

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)

Proposal Name: Amos Bayou, Canal No. 43, Cypress Creek-Headwaters Boeuf River, and Oak Log Bayou-Cypress Bayou Watersheds NRCS Watershed Program

Proposal Tracking #: NRCS WFPO ID: OPR.NW00.05.7004 CEQ ID: EAXX-005-53-000-1726840388

Agency Name: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Unit Name: NRCS Arkansas State Office

Documentation Informing the FONSI

This Finding of No Significant Impact incorporates the Environmental Assessment and relies on documentation in the associated proposal record.

Activities Approved

I have decided to approve Alternative 6 as the agency's Preferred Alternative to implement coordinated structural and nonstructural flood-damage-reduction measures within the communities of Dumas and Mitchellville as described in the "[Proposal Information](#)" section of the Environmental Assessment.

The Preferred Alternative (Alternative 6) includes the following activities in Dumas: dredging and widening approximately 1.33 miles of the east ditch; installing reinforced concrete culverts along the east ditch at East Choctaw Street, East Waterman Street, and East Bowles Street; widening or constructing approximately 9.3 miles of roadside ditches; constructing one detention pond with approximately seven acre-feet of maximum stormwater detention capacity; and dry floodproofing 27 structures totaling approximately 71,039 square feet of structure area.

In Mitchellville, the Preferred Alternative includes widening or constructing approximately 3.11 miles of roadside ditches to increase drainage capacity and reduce flood depths in surrounding areas.

The design criteria for the proposed action include compliance with NRCS engineering standards, achievement of hydrologic and hydraulic performance criteria for the 1-percent annual exceedance probability (AEP) event, incorporation of best management practices to avoid and minimize environmental impacts, and implementation consistent with applicable federal, state, and local permitting requirements and long-term operation and maintenance responsibilities.

The Preferred Alternative does not threaten the violation of Federal, State, Tribal, or local requirements imposed for the protection of the environment. Approval is contingent on completion of final design; availability of funding; acquisition of required rights-of-way, easements, and other property interests; establishment of operation and maintenance responsibilities; and receipt of all applicable federal, state, and local permits and authorizations before construction. Applicable requirements may include Clean Water Act Section 404 authorization, Arkansas water-quality authorization, and construction-stormwater coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

Determination of No Significant Impacts

I have determined no significant impacts are anticipated for the activities approved based on the discussion provided under the “[NEPA: Consideration of Reasonably Foreseeable Impacts](#)” section, and as informed by other analysis and determinations provided in the “[Environmental Review](#)” section of the Environmental Assessment.

In reaching this determination, I considered the tradeoffs between implementing the Preferred Alternative and taking no action. The Preferred Alternative would result in localized, short-term construction effects, including temporary erosion, sedimentation, turbidity, dust, vegetation clearing, disturbance, and access limitations. These effects will be avoided or minimized through final design, permitting, best management practices, seasonal restrictions and surveys where applicable, and compliance with agency requirements.

Under the No Action Alternative, existing drainage limitations and flood hazards would continue. The Environmental Assessment identifies risks to structures, access, public health and safety, and local economic activity. Compared with those consequences, the Preferred Alternative would provide long-term flood-risk-reduction benefits in Dumas and Mitchellville, improve community resilience and access during storm events, and support continued economic activity. I therefore determined that the short-term adverse effects of implementation are outweighed by the long-term benefits of the approved activities and the adverse consequences of taking no action.

I also considered the irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources associated with the Preferred Alternative. Construction of the drainage channels and detention pond would constitute a long-term commitment of land. Financial resources, construction energy, and human effort would also be irretrievably committed to construct, operate, and maintain the approved measures. These commitments are limited to the resources necessary to implement the project and are not expected to result in a loss of long-term productivity for the human environment. Instead, the commitments support long-term reductions in flood risk to affected communities and infrastructure. Accordingly, I determined that the long-term benefits of the Preferred Alternative outweigh the irreversible and irretrievable commitments required to implement the project, which informed my decision to proceed with the action.

Based on the “[Environmental Review](#)” section of the Environmental Assessment, the Preferred Alternative is not expected to significantly affect the quality of the human environment. Preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is therefore not required.

Anticipated Implementation of Authorized Activities

I intend to implement the approved activities dependent upon funding received for the design phase and construction phase. Construction phase funds will be requested after the design phase is completed. Design phase is 2 years and construction phase is 3 years.

Signature and Authorization Date

Amanda J. Mathis

State Conservationist

Signature: _____ Date: _____