision whether to initiate preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or to prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

1.2 Area Description

Cameron Parish is located entirely in the coastal marsh area in the extreme southwestern corner of Louisiana (U.S. Geological Survey, 2009). It is bordered by Sabine Lake, the Sabine River, the City of Port Arthur, Texas, and Jefferson County, Texas to the west; Orange County, Texas to the northwest; Calcasieu and Jefferson Davis Parishes to the north; Vermilion Parish to the east; and the Gulf of Mexico to the south. Calcasieu Lake forms a natural division between the eastern and western parts of the Parish.

Cameron Parish has no incorporated areas and the Parish seat is the Town of Cameron (Figure 1), which is located in the south-central section of the Parish approximately 13 miles west of the proposed site for storage pavilion. Port Arthur, Texas, is seven miles across Sabine Lake, and Beaumont, Texas is ten miles beyond. Lake Charles lies approximately eight miles north of the Cameron Parish boundary, and Lafayette is approximately 35 miles northeast of the Parish. Encompassing an area of 1,932 square miles (1,313 square miles of land and 619 square miles of water), Cameron is the largest parish in the state. Its population, however, is the smallest among Louisiana parishes. It had a population density of 5 persons per square mile in July 2009, which represented a total parish population of 6,584 (U.S. Census Bureau FactFinder, 2009). This was a 9.1 percent decrease compared to the 2008 population. The U.S. Census reports in the 2010 general demographic characteristics an increase in population to 6,839 people (U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder, Table 1).

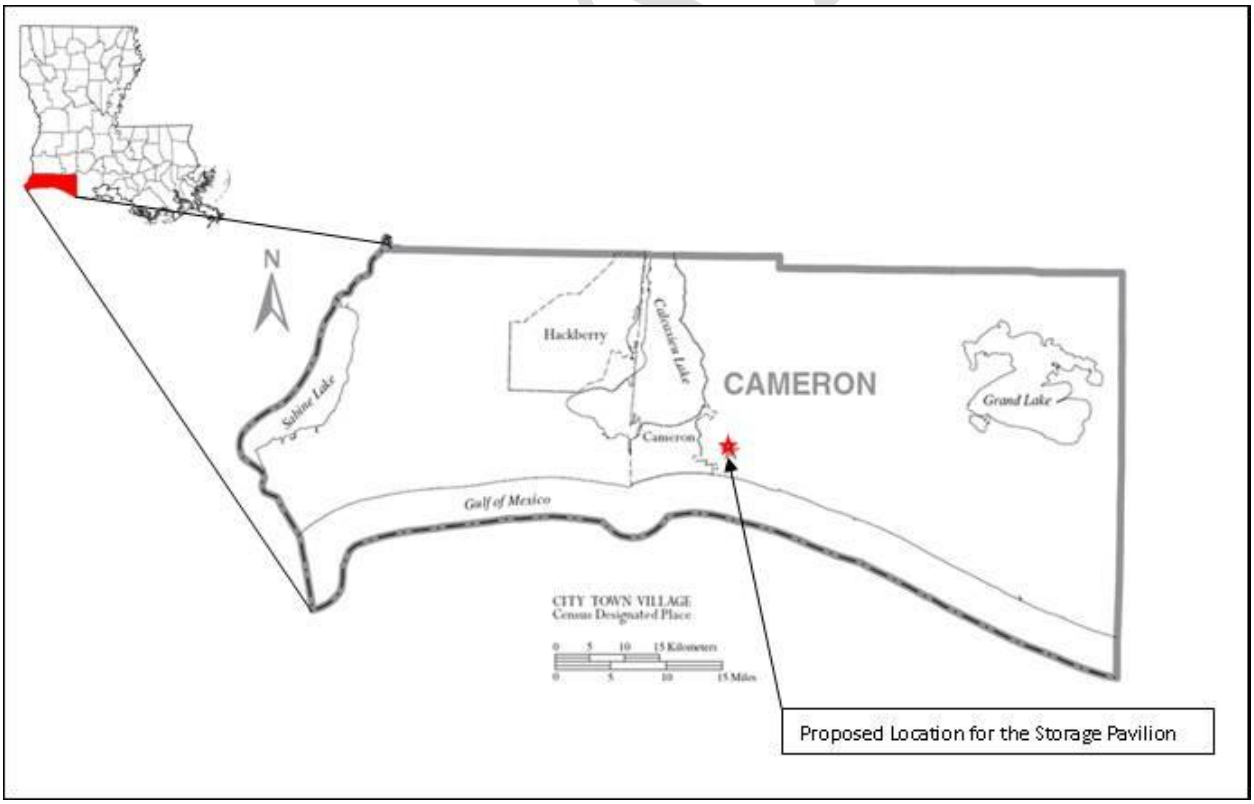


Figure 1 - Cameron Parish and the Proposed Reconstruction Location (Wikipedia, 2011)

Profile of General Population Characteristics 2010 Demographic Profile Data Cameron Parish, Louisiana		
SUBJECT	NUMBER	PERCENT
SEX AND AGE		
Total population	6,839	100.0
Under 5 years	400	5.8
5 to 9 years	453	6.6
10 to 14 years	505	7.4
15 to 19 years	503	7.4
20 to 24 years	379	5.5
25 to 29 years	390	5.7
30 to 34 years	426	6.2
35 to 39 years	369	5.4
40 to 44 years	466	6.8
45 to 49 years	620	9.1
50 to 54 years	627	9.2
55 to 59 years	443	6.5
60 to 64 years	377	5.5
65 to 69 years	309	4.5
70 to 74 years	231	3.4
75 to 79 years	150	2.2
80 to 84 years	123	1.8
85 years and over	68	1.0
Median age (years)	39.9	(X)
Male population	3,395	49.6
Female population	3,444	50.4
RACE		
Total population	6,839	100.0
One Race	6,765	98.9
White	6,546	95.7
Black or African American	119	1.7
American Indian and Alaska Native	36	0.5
Asian	6	0.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Two or More Races	74	1.1
Race alone or in combination with one or more other races		
White	6,620	96.8
Black or African American	135	2.0
American Indian and Alaska Native	60	0.9
Asian	11	0.2
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	3	0.0
Some Other Race	85	1.2
HISPANIC OR LATINO		
Total population	6,839	100.0
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	154	2.3
Not Hispanic or Latino	6,685	97.7
(X) Not Applicable		
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.		

Table 1 - U.S. Census Population Demographics, 2010 Estimates

The town of Creole is approximately 50 miles east-southeast of the Texas border and 10 miles southeast of Calcasieu Lake. This community has fire protection and school facilities as well as public utilities that are provided to the community. The town of Creole's estimated population is approximately 440 (U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder for Cameron Parish District 5, 2011). This community is linked to the parish's other coastal villages such as Grand Chenier and the town of Cameron by Louisiana State Highway 82/27.

Cameron Parish is located in subtropical latitude, which reflects the general climate of the southern United States, with mild, pleasant winters and warm, humid summers. The average temperature in July is 81 degrees Fahrenheit (ºF), and the average temperature in January is 51ºF. Rainfall averages over 60 inches annually and is evenly distributed throughout the year, except for July, the wettest month. Temperatures in the Parish are usually comfortable, but often accompanied by high humidity. The Parish's location on the Gulf Coast makes it particularly susceptible to frequent hurricanes and severe storms (FEMA, 2008a).

Four (4) wildlife preserves are located in the Parish. The largest, the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge, located to the west and southeast of Calcasieu Lake, is federally owned and operated, as are both the Lacassine and Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuges, which are located in the southeastern and north central parts (respectively) of the Parish. The Rockefeller State Wildlife Refuge and Game Preserve, which extends into Vermilion Parish, is owned and operated by the State of Louisiana.

Wetlands cover more than two-thirds of the Parish; this is one of the largest wetland areas in a single district in the United States. The Parish's economy is linked to this valuable resource through rice growing, cattle raising, commercial and sport fishing, fur trapping, oil and gas production, base facilities for offshore oil and gas drilling, tourism, and recreation.

