

document will be until September 11, 2002. To request a copy of the supplement, please call (918) 669-4396.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information regarding the DSFES, please contact Stephen L. Nolen, Chief, Environmental Analysis and Compliance Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, ATTN: CESWT-PE-E, 1645 South 101st East Avenue, Tulsa OK 74128-4629.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Wister Lake Project is located in southeastern Oklahoma in LeFlore County and was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1938 and completed in 1949. The project consists of the lake, dam, and downstream stations on the lower Poteau River to its confluence with the Arkansas River. It provides substantial flood control, municipal and industrial water supply, flow augmentation, water conservation, and sediment reduction. Wister Lake and its adjacent lands are also used for recreation, hunting, and wildlife management.

A Final Environmental Statement (FES) for operation and maintenance of the project was filed on November 19, 1973, and evaluated impacts to the environment from operating the project with a conservation pool level at 471.6 feet NGVD. Since 1974, the lake's conservation pool has been raised four times, either seasonally or permanently, principally to increase water supply and enhance recreation. The Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (WRDA 1996) instructed the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to permanently raise the conservation pool to its present elevation, 478.0 feet NGVD. However, impacts to resources and the environment were never documented or analyzed. To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), this supplement to the 1973 FES focuses on the impacts associated with maintaining the permanent pool level at 478.0 feet, as directed by Congress, and continuing current management practices. It also examines the historical impacts associated with raising the permanent conservation pool from its original level of 471.6 to 478.0 feet NGVD.

Raising the conservation pool to 478.0 feet NGVD has resulted in the loss and/or modification of approximately 3,254 acres of wildlife habitat and approximately 300 acres of a waterfowl marsh and green tree waterfowl management unit. Raising the conservation pool has inundated at least 10 archeological sites. Pool fluctuations and wave action between 471.6 and 478.0 feet NGVD have disturbed at least

18 archeological sites and may have affected as many as 36 sites.

Mitigation measures are proposed for those resources that have been negatively impacted from raising the conservation pool to 478.0 feet NGVD. These impacts are limited to biological and cultural resources. Mitigations for biological resources are based on recommendations of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and include reimbursement to the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation for the loss of a green tree waterfowl management unit and the cost of reconstructing a new waterfowl management unit.

The USACE, Tulsa District is consulting with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Officer, the Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma, and the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes of Oklahoma to develop mitigation measures to minimize adverse effects of the proposed action on historic properties.

The DSFES has been coordinated and approved by offices and directorates affected by or interested in the subject matter, including the Office of Counsel and Executive Offices.

**Stephen R. Zeltner,**

*Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, Acting 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 Increasing Depths of the Existing Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf and Black Project Up to 35 Feet, Including Channels in Atchafalaya Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, in Assumption, St. Mary, and Terrebone Parishes in the Vicinity of Morgan City, LA**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, is initiating this study under the authority of Section 430 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, Public Law 106-541, dated December 11, 2000, to determine the feasibility of deepening the navigation channel of the Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf, and Black, LA, from 20 feet to 35 feet. Deepwater oil and gas exploration

and development in the Gulf of Mexico and other deepwater areas has increased because of growth in demand; depletion of existing oil and gas fields, including those in the shallower areas of the gulf; and advancements in deepwater drilling technologies that include larger platforms. Many of the larger platforms required for deepwater activities are constructed in foreign countries because, among other factors, there are not enough competitive fabrication yards in the United States with adequate navigation access channels. The fabrication industry in the Morgan City-Amelia, LA area could capture a significant portion of the deepwater rig fabrication market if they had deeper navigation access channels to their facilities.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Questions concerning the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) should be addressed to Mr. Michael Salyer at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, PM-RS, PO Box 60267, New Orleans, LA 70160-0267, phone (504) 862-2037, fax number (504) 862-2572 or by E-mail at [michael.r.salyer@mvn02.usace.army.mil](mailto:michael.r.salyer@mvn02.usace.army.mil).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: 1.**

**Proposed Action.** The proposed action would include the deepening of the navigation channels included in the existing Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf, and Black, Louisiana project and in the Lower Atchafalaya River south of Morgan City, LA, to project depths up to 35 feet. These channels include the Atchafalaya River south of Morgan City, the existing channels in the Atchafalaya Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, and existing channels in Bayou Chene, Bayou Boeuf, and Bayou Black located south of U.S. Highway 90 and south and east of Morgan City. The material dredged for the construction and maintenance of the channels would be used for wetlands restoration and construction, to the extent practicable. Economic and environmental analysis would be used to determine the most practical plan, which would provide for the greatest overall public benefit.

**2. Alternatives.** Alternatives recommended for consideration presently include the construction of deeper channels in the Atchafalaya River, Atchafalaya Bay, the Gulf of Mexico and Bayous Chene, Boeuf, and Black; and the relocation of the fabrication facilities to other U.S. locations with larger navigation access channels. Incremental 2 reaches of those channels with separable benefits and cost would be investigated. Various project depths for navigation channels would also be investigated.

