



FEMA

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Louisiana Recovery Office
1 Seine Court, 4th Floor
New Orleans, Louisiana 70114

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
for the
FORKED ISLAND/EAST BROUSSARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FLOOD
PROTECTION PROJECT
ABBEVILLE, LOUISIANA
FEMA-1603-DR-LA

BACKGROUND

The Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School, located at 19635 Columbus Road, Abbeville, LA was substantially damaged by flooding as a direct result of Hurricane Rita on September 24, 2005. As a result, Vermilion Parish (Applicant) has requested federal funding through FEMA's 404 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to construct a ring concrete flood wall and earthen berm around the Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School structure, the top of which will be approximately 14 feet above mean sea level (msl), which is one foot above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 13 feet above msl, as indicated on the effective Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs).

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 a ring concrete flood wall and earthen berm around the Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School structure 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 Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School structure to one foot above the BFE; thereby, reducing the risk of future damage from flooding. The alternatives considered include 1) No Action, 2) Demolish the existing facilities and reconstruct the Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School structure on the same site, which would be elevated with fill (Eliminated from further consideration), 3) Construction of a ring concrete flood wall/earthen berm around the existing Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School structure with manual gates (Eliminated from further consideration), 4) Relocation of the Forked Island/East Broussard students to another location within Vermilion Parish (Eliminated from further consideration), 5) Relocate the Forked Island/East Broussard school structure to another location (Eliminated from further consideration), and 6) Construction of a ring concrete flood wall/earthen berm around the existing Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School structure with automatic gates (Proposed Action).

The applicant proposes to construct an approximately 2,120 linear feet of earthen berm and 540 linear feet of concrete floodwall around the perimeter of the Forked Island/east

Broussard Elementary School. The proposed action will provide protection to one foot above the BFE as indicated on the DFIRMs. The concrete flood/earthen berm will be approximately 9.0 feet above grade on average and will be 3.5 feet above floodwater levels experienced during Hurricane Rita. The proposed project also includes the installation of a pumping station and a retention pond within the proposed berm area and a discharge ditch outside of the berm area.

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:

- 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 miles per hour (mph) to minimize pollution/fugitive dust. In addition, during the construction of the pond, the contractor would be responsible for keeping the pond covered during non-work hours to prevent water and air erosion of the pond during rain events or high winds.
- If the project results in a discharge to waters of the state, submittal of a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (LPDES) application may be necessary.
- If the project results in a discharge of wastewater to an existing wastewater treatment system, that wastewater treatment system may need to modify its LPDES permit before accepting the additional wastewater.
- LDEQ has stormwater general permits for construction areas equal to or greater than one acre. 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 is required to implement BMPs that meet the LDEQ permitting specifications for storm water discharge regulated under Section 402 of the CWA.
- Any changes or modifications to the proposed project would require a revised USACE 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.

- All precautions should be observed to protect the groundwater of the region.
- 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.
- The applicant would be responsible for contacting the USFWS if there is a change in the scope of work, the project necessitates removal of mature pine trees, construction activities have not been initiated within one year, or if any new bald eagle nests are observed in proximity to the proposed project activities during the next nesting season (October 1 through mid-May). If the projects have not been initiated within one year, follow up consultation is required with the USFWS prior to construction.
- 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 Act (OSHA) requirements. To alert motorists and pedestrians of project activities, appropriate signage and barriers should be used during construction.
- If archaeological artifacts or features (prehistoric or historic) are discovered during the course of FEMA funded work at the Forked Island/East Broussard Elementary School, 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 Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) and FEMA of the discovery and FEMA will deploy an archaeologist to the location to conduct a site condition assessment. The Applicant will 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 will immediately notify GOHSEP, FEMA, the local Police Department, and the local Coroner's Office of the discovery. The local Coroner's Office will 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 will take jurisdiction over the remains. Within twenty-four (24) hours, FEMA will notify the Louisiana Division of Archaeology (225-342-8170) of the finding. Within seventy-two (72) hours, FEMA will 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).

- 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.

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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FEMA 1603-1607-DR-LA

Date

Joseph Threat
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Date