The Parish has extensive mineral resources, ranking first in natural gas production and sixth in total mineral production in the United States. Oil development, an important activity in the Parish, is not concentrated in one area. Piping and processing plants, as well as oil support facilities are located throughout the Parish near major oil and gas fields. Pipelines traverse the Parish and link oil deposits with processing plants and users throughout the country. Petroleum pipelines are expected to influence the future development of the Parish; there is high potential for the construction of processing plants and refineries along pipeline routes (FEMA, 2008a).

1.3 Project Location

The damaged Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 office building was located at 132 Raymond Richard Road (Latitude 29.81614 / Longitude -93.13257, Figure 2). This facility, which was built in 1997, consisted of a 1320 square feet one-story wood-framed with vinyl siding building that was utilized for both office and storage space. An associated storage facility located at 4790 W. Creole Highway (29.81429, -93.13349) was also damaged. This facility consisted of a 12 feet x 12 feet barn-type storage building with inside wrap-around shelving.

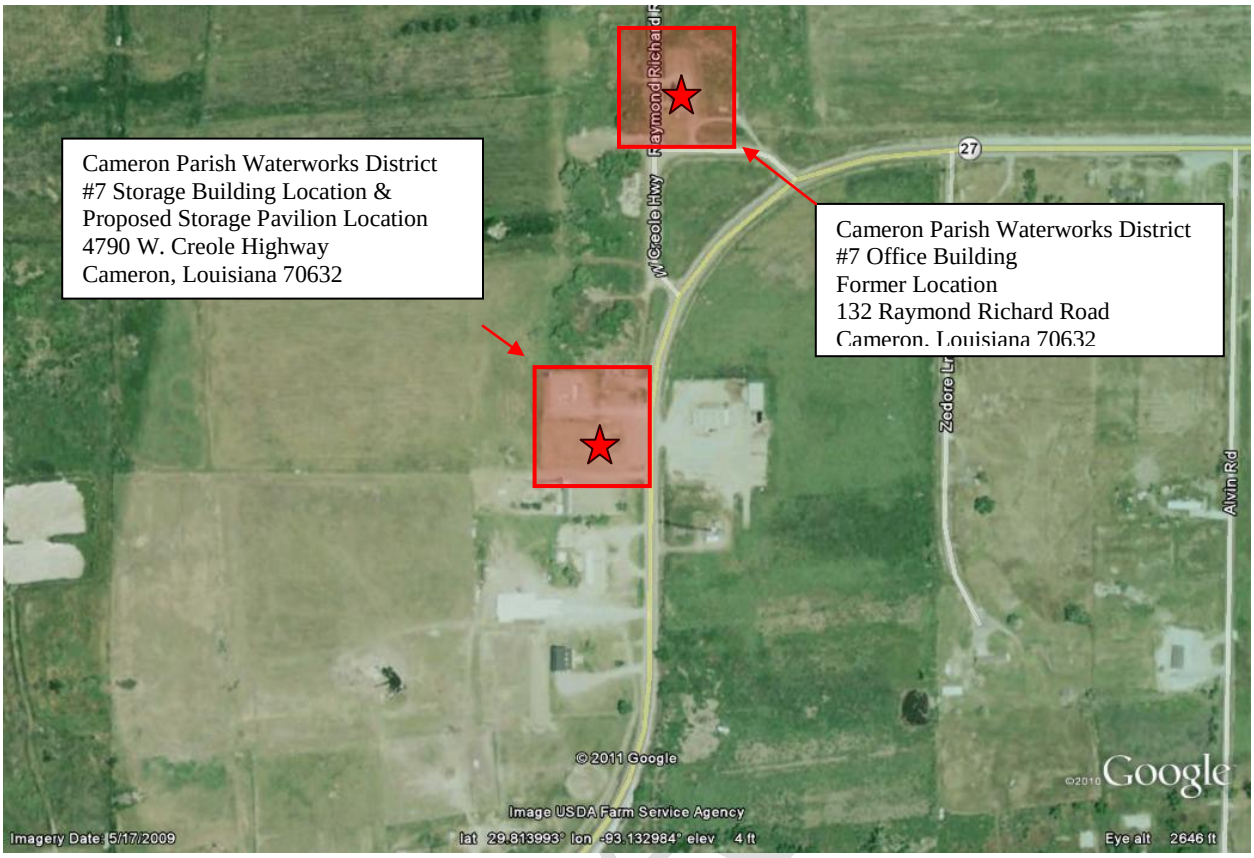


Figure 2 – Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 Former Office Location and Proposed Storage Pavilion Location (Google Earth, 2009)

The proposed location of the 30 feet x 50 feet storage pavilion is 4790 West Creole Highway (29.81429, -93.13349), which is located at the site of the former storage building (Figure 2).

1.4 Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

In order to better serve the community and prepare for another disaster, Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 seeks federal grant funds to construct a storage pavilion as well as purchase capital equipment (generators, cargo trailers, and an excavator). Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 plans to deploy the equipment to affected water well locations in order to provide essential water services to the community immediately following a disaster.

The purpose of the proposed action is to eliminate gaps in resources available during the event of another disaster similar to Hurricane Rita. This will ensure better preparedness to be able to provide emergency power for continuous operations of essential water services to the community. Additionally, this will support implementation of long-term community recovery plans and ensure community viability.

2.0 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

2.1 Alternative 1 - No Action

Under the no action alternative, there would be no construction of the storage pavilion nor the purchase of capital equipment. As a result, the community would be deprived of essential water service due to a lack of emergency equipment (i.e. generators) needed to maintain essential community services during a time of disaster.

2.2 Alternative 2 – Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment – Proposed Action

The proposed replacement action is for construction of a storage pavilion located at the original site of the storage shed. The site is within the unincorporated community of Creole. The proposed storage pavilion is approximately 30 feet x 50 feet, which is an increase in size from the original 12 feet x 12 feet storage shed.

The proposed storage pavilion will consist of a 1500 square feet metal frame and roof structure with no walls situated on a concrete slab. The proposed project will require site grading and may include the addition of fill (1 foot or less over approximately 1/5 acre). There is existing access to the needed utilities.

In addition, the proposed action includes the purchase of capital equipment (generators, cargo trailers, and an excavator) that will be stored at the pavilion site.

2.3 Alternative 3 – Reconstruct at Original Sites – Alternative Eliminated from Consideration

This alternative would rebuild the damaged Waterworks District #7 building at the original site to pre-disaster configuration, function, and capacity. Grading of the site would be necessary to prepare for reconstruction. The facility would be constructed within the respective original footprint and would include improvements for meeting current codes and standards (e.g., American with Disabilities Act, building codes, local floodplain ordinances, etc.).

Local population did not return to the pre-disaster levels resulting in a reduction of administrative operations and thus eliminating the need for a separate administrative building. Therefore, community leaders have determined the alternative to replace the facility at the original site is not practicable, desirable, or feasible and as such, will not be carried forward for further analysis in this draft EA.

3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND IMPACTS

3.1 Geology and Soils

Southwest Louisiana is characterized by extensive coastal marshland interrupted by numerous forests atop relict beach ridges, or chenier ridges, and natural ridges or levees (Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, 2009). According to the Louisiana State University (LSU) Louisiana Geological Survey (LGS), the geology in the vicinity of the site is predominantly Holocene coastal marshes, river sedimentary deposits composed mainly of sands, silts and clays (LSU, 2008). Figure 3 is a generalized geologic map for the state of Louisiana indicating the location of the proposed project site in Cameron Parish.