3. *Scoping.* Scoping is the process for determining the scope of alternatives and significant resources and issues to be addressed in the EIS. For this analysis, a letter will be sent to all parties believed to have an interest in the analysis, requesting their input on alternatives and issues to be evaluated. The letter will also notify interested parties of public scoping meetings that will be held in the local area. Notices will also be sent to local news media. All interested parties are invited to comment at this time, and anyone interested in this study should request to be included in the study mailing list.

A public scoping meeting will be held in July 2002. The meeting will be held in the vicinity of Morgan City, LA. Additional meetings could be held, depending upon interest and if it is determined that further public coordination is warranted.

4. *Significant Resources.* The tentative list of resources and issues to be evaluated in the EIS includes tidal wetlands (marshes and swamps), aquatic resources, commercial and recreational fisheries, wildlife resources, essential fish habitat, water quality, air quality, threatened and endangered species, recreation resources, and cultural resources. Socioeconomic items to be evaluated in the EIS include: Navigation, flood protection, business and industrial activity, employment, land use, property values, public/community facilities and services, tax revenues, population, community and regional growth, transportation, housing, community cohesion, and noise.

5. *Environmental Consultation and Review.* The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be assisting in the documentation of existing conditions and assessment of effects of project alternatives through Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act consultation procedures. The USFWS will provide a Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act report. Consultation will be accomplished with the USFWS and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) concerning threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat. The NMFS will be consulted on the effects of this proposed action on Essential Fish Habitat. The draft EIS (DEIS) or a notice of its availability will be distributed to all interested agencies, organizations, and individuals.

6. *Estimated Date of Availability.* Funding levels will dictate the date when the DEIS is available. The earliest that the DEIS is expected to be available in the fall of 2004.

Dated: June 6, 2002.

**Thomas F. Julich,**

*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 L-31N Seepage Management Pilot Project

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), intends to prepare an integrated Pilot Project Design Report (PPDR) and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the L-31N Seepage Management Pilot Project. The project is a cooperative effort between the Corps and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), which is also a cooperating agency for this DEIS. L-31N is a levee-canal system running north-south and is located south of the Tamiami Canal in Miami-Dade County. One of the environmentally detrimental effects resulting from the construction of the Central and South Florida Project is extensive water seepage from Everglades National Park (ENP). This project will investigate seepage management technologies to control seepage from ENP. The pilot project will provide necessary information to determine the appropriate amount of wet season groundwater flow to return to ENP while minimizing potential impacts to Miami-Dade County's West Wellfield and freshwater flows to Biscayne Bay; results of the pilot project will be used in the full-scale project.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Planning Division, Environmental Branch, P.O. Box 4970, Jacksonville, FL, 32232-0019; Attn: Ms. Janet Cushing or by telephone at 904-232-2259 or email: [janet.a.cushing@usace.army.mil](mailto:janet.a.cushing@usace.army.mil).

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** a.

*Authorization:* Section 601 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (Pub. L. 106-541) authorized the implementation of the L-31N Pilot Project.

b. *Study Area:* The study area is along a portion of L-31N north of structure G-211, and the southern portion of L-30

just north of C-4 (Tamiami Canal), in Miami-Dade County.

c. *Project Scope:* The scope is to investigate seepage management technologies to control seepage from ENP and use the resulting data in the full-scale implementation of the proposed project features along the entire length of L-31N. The evaluation of alternatives and selection of a recommended plan will be documented in the PPDR and EIS.

d. *Preliminary Alternatives:* Technologies to be tested may include reducing levee seepage flow across L-31N via a levee cutoff wall and reducing groundwater flows during the wet season by capturing the groundwater with a series of wells adjacent to L-31N, then back-pumping the water to ENP.

e. *Issues:* The EIS will address the following issues; the relation between this project and related projects including Modified Water Deliveries to ENP; impacts to Miami-Dade West Wellfield and Biscayne Bay, impacts to aquatic and wetland habitats; water flows; hazardous and toxic waste; water quality; flood protection; the impacts of land acquisition on the tax base; aesthetics and recreation; fish and wildlife resources, including protected species; cultural resources; and other impacts identified through scoping, public involvement and interagency coordination.

f. *Scoping:* A scoping letter and public workshops will be used to invite comments on alternatives and issues from Federal, State, and local agencies, affected Indian tribes, and other interested private organizations and individuals. The next public workshop is scheduled for July 2002; more information about the workshop will be in the scoping letter.

g. *DEIS Preparation:* The integrated draft PPDR, including a DEIS, is currently scheduled for publication in November 2004.

Dated: June 18, 2002.

**James C. Duck,**

*Chief, Planning Division.*

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