

No Federal Action Alternative; (2) Proposed Projects; (3) Reduced Aquatic Impacts Alternative; (4) Previously Proposed Project; and (5) No Build Alternative. The Draft EIR/EIS will also consider any other reasonable alternative(s) identified during the scoping or the preparation of the document.

3. *Scoping Process:* Pursuant to CEQA and NEPA, the City and USACE must include a "scoping" process for the Draft EIR/EIS. Scoping primarily involves determining the scope of issues to be addressed in the Draft EIR/EIS and identifying the anticipated significant issues for in-depth analysis. The scoping process includes public participation to integrate public needs and concerns regarding the proposed action into the process.

a. *Public Involvement Program:* Vehicles for public comment on the proposed action will include: a public hearing to be conducted jointly by the City and USACE, the preparation of the Draft EIR/EIS, and receipt of public comment in response to the Draft EIR/EIS. In addition, affected Federal, state and local agencies, affected Native American tribes, and other interested private organizations and parties are encouraged to participate in the program.

b. *Significant Issues to be Analyzed in Depth in the Draft EIR/EIS:* The following significant environmental issues have already been identified and will be analyzed in depth in the Draft EIR/EIS: (1) Aesthetics; (2) Agriculture; (3) Air Quality; (4) Biological Resources; (5) Cultural Resources; (6) Geology/Soils; (7) Hazards/Hazardous Materials; (8) Hydrology/Water Quality; (9) Land Use/Planning; (10) Noise; (11) Population and Housing; (12) Public Services; (13) Recreation; (14) Traffic and Circulation; and (15) Utilities/Service Systems.

c. *Environmental Review/Consultation Requirements:*

- National Environmental Policy Act.
- Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
- Endangered Species Act.
- Clean Air Act.
- National Historic Preservation Act.
- California Environmental Quality Act.

- Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

4. *Scoping Meeting:* The City and the USACE will hold a scoping meeting at the Fairfield City Council Chambers, 1000 Webster Street, Fairfield, CA 94533-4883, to provide information on the project and receive oral comments on the scope of the document on March 16, 2009, at 7 p.m. Mail comments within 30 days of publication to: Mr. Bryan Matsumoto, U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers, 1455 Market Street, CESP-N-R-N, San Francisco, CA 94103-1398, or: Mr. David Feinstein, Senior Planner, Department of Community Development, City of Fairfield, 1000 Webster Street, Fairfield, California 94533-4883.

5. *Availability of Draft EIR/EIS:* The Draft EIR/EIS is expected to be available for public review August 2009.

(Authority: 40 CFR part 1501.7)

Dated: February 13, 2009.

**Laurence M. Farrell,**

*Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, Commanding.*

[FR Doc. E9-4201 Filed 2-26-09; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3720-58-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

#### **Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Little Colorado River at Winslow, a Feasibility Study of a Portion of the Little Colorado River From Chevelon Canyon to the North End of the Winslow Levee, in and Near Winslow, Navajo County, AZ**

**AGENCY:** Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DOD.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** Analyses of foreseeable environmental impacts from potential actions along the Little Colorado River in the vicinity of the City of Winslow, Navajo County, AZ, will commence. No explicit plans have been advanced as yet, so contents of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) remain to be determined during the public scoping process. The Little Colorado River at Winslow Study area encompasses the floodplain of the Little Colorado River (LCR) from Chevelon Canyon downstream (northwest) to the north end of the existing Winslow Levee, a distance of about 18 river miles. The study area includes the majority of the City of Winslow, including the Ruby Wash Diversion Levee and the Ruby Wash Levee.

The purposes of this Feasibility Study are to develop and evaluate potential non-structural and engineered solutions to address flooding issues within the City of Winslow, and to investigate potential opportunities for ecosystem restoration along the LCR and its tributaries in the vicinity of Winslow. There is also an opportunity to provide much-needed recreational opportunities concurrent with flood risk management and ecosystem restoration. If there are measures and alternatives or plans that

could be implemented within the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, (USACE) missions, Navajo County has indicated their interest to support and provide necessary cost-sharing and other requirements for the project. Navajo County has identified within this length of the river needs associated with loss of native riparian habitat and the presence of significant cultural resources. Those needs will guide the formulation of plans for this segment of the Little Colorado River. The USACE and Navajo County, AZ, will cooperate in conducting this Feasibility Study.