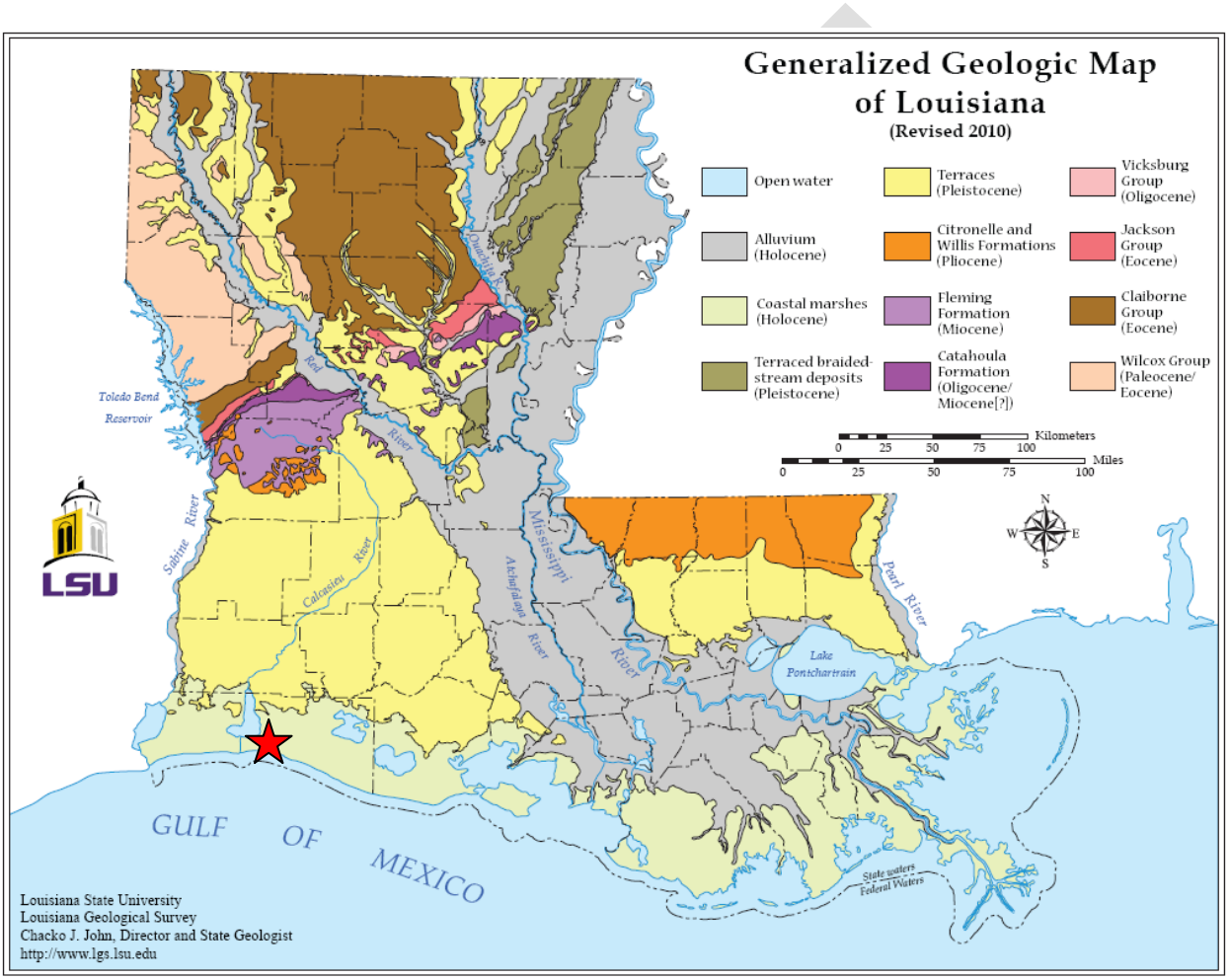


Figure 3 - Generalized Geologic Map of Louisiana (LSU, Revised 2010)

The Parish has elevations ranging from sea level to 20 feet. A short distance inland and parallel to the coastline, there are numerous chenier ridges, which are generally at elevations of 4 to 7 feet; in a few cases, they are at elevations of 10 feet or slightly higher. These cheniers are long, narrow beach ridges composed essentially of sand and shells thrown up by waves during storms.

The soils in Cameron Parish vary widely in their potential for most important land uses and urban development. Specific mapped soils in the vicinity of the proposed project site include the Hackberry-Mermentau complex, generally undulating (Figures 4 and 5, National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Web Soil Survey Mapper, 2011). These level and gentle undulating, somewhat poorly drained soils are found near the Gulf of Mexico with Hackberry soil on low ridges and Mermentau soil in the depressions between ridges.

Figure 4 - Web Soil Survey Mapper (NRCS, 2011)

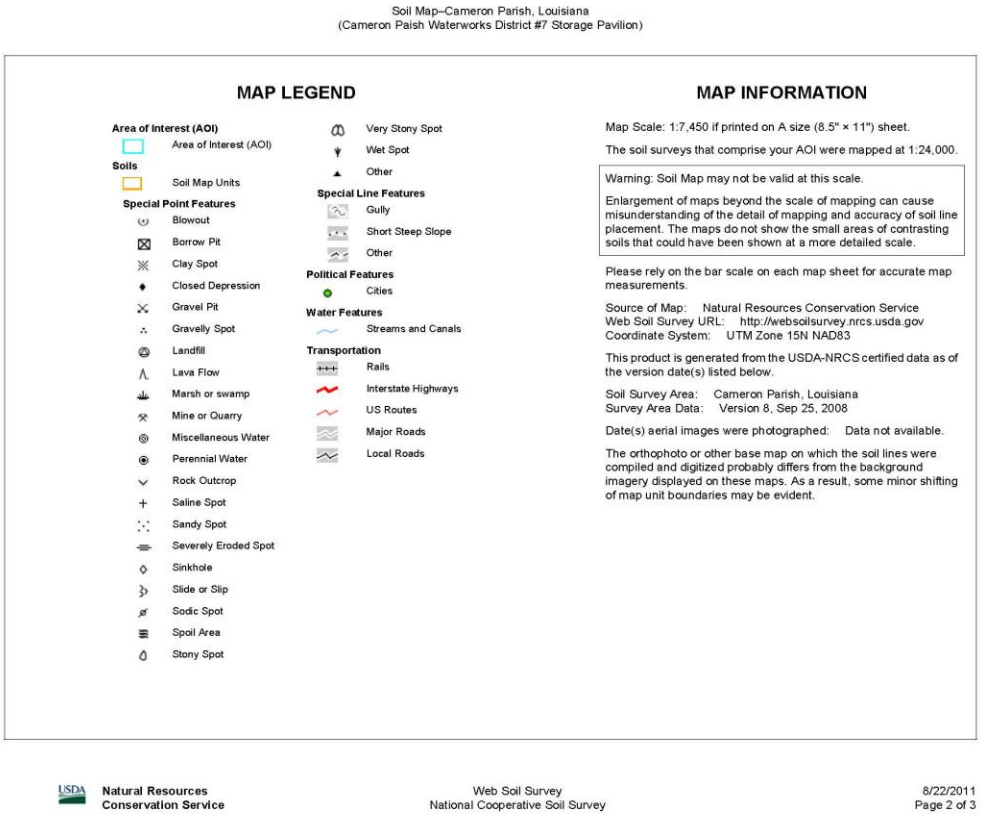


Figure 5 - Web Soil Survey Legend (NRCS, 2011)

This soil is poorly suited to urban development. Population growth, however, has increased the extent of home site and industrial/commercial development on this soil type in Cameron Parish (U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), 1995). The main management concerns are the wetness and the hazard of flooding during hurricanes. Pilings or mounds can elevate structures above the expected level of flooding and adherence to codes and standards ensures utilization of appropriate construction methods and materials for this soil type.

The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA: P.L. 97-98, Sec. 1539-1549; 7 U.S.C. 4201, *et. seq.*) was enacted in 1981 to minimize the unnecessary conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses as a result of federal actions. Programs administered by federal agencies must be compatible with state and local farmland protection policies and programs. The NRCS is responsible for protecting significant agricultural lands from irreversible conversions that result in the loss of an essential food or environmental resource. Prime farmland is characterized as land with the best physical and chemical characteristics for the production of food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops (USDA, 1989). Review of NRCS soils database identified that the entire community of Cameron is built on prime farmlands (NRCS Web Soil Survey Mapper, 2011).

