



**FEMA**

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

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
FOR THE  
SEWERAGE & WATER BOARD OF NEW ORLEANS  
RECONSTRUCTION/ELEVATION AND HARDENING OF NINE (9) SEWAGE  
PUMP STATIONS PROJECT  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA  
*FEMA-1603-DR-LA***

**BACKGROUND**

The sanitary sewer system of the City of New Orleans is a gravity collection system consisting of 1,600 miles of lateral and trunk sewer lines, ranging in size from eight (8) inches to seven (7) feet in diameter. Lifting and conveying the raw sewage by trunk sewers and sewer force mains requires 82 electrically operated sewage pump stations (SPSs) and lift stations, 79 of which are operated automatically, with no man power required other than periodic maintenance.

During Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005, floodwaters caused significant damage to nine (9) SPSs in Orleans Parish. The SPSs are located at:

- SPS 8 – Corner of North Broad Avenue and Toulouse Street (Existing Location)
- SPS 8 – Corner of Lafitte Street and North Dorgenois Street (Proposed New Location)
- Bullard SPS – 5501 Bullard Avenue
- Dotd SPS – 8118 Chef Menteur Highway
- SPS 6 – 242 Solomon Street
- Lake Forest SPS – 10451 Lake Forest Boulevard
- Lawrence SPS – 7900 Morrison Road
- Plum Orchard SPS – 7300 Chef Menteur Highway
- Victoria SPS – 3620 Victoria Street
- Burke SPS- 9001 Morrison Rd

These SPSs were flooded to some degree for 51 days and were inoperable for 27 months after Hurricane Katrina. As a result, Orleans Parish (Applicant) has requested federal funding through FEMA's 404 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to reconstruct/elevate these nine (9) existing sewage pump stations to prevent future flood damage to these critical installations.

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 the reconstruction/elevation and hardening of these nine (9) SPSs 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 SPS critical electrical equipment to at least the BFE, and where possible, to or above the 500-year flood levels for each site; thereby, reducing the risk of future damage from flooding. The alternatives considered include 1) No Action; 2) Elevation of the electrical equipment three (3) to four (4) feet above ground level on a metal platform without any protective enclosure; 3) Reconstruction of SPS 8 at a new location not owned by the City of New Orleans; and 4) Reconstruction/elevation and hardening of eight (8) of the SPSs at the same location and one (1) SPS at new location owned by the City of New Orleans (Proposed Action).

The applicant proposes to construct a new structure at each location. All critical electrical equipment would be elevated to varying heights above ground level, depending on the location. The structures would be constructed of concrete masonry shell walls. Excavation and trenching would be required to install all submerged pumps and underground piping from the SPS to the main sewer line under the adjacent public street. At all locations, some work on the public street at the entrance of the SPS would be required. At the SPS 8 and SPS 6 locations, extensive work on the public streets would be required.

### **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 funding:

- The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has stormwater general permits for construction areas equal to or greater than one (1) 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 Best Management Practices that meet the LDEQ permitting specifications for storm water discharge regulated under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act. All precautions should be observed to control nonpoint source pollution from construction activities.

- 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.
- This project may require a Coastal Use Permit (CUP) from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR). Determination of CUP requirements must be obtained through the submission of a completed CUP application to the LDNR. Projects may be coordinated by contacting the LDNR at (225) 342-7591 or 1-800-267-4019. Refer to CUP Number P20120106. The application packet may be obtained by calling (225) 342-7591 or (800) 267-4019, or from the LDNR website:  
<http://dnr.louisiana.gov/index.cfm?md=pagebuilder&tmp=home&pid=93&pnid=189&nid=191>.
- The Applicant must coordinate with the Orleans Levee District (OLD) at (504) 286-3100 Ext. 1007. Alternatively, the OLD may be contacted by email to [ggillen@orleanslevee.com](mailto:ggillen@orleanslevee.com) or [pjohnson@orleanslevee.com](mailto:pjohnson@orleanslevee.com) to determine if a construction permit would be required.
- 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.
- The Applicant would be responsible for contacting the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) if there is a change in the scope of work, the project necessitates removal of mature pine trees or if construction activities have not been initiated within one year.
- Unusable equipment, debris and material shall be disposed of in an approved manner and location. In the event significant items (or evidence thereof) are discovered during implementation of the project applicant shall handle, manage, and dispose of petroleum products, hazardous materials and/or toxic waste in accordance to the requirements and to the satisfaction of the governing local, state and federal agencies. Applicant is responsible for acquiring LDEQ permits for the temporary debris staging and reduction sites (TDSRS) associated with this project prior to project closeout. Failure to provide FEMA with LDEQ approval may jeopardize pw funding eligibility

- If a bald eagle or its nest is spotted within 1,500 feet of the project site during the months of October through mid-May, the Applicant must cease construction activities and contact Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the USFWS immediately. All correspondence must be documented and remain in the project permanent files.
- 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. Traffic on affected streets would be controlled, as necessary, during construction and excavation activities.
- 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 (GOSHEP) 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 and other appropriate consulting parties 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 seventy-two (72) hours, the Applicant will notify FEMA and the Louisiana Division of Archaeology (225-342-8170) of the finding. FEMA will assist, as requested, 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.

- FEMA will digitally photograph the interior and exterior of SPS 6 and SPS 8 prior to demolition and within two (2) months of SHPO concurrence of this determination. FEMA will also prepare a narrative history of the New Orleans Drainage, Sewerage, and Water System. The first draft will be completed within six (6) months of SHPO concurrence of this determination.
- Any change to the approved scope of work will require reevaluation under Section 106 and NEPA.
- In accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations, the Applicant is responsible for acquiring any necessary permits and/or clearances prior to the commencement of any construction related activities.

**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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Katherine Zeringue,  
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 Louisiana Recovery Office  
 FEMA 1603-1607-DR-LA

Date

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Joseph Threat  
 Executive Director  
 Louisiana Recovery Office  
 FEMA 1603-1607-DR-LA

Date