**ADDRESSES:** District Engineer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, ATTN: CESPL-PD-RP, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Michael J. Fink, Environmental Manager, telephone (602) 640-2001, ext. 232, or Mr. Mike Ternak, Project Manager, telephone (602) 640-2004, ext. 272. The cooperating entity, Navajo County, requests inquiries be directed to Mr. Homero Vela, telephone (928) 524-4000, for any additional information.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

1. *Authorization.* This study has been conducted under the authority provided by the Flood Control Act of 1937. This authority amends the Flood Control Act of 1936 to permit the Secretary of the Army, through the Chief of Engineers, to conduct preliminary examinations and surveys for flood control at the Little Colorado River upstream from the boundary of the Navajo Indian Reservation. Further authority is provided under House Committee on Public Works Resolution (Docket 2425) May 17, 1994 which states:

\* \* \* The Secretary of Army is hereby requested to review reports of the Chief of Engineers on the State of Arizona \* \* \* in the interest of flood damage reduction, environmental protection and restoration, and related purposes.

2. *Background.* The Little Colorado River (LCR) Watershed encompasses an area of approximately 27,051 square miles in northeastern Arizona and northwestern New Mexico. The drainage basin of the LCR is about 245 miles long and 158 miles wide at the widest point. The mainstem of the LCR is entirely in Arizona, has a channel length of 356 miles, and total elevation drop of about 6,300 feet from its headwaters in the White Mountains to its confluence with the Colorado River. The LCR flows in generally a northwest direction and receives runoff from 18 sub-watershed basins and contributing drainage areas with hundreds of miles of small tributary streams. The

tributaries of Ruby Wash, Clear Creek, Cottonwood Wash and Salt Creek join the LCR within the study area. The LCR joins the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon on the northwest edge of the basin. The City of Winslow is located in the west-central part of the LCR Watershed in western Navajo County, AZ.

The LCR was once a broad and flat bottomland environment, conveying shallow perennial flows along a braided, meandering channel. As a result, numerous backwater sloughs and marshes offered appropriate biotic conditions and habitat for a diversity of riparian species. Today the LCR is a deep, narrow, incised channel which experiences only intermittent to ephemeral flows. This entrenchment has disconnected large parts of the floodplain from the river. During flooding, channel migration results from sedimentation deposition and scour. This erosion has contributed to habitat degradation and threatened cultural resources throughout the Watershed. Riparian vegetation has been largely replaced by the non-native salt cedar, which forms almost pure in-channel stands. Changes in vegetation types, channel morphology and sediment transport are believed to be contributing to the flooding problems being experienced by the Winslow community.

In response to recurrent flooding problems along the LCR, Navajo County requested assistance from the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) to build the Winslow Levee in 1979. The 7.2 mile Winslow Levee was constructed along the west side of the LCR between 1986 and 1989 for the purpose of providing 100-year flood protection to the city. This levee has failed twice in recent years. The levee was overtopped in 1993, resulting in washout of a 400-foot levee section, and damage to an additional 3,000 feet of levee. The resulting flooding inundated 204 parcels and 140 structures. Permanent levee repairs were completed in 1994. However, problems with the levee continue as evidenced by a second levee failure in 2003. This was a piping failure, believed to have been caused by desiccation cracks, root channels, rodent burrows, a structural flaw, and other factors.

Recent studies indicate that the levee now only provides a 55-year level of protection. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has completed decertification of the levee for 100-year protection, returning approximately 2,700 individual parcels and 1,500 structures to the regulated floodplain. Owners of developed

properties in this area will now be required to obtain flood insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program. The Navajo County Public Works Department is attempting to rehabilitate the levee along the 7.2 mile reach east of Winslow. Navajo County is seeking assistance from the USACE to resolve recurrent flooding problems in the Winslow community.

The potential environmental impacts to be evaluated by this DEIS will include: (1) Non-structural solutions to address flooding issues; (2) engineered solutions to address flooding issues; (3) opportunities for ecosystem restoration, especially as necessary to support the primary purpose of flood risk management; (4) mitigation of impacts to cultural resources, and; (5) designs for recreational features which would be most compatible with the natural resources of the region.