Alternative 1 - No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not impact the soils or geologic processes known for the area nor would it result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Construction of a storage pavilion within an area that has already been disturbed, graded, and developed would not cause significant disturbance of geology or soils as part of the site preparation. The project will also not result in conversion of any Prime, or State-wide and locally important farmlands (NRCS letter dated May 25, 2011; Appendix B). The proposed site is generally flat but because of the proposed project's size, soils exposed from site preparation actions would be subject to erosion thus, silt fence and/or other required storm water quality best management practices will be required by Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's (LDEQ) during construction.

3.2 Water Resources and Water Quality

3.2.1 Surface and Groundwater

Cameron Parish has 354,924 acres of surface water. The Sabine, Calcasieu, and Mermentau Rivers are the largest sources of surface water. Sabine Lake, Calcasieu Lake, and Grand Lake are the largest lakes in the parish. The major streams are at the low elevations. They are heavily contaminated with salt water from the Gulf of Mexico (USDA, 1995). As a result, most of the surface water is unsuited to agriculture and domestic uses and to some industrial uses. A review of the LDEQ Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 303(d) list identifies that both Calcasieu Lake and Calcasieu Ship Canal as being impaired water bodies (LDEQ, 2008). Excess sediments, nutrients, and hydrology alterations are the leading reasons for the findings of high concentrations of oil/grease, fecal coliform bacteria, pesticides, and heavy metals in these impaired water bodies.

There are no rivers, lakes, creeks or other well-defined drainageways on the proposed site. There are also no wild or scenic rivers, as designated under the Wild and Scenic River Act, on or near the proposed project site. The project vicinity outside the proposed site includes extensive surrounding fresh and brackish marshes merging with small bayous that provide drainage and water exchange for significant parish surface waters. These bayous, marshes and other surface waters receive stormwater runoff from the site.

The groundwater used for irrigation and for municipal, industrial, and domestic purposes in Cameron Parish is obtained from wells screened in the Chicot Aquifer. The Chicot aquifer system consists of fining upward sequences of gravels, sands, silts, and clays of the Pleistocene Prairie, intermediate, and high terrace deposits of southwest Louisiana. The medium to coarse-grained sand and gravel aquifer units dip and thicken toward the Gulf of Mexico, thin slightly toward the west to Texas, and thicken toward the east where it is overlain by alluvium of the Atchafalaya and Mississippi Rivers (LDEQ, 2002). The project site overlies recharge zones of the Chicot Aquifer.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not adversely impact the surface or groundwater resources of the region.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Construction of a storage pavilion within an area having existing utilities, infrastructure, and no identifiable on-site surface waters would not adversely affect surface water resources.

To minimize spills and leaks of hazardous materials from the maintenance of construction equipment, safe handling procedures per local, state, and federal regulations must be used to reduce impacts to surface and groundwater resources. Sound construction techniques and the use of best management practices would mitigate minor potential effects that might otherwise result from runoff during construction.

3.2.2 Wetlands and Waters of the United States

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulates the discharge of dredged or fill materials into waters of the U.S. including wetlands, pursuant to Section 404 of the CWA. Jurisdictional wetlands are defined as those areas that that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Jurisdictional wetland determinations are regulated by the USACE pursuant to the CWA. Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands, also directs federal agencies to take actions to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands.

Review of United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory (NWI, Figure 6) identified no wetlands at the project site (USFWS NWI, 2011). However, the NWI identifies non-tidal marshland to both the north and south of the proposed project site. The NWI also identified the nearby coastal frontage as entirely wetlands. Both types of wetlands are highly productive range sites for wildlife habitat and grazing cattle. These surrounding wetlands have been deteriorating due to an increasing input of soil and saline content, undesirable fluctuation of low water levels, and extremely high floodwater inundation.

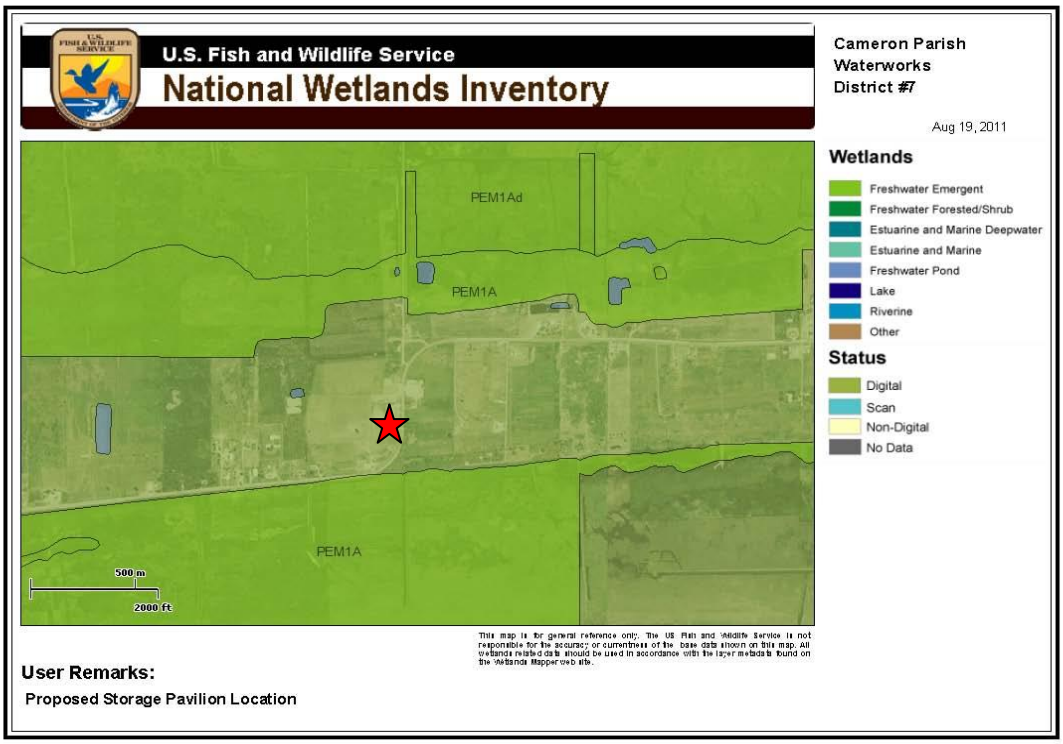


Figure 6 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Wetlands Inventory (FWS, 2011)

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not impact wetlands or other waters of the U.S. and would not require a CWA Section 404 permit.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Construction of the storage pavilion would not impact waters of the U.S. or modify wetlands per review of USFWS NWI (USFWS NWI Mapper, 2011) and USACE jurisdictional determination letter dated June 10, 2011 (Appendix B).

3.2.3 Floodplains

Flood hazards within the Parish result primarily from tidal surge and associated waves caused by tropical storms and hurricanes (FEMA, 2008). Tides can intrude into the low-lying areas through the Calcasieu Ship Channel, and through the Creole Canal and Kings Bayou, which flow into the Mermentau River. Less severe than tidal flooding, stream overflow occurs infrequently from the Sabine, Calcasieu, and Mermentau River systems, all of which cross Cameron Parish and empty into the Gulf of Mexico within the Parish boundaries. Because of the flat terrain and

inadequate drainage, many areas are also susceptible to shallow flooding or ponding during rainfalls (FEMA, 2008a). Not all storms that pass closely to the study area produce extremely high tides. Similarly, storms that produce extreme conditions in one area may not produce critical conditions in other locations. The rainfall that usually accompanies hurricanes can aggravate the tidal flooding.

Executive Order (EO) 11988, Floodplain Management, requires federal agencies to avoid direct or indirect support or development within or affecting the 1% annual chance special flood hazard area (SFHA) (i.e., 100-year floodplain) whenever there is a practicable alternative (for "*Critical Actions"*, outside the 0.2% annual chance SFHA, i.e., the 500-year floodplain). FEMA's regulations for complying with EO 11988 are found in 44 CFR Part 9, Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

During an initial post-hurricane analysis, FEMA determined the 100-year floodplain elevations on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) for many Louisiana communities, referred to as Base Flood Elevations, were too low. Therefore, FEMA created recovery maps showing the extent and magnitude of Hurricane Katrina's and Rita's surge, as well as information on other storms over the past 25 years, to develop advisory flood data. The advisory flood data shown on the recovery maps indicate high-water marks surveyed after the storm; flood limits developed from these surveyed points; and Advisory Base Flood Elevations (ABFEs). This information was developed to assist parish officials, home and business owners, and other affected citizens with their recovery and rebuilding efforts.

