



**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
HIGHWAY 90 PORTION
RESTORE BILOXI PROGRAM
HARRISON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
FEMA-1604-DR-MS**

The City of Biloxi has applied for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding under FEMA's Public Assistance Program for the proposed construction of the Highway 90 Section of the Restore Biloxi Program in Biloxi, Harrison County, Mississippi.

On August 29, 2005 the storm surge from Hurricane Katrina inundated the City of Biloxi, damaging a large portion of the City's water, sanitary sewerage and stormwater drainage collection systems, including a number of the lift stations. The proposed project will repair or replace damaged water, sewerage and stormwater drainage facilities in order to restore the City's infrastructure to pre-Katrina conditions. The efficiency of these systems will be improved while reducing the potential for future storm impacts. Some existing sewer lift stations will be eliminated and the affected flows consolidated into new gravity sanitary sewers, which are less susceptible to future storm-related damage.

Under the Proposed Action Alternative, the City of Biloxi proposes to repair/replace sanitary sewerage lines, water lines, stormwater drainage and lift stations, and perform associated minor roadway rehabilitation work within a corridor extending approximately 8.5 miles along Highway 90, from Wal Mart Lane eastward to Point Cadet. The City proposes to acquire easements, as necessary, in order to relocate existing water lines, sewer lines, and stormwater drainage lines that are currently located in Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) right-of-way beneath and adjacent to Highway 90.

The project area consists of generally linear improvements in an area approximately 8.5 miles long by 20 feet wide north of and adjacent to Highway 90. The areas that will be affected include MDOT-maintained right-of-way occupied by Highway 90 frontage roads, as well as sidewalks, parking lots, and vegetated portions of private, commercial and municipal properties adjacent to Highway 90. The project is divided into ten sections (from west to east): BEA1, BEA2, BEA3, ROD9, BVW1, BVW2, BVE1, BVE2, STM1, and STM2. The terrain is relatively flat with a slight slope from north to south. The entire project area is located within the 100-year floodplain in zones AE (base floodplain) and VE (base floodplain with additional velocity hazard due to wave action). The Eight-Step Planning Process for Floodplains and Wetlands has been completed.

This proposed project as described in the EA was evaluated for any potential significant adverse impacts to existing land use, water resources (surface water, groundwater, waters of the United States, and floodplains), air quality, noise, biological resources (vegetation, fish and wildlife, State and Federally-listed threatened or endangered species and critical habitat), and cultural resources. It was also evaluated for safety and hazardous materials issues as well as for disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority or low income populations.

FINDINGS

The proposed project as described in the EA will not adversely impact geology, groundwater, socioeconomic resources (environmental justice), or biological resources under the Proposed Action Alternative. During the construction period, short-term impacts to soils, surface water, transportation, air quality, and noise are anticipated. All short-term impacts will be mitigated using BMPs, such as silt fences and proper equipment maintenance. To ensure that adverse effects to cultural resources are avoided, monitoring during construction and additional Phase II testing of sites specified by MDAH will be conducted by a qualified cultural resource professional in coordination with MDAH. If unexpected discoveries are made and unrecorded cultural resources are encountered during the course of project execution, all work will cease and MDAH will be contacted immediately.

Minor, long-term impacts to the 100-year floodplain would occur. There will be minimal placement of above-ground fill material in the floodplain where necessary to facilitate proper drainage. Although the proposed project would occur entirely in the 100-year floodplain, the majority of the infrastructure improvements (sanitary sewer lines, water lines, and stormwater drainage facilities) would be constructed below ground.

CONDITIONS

The City of Biloxi shall comply with all prescribed conditions set forth in the EA, including but not limited to the following condition. Failure to comply with this condition may jeopardize the receipt of Federal funding.

- 1) To ensure that adverse effects to cultural resources are avoided, monitoring by a qualified cultural resource professional will be conducted during earthmoving activities in the areas of 22Hr911 and 22Hr591. Additional Phase II testing will be conducted prior to earthmoving activities in areas 22Hr510, 22Hr513, 22Hr1042, 22Hr1160 (a newly identified site), and 22HR999 to determine whether or not these sites are eligible for listing in the NRHP. If unexpected discoveries are made and unrecorded cultural resources are encountered during the course of project execution, all work will cease and MDAH will be contacted immediately.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on input and consultations with Federal and State resource agencies, and other identified sources documented in the attached EA and in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act FEMA regulations (44 CFR Part 10) for environmental considerations, and executive orders on floodplains (EO 11988), wetlands (EO 11990) and environmental justice (EO 12898), FEMA has found that the proposed project with the prescribed mitigation measures as defined in the EA will have no significant impact on the natural or human environment. As a result of this Finding of No Significant Impact, an EIS will not be prepared and the proposed project with prescribed conditions may proceed. If a change in the scope of work occurs, the State and FEMA must be notified to evaluate if the proposed change would alter the potential impacts on the environment.

Recommended:

Approved

Michael Grisham

Date

J. Randy Walker

Date

FEMA Environmental Liaison Officer

FEMA Infrastructure Branch Chief