Prehistoric and historic cultural resources are abundant along the 18 mile reach of the Little Colorado River Feasibility Study area. Sensitive natural habitats for federally listed species in the general vicinity of the confluence of Chevelon Creek with the Little Colorado River have previously been identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD).

3. *Proposed Action.* No plan of action has yet been identified.

4. *Alternatives.* a—No Action: No plans would be implemented to reduce flood risk to the Winslow area.

b—Proposed Alternative Plans: None have been formulated to date.

5. *Public Involvement.* Public involvement, an essential part of the EIS process, is integral to assessing the environmental consequences of the proposed action and improving the quality of the environmental decision making. The public includes affected and interested Federal, State, and local agencies, Indian tribes, concerned citizens, stakeholders, and other interested parties. Public participation in the EIS process will be strongly encouraged, both formally and informally, to enhance the probability of a more technically accurate, economically feasible, and socially and politically acceptable EIS. Public involvement will include but is not limited to: Information dissemination; identification of problems, needs and opportunities; idea generation; public education; problem solving; providing feedback on proposals; evaluation of alternatives; conflict resolution by consensus; public and scoping notices and meetings; public, stakeholder and advisory groups consultation and meetings; and making the EIS and

supporting information readily available in conveniently located places, such as libraries and on the Internet.

Participation of all interested Federal, State, and County resource agencies, as well as Native American peoples, groups with environmental interests, and all interested individuals is encouraged. Public involvement will be most beneficial and worthwhile in identifying pertinent environmental issues, offering useful information such as published or unpublished data, direct personal experience or knowledge which inform decision making, assistance in defining the scope of plans which ought to be considered, and recommending suitable mitigation measures warranted by such plans. Those wishing to contribute information, ideas, alternatives for actions, and so forth can furnish these contributions in writing to the points of contacts indicated above, or by attending public scoping meetings. Notice of public scoping meetings will be published in the local and regional newspapers.

When plans have been devised and alternatives formulated to embody those plans, potential environmental and social impacts will be evaluated in the DEIS. These analyses will emphasize at least fifteen categories of resources: Land use, impromptu historic landfills created by dumping trash over the banks, hazardous wastes, physical environment, hydrology, groundwater, biological, archaeological, historical, geological, air quality, noise, transportation, socioeconomics, and safety.

6. *Scoping Process.* Scoping, an early and open process for identifying the scope of significant issues related to the proposed action to be addressed in the EIS, will be used to: (a) Identify the affected public and agency concerns; (b) facilitate an efficient EIS preparation process; (c) define the issues and alternatives that will be examined in detail in the EIS; and (d) save time in the overall process by helping to ensure that the Draft EIS adequately addresses relevant issues. An initial public scoping meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 24, 2009, in Winslow, AZ. Announcements through local and regional media, as well as a scoping meeting public notice announcing the location, date and time of the scoping meeting will be mailed to all interested parties during February 2009. Interested parties are encouraged to express their views throughout the entire study process. Comments will be welcomed at the public scoping meeting. In addition, written comments will also be accepted during the scoping comment period

which will extend 30 days from the date of the scoping meeting public notice.

7. *Interagency Coordination and Cooperation.* The USACE and the USFWS have formally committed to work together to conserve, protect, and restore fish and wildlife resources while ensuring environmental sustainability of our Nation's water resources under the January 22, 2003, Partnership Agreement for Water Resources and Fish and Wildlife. The USFWS will provide a Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report. Coordination will be maintained with the USFWS regarding threatened and endangered species under their jurisdictional responsibilities. The Arizona Game and Fish Department (AZGFD) will be consulted concerning potential impacts to sensitive species and habitats. Coordination will be maintained with the Advisory Counsel on Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Coordination will be maintained with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) concerning compliance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations."

8. *Availability of the EIS.* It is anticipated that the DEIS will be available for public review during the spring of 2011. The DEIS or a Notice of Availability (NOA) will be provided during the 45-day review period to affected Federal, State and local agencies, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties.

Dated: February 25, 2009.