Furthermore, updated preliminary flood hazard maps from an intensive five-year mapping project guided by FEMA are now provided to all Louisiana coastal parishes. The new maps, known as Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMS), are based on technically advanced flood insurance studies and provide up-to-date, accurate portrayals of coastal Louisiana flood risks as well as giving communities a more scientific approach to economic development, hazard mitigation planning, emergency response and post-flood recovery.

FEMA used the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) effective Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) (Figure 7) and the preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRM) (Figure 8) to determine the flood hazard zone for the proposed project location (FEMA, 2008b).

In compliance with FEMA policy implementing EO 11988, the proposed project was reviewed for possible impacts associated with occupancy or modification to a floodplain. Cameron Parish enrolled in the NFIP on September 4, 1970. According to the NFIP effective FIRM panel number 22 5194 0650 G, dated May 04, 1992, the project site lies within a special flood hazard area zone AE (EL 9) (1% annual chance flood area, 100-year floodplain, base flood elevation [BFE] determined).

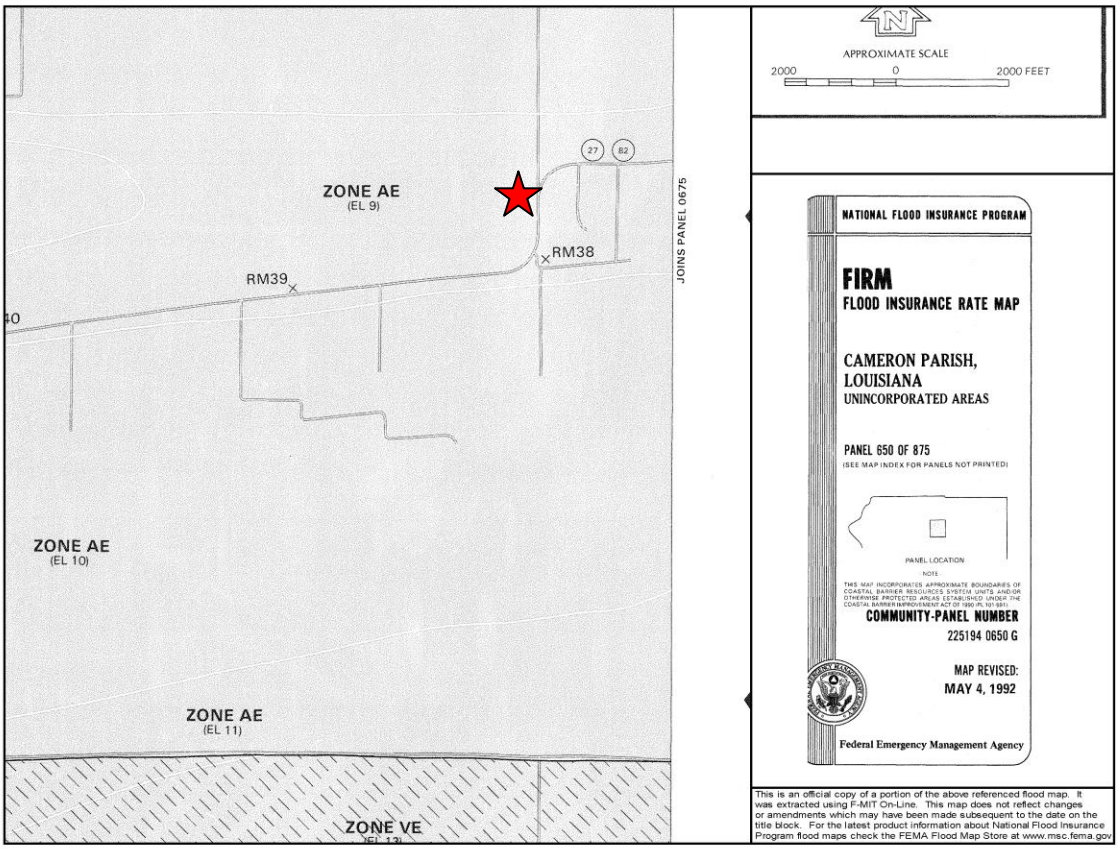


Figure 7 - Effective Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel 22 5194 0650 G (FEMA, 1992)

Additionally, according to the preliminary DFIRM panel 22 023C 0725 H, dated March 28, 2008, the proposed project site lies within a coastal high hazard area zone VE (EL 15) (1% annual chance flood area, 100-year floodplain, coastal area with velocity wave action, BFE determined). Per a letter dated April 21, 2011, from FEMA's Region VI Director of the Mitigation Division, zone designations initially identified in the March 2008 DFIRMS were reanalyzed by FEMA Region VI Mitigation Division and as a result of this reanalysis, the zone designation for the proposed project site was reclassified as a special flood hazard area zone AE (EL 11) (not within the coastal high hazard area with wave velocity action in excess of three feet) (FEMA, 2011).

Notwithstanding the flood zone reanalysis, the project is located within a Coastal A Zone and is required, as a condition of the provision of the federal grant funds, to build to the Coastal A Zone requirements specified within the ASCE 24-05 Standard. The ASCE provides the designer the minimum requirements and expected performance for the design and construction of buildings and structures in flood hazard areas. It does not restate the NFIP requirements but offers specificity, some additional requirements above and beyond NFIP minimum standards, and some limitations.

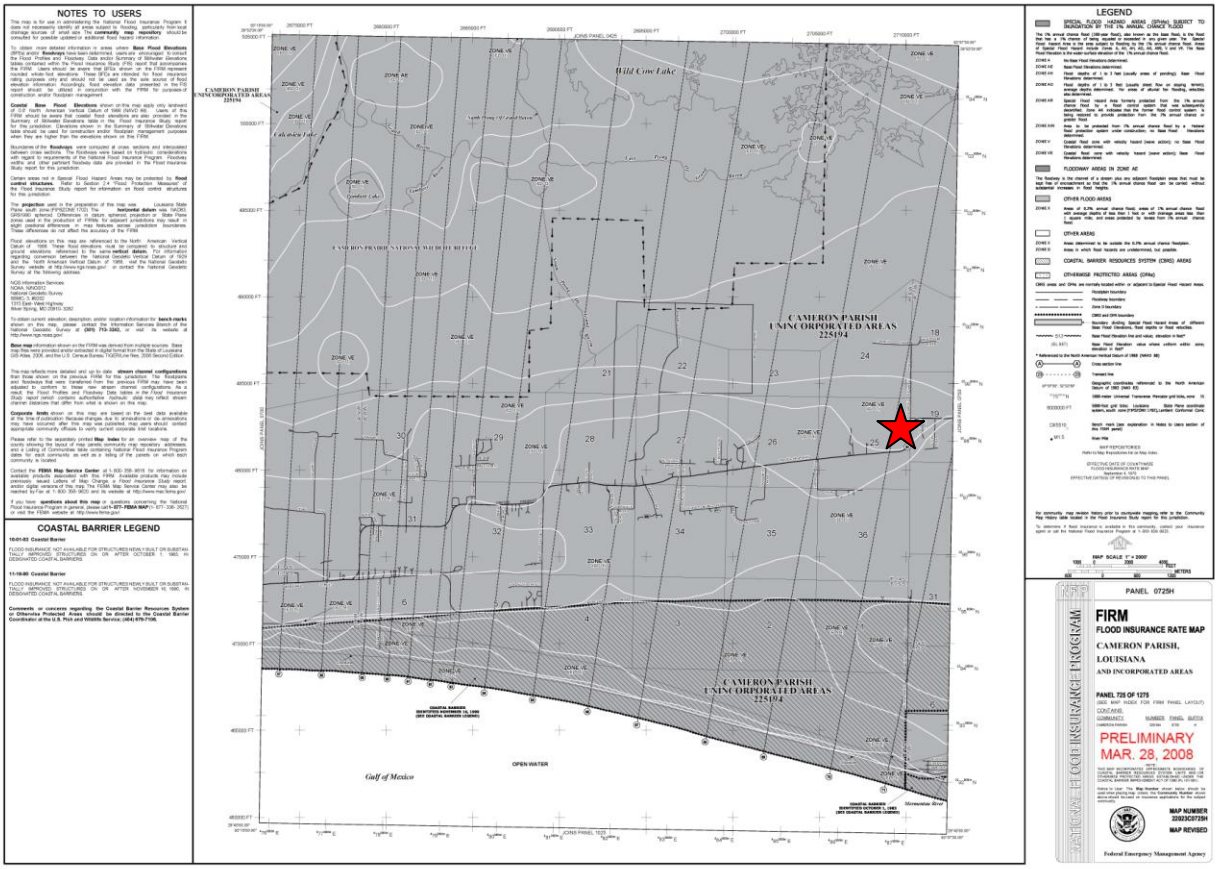


Figure 8 - Preliminary Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map Panel 22 023C 0725 H (FEMA, 2008)

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not result in impacts to the 100-year floodplain.

Alternative 2 Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

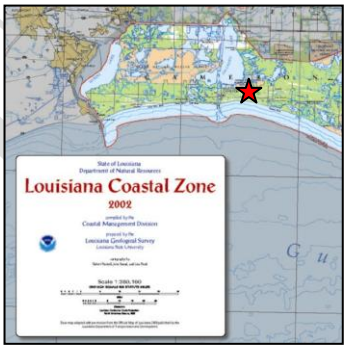
The Proposed Action Alternative would involve the construction of a storage pavilion at the proposed site within a special flood hazard area. Per preliminary DFIRM panel number 22 023C 0725 H dated March 28, 2008, and FEMA guidance, the proposed project site is located in a flood hazard zone AE.

This EA forms part of the Eight Step Planning Process outlined in 44 CFR Part 9. No acceptable practicable alternatives outside of the special flood hazard area were identified by Cameron Parish or GOHSEP. Adverse impacts such as flood damage to capital equipment must be minimized and /or mitigated by compliance with relevant codes and standards and elevation or flood proofing of the proposed facility and appurtenances to or above the BFE. These projects must be conducted in accordance with conditions for federal actions in the floodplain as set forth in EO 11988, Floodplains, and EO 11990, Wetlands, and the implementing regulation found at 44 CFR Part 9, Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands. These regulations apply to

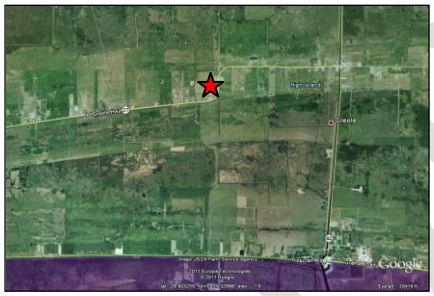
Agency actions which have the potential to affect floodplains or wetlands or their occupants, or which are subject to potential harm by location in floodplains or wetlands.

Additionally, FEMA Public Assistance grant funded projects carried out in the floodplain or affecting the floodplain must be coordinated with the local floodplain administrator for a floodplain development permit and the action must be undertaken in compliance with relevant, applicable, and required local codes and standards. This will reduce the risk of future flood loss, minimize the impacts of floods on safety, health, and welfare, and preserve and possibly restore beneficial floodplain values as required by Executive Order 11988.

3.3 Coastal Resources



The Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA) requires federal agency actions to be consistent with the policies of the state coastal zone management program when conducting or supporting activities that affect a designated coastal zone. The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) regulates development in Louisiana's coastal zone through the Coastal Use Permit Program. The existing facilities and the proposed project site are located in the coastal zone and are required to obtain a Coastal Use Permit from LDNR prior to construction (see photo inset at right of the site in relation to the Louisiana Coastal Zone).



The USFWS regulates federal funding in Coastal Barrier Resource System (CBRS) units under the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA). This Act protects undeveloped coastal barriers and related areas (i.e., Otherwise Protected Areas) by prohibiting direct or indirect federal funding of projects that support development in these areas. This promotes the appropriate use and conservation of coastal barriers along the Gulf of Mexico. The proposed project site is not located within a regulated CBRS unit (nearest units S-10 and LA-09, begin to the south of the project site across Gulf Beach Highway (see purple highlighted area in photo inset at left).

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not impact those sensitive coastal processes mentioned above.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Review of Louisiana's Coastal Zone Boundary Map identified that the construction of the proposed action is within the coastal zone jurisdiction therefore, the project would require a Coastal Use Permit (CUP) to ensure enforcement of applicable construction standards in implementing the proposed action. However, the project is not in a CBRS and would therefore, have no adverse impact to a CBRS unit(s).

3.4 Air Quality

The Clean Air Act (CAA) requires the State of Louisiana to adopt ambient air quality standards to protect the public from potentially harmful amounts of pollutants. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has designated areas meeting the state's ambient air quality standards by their monitoring and modeling program efforts. According to results from the state's air quality monitoring, Cameron Parish has been identified as currently meeting the ambient air quality standards; thus is in attainment (LDEQ, 2008).

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not adversely impact ambient air quality for the area.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Negligible impacts would be anticipated from vehicle exhaust emissions and increased dust during construction of the storage pavilion and elevated generator platform. The proposed action would not significantly affect the ambient air quality if. Best management practices, such as covering and / or wetting roads during construction activities, are required for reducing the amount of particulate matter (dust & vehicle emissions) from construction work occurring on the site.

3.5 Noise

Development of Cameron Parish's coastal communities extends in a line village pattern which follows Louisiana State Highway 82/27 from west to east (Cameron and Grand Chenier Communities, respectively). Existing ambient noise levels in the Creole area is consistent with traffic noise from rural residential as well as retail and light commercial related businesses present on either side of Highway 27 (a.k.a. West Creole Highway). There is also intermittent traffic noise from Highway 27, the main thoroughfare of the community. One traffic light is located along this main thoroughfare; however, it will not cause traffic backups that may lead to an increase in noise levels because of idling and accelerating vehicles.

The Cameron noise ordinance states that for construction and demolition, the operating of any equipment used in such work within 165 feet of any residential or noise sensitive area is prohibited between sunset and sunrise on weekdays and Saturdays; and 9:00PM to 8:00AM on Sundays and holidays (Cameron Parish Ordinance Article III, Sec. 15-32). Thus, noise levels generated for the proposed activities will be limited to workday daylight hours for the duration of the project.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not impact ambient noise levels of the Cameron community's surroundings.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Noise levels would increase within the proposed project site due to project construction activities and equipment, therefore, during the construction period of the proposed action, businesses and residents adjacent to the project site would experience an increase in noise levels. This noise increase and impact would be expected to be temporary and after the project completion, increased noise levels would be return to normal, i.e., those related to typical street and parking lot traffic of a small town urban area.

3.6 Biological Resources

Threatened and endangered species, national wildlife refuges, remarkable habitats (e.g., the Mississippi Flyway) for migratory waterfowls, neotropical songbirds and shorebirds (warbler, thrushes, red-tailed hawks, Mississippi kites, red-winged blackbirds, dabbling ducks, and cardinals) as well as mink, muskrat, armadillos, nutria and alligators are located in the vicinity of Creole. In addition, estuaries and marine waters located south of the proposed project site provide habitat for marine species such as blue crabs, white/brown shrimp, Gulf menhaden, red/black drum, spotted sea trout, southern flounder and catfish.

3.6.1 Plant Communities

Existing project-area vegetative communities consist of fresh, intermediate, and brackish marshes and open water. These areas are dominated by marshhay cordgrass (*Spartina patens*), Olney's three square (*Scirpus olneyi*), and leafy three square (*Scirpus maritimus*) (USFWS, 2004).