**Thomas H. Magnus,**

*Colonel, U.S. Army, District Engineer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

#### Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Southwest Coastal Louisiana Feasibility Study

**AGENCY:** Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The Corps of Engineers (Corps) intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Southwest Coastal Louisiana Feasibility Study for Calcasieu, Cameron and Vermilion Parishes,

Louisiana. The Corps will evaluate a full suite of structural, nonstructural and coastal restoration measures to achieve hurricane protection and storm damage risk reduction within Calcasieu, Cameron and Vermilion Parishes in Louisiana. Southwestern Louisiana has been affected by several named storms in the past 50 years. The study area, which is characterized by low, flat terrain, is highly susceptible to flooding from tidal surges associated with hurricanes and tropical storms due to its close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricanes that caused damage include Audrey (1957), Arlene (1959), Debra (1978), Chris (1982), Danny (1985), Juan (1985), Bonnie (1986), Allison (1989), Chantal (1989), Francis (1998), Hermine (1998), Allison (2001), Bertha (2002), Lili (2002), Rita (2005), Gustav (2008) and Ike (2008). As the ground elevation subsides relative to the levels of the Gulf of Mexico, the depth of potential flooding in the future will increase along with an increase in damages to the human and natural environments. Wetlands in the study area are affected by relative sea level rise, subsidence, tides and storm surge created by tropical storms and hurricanes, saltwater intrusion and ponding and reduced organic production. These conditions would continue at an increased rate as the mass of coastal land decreases.

**DATES:** See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for scoping meeting dates.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Questions concerning the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) should be addressed to Ms. Sandra Stiles at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEMVNP-MS, P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, LA 70160-0267, phone (504) 862-1583, fax number (504) 862-2088 or by e-mail at [sandra.e.stiles@usace.army.mil](mailto:sandra.e.stiles@usace.army.mil).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. *Authority:* Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, U.S. House of Representatives, Resolution Docket 2747, Southwest Coastal Louisiana, LA authorized the Secretary of the Army in accordance with section 110 of the River and Harbor Act of 1962, to survey the coast of Louisiana in Cameron, Calcasieu and Vermilion Parishes with particular reference to the advisability of providing hurricane protection and storm damage reduction and related purposes to include the feasibility of constructing an armored 12 foot levee along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

2. *Proposed Action.* The Corps will develop hurricane protection, storm damage risk reduction and coastal restoration measures for Calcasieu,

Cameron and Vermilion Parishes to include: (1) Levee alignments to provide hurricane protection and reduce damages from storm surge; (2) restoring natural ecosystem features, such as Cheniers, to reduce damages from storm surge; (3) measures protecting, restoring or increasing wetlands to prevent saltwater intrusion or reduce storm surge; (4) measures reducing risk of storm damage to communities by preventing or reducing wetland losses in areas affected by navigation, oil and gas and other manmade channels; (5) creation of barrier islands to serve as the first line of defense against storms and reduce storm surge; (6) nonstructural measures such as raising structures in-place, relocating structures, buyouts, flood proofing and policy development.

3. *Alternatives.* Hurricane protection and surge reduction measures being considered include multi-parish levee alignments, ring levees, ridges, and breakwaters to provide multiple lines of defense. Coastal restoration measures being considered include restoration of Cheniers, creation of barrier islands, large-scale marsh creation and restoration, salinity control, hydrologic restoration, and restoration of natural features to prevent/reduce storm surge. Non-structural measures include raising structures in-place, property buyouts, relocations of residents and communities, flood-proofing and hardening of infrastructure. Once hurricane protection, storm surge risk reduction and coastal restoration measures are identified, alternative plans will be developed through various combinations of measures that best meet the study goals and objectives and are determined to be cost-effective, environmentally acceptable and technically feasible.

3. *Public Involvement.* Stakeholder and public involvement for this proposed action is integral to the project. Interested parties, concerned citizens, and other State and Federal agencies, private and not for profit or non-governmental organizations are strongly encouraged to participate in the development of the proposed action. Stakeholder and public meetings would be held throughout project development. Meeting announcements would be made as information becomes available.

4. *Public Scoping Meeting.* Scoping is the process utilized for determining the range of alternatives and significant issues to be addressed in the EIS. For this study, a letter will be mailed to all parties believed to have an interest in the analysis. The letter will notify interested parties of public scoping meetings that will be held in the local