Review of USDAs threatened and endangered plants database and Louisiana State's Heritage Plant list identified that none of the five (5) flora species federally listed as being endangered or threatened have been either identified and/or reported as being present in the community of Cameron and/or the parish.

3.6.2 Fish and Shellfish Habitat

Project-area marshes and associated open-water habitats provide important habitat (e.g., nursery, escape cover, feeding grounds) for a variety of freshwater and estuarine-dependent fish and shellfish. Most of the economically important saltwater fishes and crustaceans harvested in Louisiana spawn offshore, and then use estuarine areas for nursery habitat.

Species typical of low-salinity areas include largemouth bass, crappie, bluegill, gar, and blue catfish. Species found in higher salinity areas, such as the project area, include Atlantic croaker, spot, Gulf menhaden, bay anchovy, red drum, black drum, southern flounder, blue crab, Gulf stone crab, brown shrimp, and white shrimp (LDNR, 2009).

Examination of the conditions of the site indicate that there is no or low potential for adverse effects to nearby fish and shellfish habitat due to activities proposed at the site.

3.6.3 Essential Fish Habitat

Detailed information on federally managed fisheries and their EFH is provided in the 2005 generic amendment of the Fishery Management Plans for the Gulf of Mexico prepared by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. That generic amendment was prepared as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). The nearest identified Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for all life stages of white shrimp, brown shrimp, stone crab, reef fish, pelagic, and red drum is five (5) miles south of the proposed project site (NOAA Essential Fish Habitat Mapper, 2011).

In addition to being designated as EFH for the above reference species, aquatic habitats that could possibly be affected by this project provide valuable nursery and foraging habitats for other economically important fishery species including Atlantic croaker, striped mullet, Gulf menhaden, and blue crab. Those estuarine-dependent species serve as prey for other species managed under the MSFCMA by the GMFMC (e.g., red drum, mackerels, snappers and groupers) and highly migratory species (e.g., billfishes and sharks) managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

A site reconnaissance and analysis of the potential for significant adverse effects resulting from the proposed site activities indicates there is little possibility for construction of the storage pavilion to adversely affect EFH.

3.6.4 Wildlife Habitat

The majority of the project area occurs on previously disturbed urban land. Nearby areas, including the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge and the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, provide habitat for more than 250 species of birds, 132 fishes, 36 reptiles and amphibians, and 28 kinds of mammals (FWS, 2004). The refuges (and the above-mentioned project-area marshes) are located at the termini of the Mississippi and Central Flyways and provide wintering habitat for 26 species of waterfowl such as dabbling ducks (i.e. mallard, gadwall, American widgeon, pintail, northern shoveler, green- and blue-winged teals) and diving ducks (i.e. lesser scaup and ring-necked) as well as several species of mergansers and geese (LDNR, 2009).

The project area also provides feeding and nesting habitat for numerous other migratory birds such as American coots, rails, gallinules, bitterns as well as several species of heron, egrets, and ibis. Other nongame birds such as the boat-tailed grackle, red winged blackbird, eastern kingbird, cormorants, anhinga, northern harrier, belted kingfisher and white pelican also use the project-area marshes. Reptiles and amphibian species found in the project area include American alligator, western cottonmouth, red-eared turtle, common snapping turtle, soft shell turtle, tree frogs, bullfrog and pig frog. Mammals that inhabit project-area habitats include nutria, muskrat, raccoon, river otter, mink, swamp rabbit, coyote, and white-tailed deer.

3.6.5 Threatened and Endangered Species

Nine (9) federally listed endangered or threatened species are found in Cameron Parish. Reconnaissance of the site confirmed the urban previously-disturbed site conditions and no listed species or critical habitats were identified present.

The endangered brown pelican (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) occurs within or adjacent to the proposed project area, however that species is not known to nest within the project area. The closest known pelican nesting colony is on Rabbit Island in southwestern Calcasieu Lake, 15 miles northeast of the project site. Pelicans feed in shallow estuarine waters in coastal Louisiana and may use the project area for feeding and/or loafing. Major threats to this species include chemical pollutants, colony site erosion, disease, and human disturbance.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not affect endangered, threatened or proposed listed species as well as listed critical habitats.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Construction of the storage pavilion would not impact or modify endangered, threatened, as well as proposed listed species, or federally listed critical habitat per USFWS Effects to Federal Trust Resources letter dated May 25, 2011 (Appendix B).

3.7 Cultural Resources

The consideration of impacts to cultural resources is mandated under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as implemented by 36 CFR Part 800. Requirements include the identification of significant historic properties that may be impacted by the proposed action or alternatives within the project's area of potential effect (APE). Historic properties are defined as archaeological sites, standing structures, or other historic resources listed in or determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. If adverse effects on historic, archaeological, or cultural properties are identified, agencies must consider effects of their activities and avoid, minimize, or mitigate the impacts to these resources.

FEMA has reviewed this project in accordance with the Statewide Programmatic Agreement (PA) dated August 17, 2009, between the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Louisiana GOHSEP, the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, the Caddo Nation, the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, the Quapaw Tribe of Oklahoma, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, the Seminole Tribe of Florida, the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. The PA was created to streamline the Section 106 review process.

Based on research using the National Register nomination on the Louisiana Division of Historic Preservation's website and FEMA's National Register maps, updated in coordination with SHPO

since Hurricane Katrina, there are no known archaeological sites within 0.5 miles of the APE. FEMA archaeologists conducted a site visit to the proposed new location and the current location and found no evidence of cultural resources.

Alternative 1 – No Action

This alternative would not include any FEMA undertaking; therefore would not impact any Historic and/or Cultural resources.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

The scope of work indicates ground disturbing activities associated with the construction of the new storage facility. A review of this alternative was conducted in accordance with FEMA's Statewide PA dated August 17, 2009. The scope of work meets the criteria in FEMA's PA dated August 17, 2009, Appendix C: Programmatic Allowances, Item 1, Section A and F. In accordance with this PA, FEMA is not required to consult with the SHPO where work performed meets these criteria. The applicant must comply with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act (R.S. 8:671 et seq.) and the Inadvertent Discovery Clause. If during the course of work, archaeological artifacts (prehistoric or historic) or human remains are discovered, the applicant shall stop work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The applicant shall inform their Public Assistance contacts at FEMA, who will in turn contact FEMA Historic Preservation (HP) staff. The applicant will not proceed with work until FEMA HP completes consultation with the SHPO. In addition, if unmarked graves are present, compliance with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act (R.S. 8:671 et seq.) is required. The applicant shall notify the law enforcement agency of the jurisdiction where the remains are located within twenty-four hours of the discovery. The applicant shall also notify FEMA and the Louisiana Division of Archaeology at 225-342-8170 within seventy-two hours of the discovery. Failure to comply with these stipulations may jeopardize receipt of FEMA funding.

3.8 Traffic and Safety

Cameron Parish's coastal communities extend in a line village pattern that is linked by the Louisiana's State Highway 82/27. The highway consists of two lanes; one lane each dedicated for east and west travel. The highway is named West Creole Highway / East Creole Road when traveling through Creole and is the community's "*Main Street*". There is one traffic signal light located along this segment of the highway. The speed limit is posted at 45 miles per hour traveling through the community.

There are no center turn lanes present at that section of the highway traversing in front of the proposed construction site. Access and egress to commercial, residents, and businesses located on highway frontage traveling on and off of West Creole Highway is through a single driveway entrance on the west border to Highway 82/27. Although there are no pedestrian sidewalks on either side of this street, there are well-defined drainageways along both sides.

The existing transportation infrastructure is sufficient to accommodate these increases without impacting local traffic.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not adversely affect traffic patterns.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

During construction the contractor must place fencing around the site perimeter or take other reasonable precautions to protect residents from accidental ingress or trespassing. The contractor must post appropriate signage and fencing to minimize foreseeable potential adverse public safety concerns. Appropriate signage and barriers must be in place prior to construction activities in order to alert pedestrians and motorists of project activities and traffic pattern changes (detours/lanes dedicated for construction equipment egress). Upon completion of the proposed action, there would be minimal effect on the current traffic patterns.

3.9 Environmental Justice

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, mandates that federal agencies identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of programs on minority and low-income populations.

Review of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Environmental Justice Assessment Mapper identifies that the population of Cameron Parish is diverse in its ethnic composition (USEPA Environmental Justice Geographic Mapper, 2011). Hence, there were no identified areas showing a high concentration of a specific ethnic background or affluence within and surrounding the community.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not impact low income or minority populations.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

The proposed action will not pose disproportionately high and adverse public health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations. The construction of the storage pavilion would allow for the storage of equipment that would be utilized in the event of a storm or natural disaster such as Hurricane Rita. This equipment would be used to provide necessary services and protection to all citizens.

3.10 Hazardous Materials and Waste

Hazardous wastes, as defined by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), are defined as "a solid waste, or combination of solid wastes, which 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, disposed of or otherwise managed.

A review of data sources (e.g., U.S. EPA EnviroMapper and Electronic Document Management System™) revealed that the proposed project site is not on federal and/or state agency's lists concerning Volunteer Remedial Program, Brownfield Program, underground storage tank decommission, waste/debris disposal facilities, and oil/gas wells sites. According to historical aerial photographs through 1998 to 2008 and a 1998 topographic map, there were no obvious structures on the proposed site and no obvious sites of concern in the vicinity of proposed project area.

Alternative 1 – No Action

Implementation of the no action alternative would not disturb any hazardous materials or create potential hazards to human health.

Alternative 2 – Proposed Action: Construct a Storage Pavilion and Purchase Capital Equipment

Construction of a storage pavilion would not disturb any hazardous materials or create increased potential hazards to human health. The proposed site is not adjacent to hazardous or solid waste facilities. If hazardous materials are unexpectedly encountered in the project area during the construction activities, appropriate measures for the proper assessment, remediation, management and disposal of the contamination must be initiated in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local regulations. The contractor is required to take appropriate actions to prevent, minimize, and control the spill of hazardous materials at the proposed site.

4.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are those effects on the environment that result from the incremental effect of the action when added to past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (federal or nonfederal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative effects can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

The impact of Hurricane Rita's storm surge devastated the southwestern coastal region of Louisiana. There are numerous other critical facilities projects to repair buildings, roads, recreational facilities, and public utilities to pre-disaster conditions that include upgrades to

codes and standards surrounding the proposed project site. The area is also undergoing restorations and/or repairs using non-FEMA funding.

The cumulative impact to the natural resources and socio-economics from the proposed action would be minimal and would not have significant cumulative affects to the environment.

5.0 CONDITIONS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Based upon the studies, reviews and consultations undertaken in this environmental assessment, several conditions and mitigation measures must be taken by the applicant prior to and during proposed project implementation.

- Prior to initiating any work, Cameron Parish will need to coordinate with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) Coastal Zone Management Department for an approved Coastal Use Permit. Cameron Parish must ensure that contractors follow permit requirements, conditions, and construction procedures and standards during construction work. Projects may be coordinated by contacting LDNR at 1-800-267-4019.

- FEMA Public Assistance grant funded projects carried out in the floodplain or affecting the floodplain must be coordinated with the local floodplain administrator for a floodplain development permit and the action must be undertaken in compliance with relevant, applicable and required local codes and standards and thereby, will reduce the risk of future flood loss, minimize the impacts of floods on safety, health, and welfare, and preserve and possibly restore beneficial floodplain values as required by Executive Order 11988.

- If during the course of work, archaeological artifacts (prehistoric or historic) or human remains are discovered, the applicant shall stop work in the vicinity of the discovery and take all reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The applicant shall inform their Public Assistance contacts at FEMA, who will in turn contact FEMA HP staff. The applicant will not proceed with work until FEMA HP completes consultation with the SHPO. In addition, if unmarked graves are present, compliance with the Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Preservation Act (R.S. 8:671 et seq.) is required. The applicant shall notify the law enforcement agency of the jurisdiction where the remains are located within twenty-four hours of the discovery. The applicant shall also notify FEMA and the Louisiana Division of Archaeology at 225-342-8170 within seventy-two hours of the discovery. Failure to comply with these stipulations may jeopardize receipt of FEMA funding.

- The applicant must follow all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations and requirements and obtain and comply with all required permits and approvals prior to initiating work.

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND AGENCY CONSULTATIONS

FEMA is the lead federal agency for conducting the NEPA compliance process for this Environmental Assessment and FEMA Public Assistance grant funded project. It is the responsibility of the lead agency to conduct the preparation and review of NEPA documents in a way that is responsive to the needs of the Parish communities while meeting the spirit and intent of NEPA and complying with mandated provisions. As part of the development of early interagency coordination related to the proposed action, state and federal resource protection agencies were contacted and FEMA distributed an informal scoping notification through a Solicitation of Views.

These agencies include the State Historical Preservation Officer, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration National Marine Fisheries Service. FEMA has received no objections to the project as proposed subsequent to these notifications and comments and conditions received have been incorporated into this NEPA document.

FEMA is inviting the public to comment on the proposed action during a fifteen (15) day comment period. A public notice will be published for 5 days in the local newspaper, The Cameron Pilot, announcing the availability of this EA for review at the Cameron Parish Library at 469 Marshall Street, Cameron, Louisiana. A copy of the Public Notice is attached in Appendix C.

7.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

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Appendix A

Site Construction Plans

Appendix B

Agency Correspondence

Appendix C

Public Notice

FEMA PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE CAMERON PARISH WATERWORKS DISTRICT #7 STORAGE PAVILION AND PURCHASE OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT, CAMERON PARISH, LOUISIANA

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed construction of a storage pavilion and the purchase of capital equipment in lieu of replacing the Hurricane Rita damaged Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 office building and storage shed formerly located at 132 Raymond Richard Road, Cameron, Louisiana and 4790 West Creole Highway, Cameron, Louisiana, respectively. Cameron Parish Waterworks District #7 relocated their administrative functions to the Creole Fire Station building and proposed to use the storage pavilion and capital equipment to serve the needs of the community in the event of another disaster. Cameron Parish seeks federal grant funds for this action eligible under a Presidential Disaster Declaration, signed on September 24, 2005 (FEMA-1607-DR-LA).

This proposed action would include developing an approximate one acre site (termed "Proposed Storage Pavilion Site") adjacent to and on the west side of Creole Highway Highway/Louisiana Highway 82. This would include constructing an approximately 1500 square foot open pavilion to mainly store the capital equipment purchased, which will be used to service the needs of the community in the event of another disaster. Activities would include, where necessary, site clearing, grading, driveway construction, and placement of appurtenant utilities (electricity) for the site. Per the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq.*), and associated environmental statutes, a Draft EA has been prepared to evaluate the action's potential impacts on the human and natural environment. This Draft EA summarizes the purpose and need, site selection process, affected environment, and potential environmental consequences associated with the proposed action.

The public comment period will be 15 days – October 17, 2011 through October 31, 2011. Written comments on the Draft EA or related matters can be faxed to FEMA's Louisiana Recovery Office at (504) 762-3232; or mailed to FEMA Louisiana Recovery Office, 1 Seine Court, New Orleans, Louisiana 70114. The Draft EA can be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website: http://www.fema.gov/plan/ehp/envdocuments/ea-region6.shtm. A public notice will be published for 5 days in the local newspaper, The Cameron Pilot, announcing the availability of the Draft EA for public review at the Cameron Parish Main Library at 469 Marshall Street, Cameron, Louisiana (hours are 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Mon.-Thurs. and 8:00 AM to 4:00PM Fri.).

Based on FEMA's findings to date, no significant adverse environmental effects are anticipated. However, if FEMA receives new information that results in a change from no adverse effects then FEMA would revise the findings and issue a second public notice allowing time for additional comments. However, if there are no changes, this Draft EA will become the Final EA.

If no substantive comments are received, the Draft EA and associated Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will become final and this initial Public Notice will also serve as the final Public Notice. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.