

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
BAYOU METO BASIN, ARKANSAS
POST GENERAL REEVALUATION DESIGN CHANGES**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District, proposes to modify the project as presented in the general reevaluation report (GRR) and final environmental impact statement (EIS) that were circulated for public review in December 2006. Detailed design of the Bayou Meto Basin project was initiated following completion of the GRR and as funds were made available. During detailed project design, four modifications were proposed to the project. The modifications included ensuring appropriate mitigation was accomplished for fishery habitat impacts that were inadvertently overlooked during the original project fishery assessment; relocation of a borrow site associated with construction of pumping station No. 1 and flow regulating reservoir; relocation of the pumping station access road; and maintaining connectivity of a backwater channel to provide an outlet for any flood waters that may pass through the backwater area. The relocation of the road and borrow site were deemed necessary due to the construction of residential housing on or directly adjacent to the previously identified locations.

A 404(b)(1) evaluation was completed during the general reevaluation and presented in the EIS. The project design modifications will not result in any changes in the amount of fill material placed in wetlands.

All current rights-of-way have been surveyed for cultural resources, including the new location of the borrow site and access road and no evidence of archeological materials within the proposed footprint of either modification were discovered. Any cultural resources revealed during project construction would be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer and appropriate measures would be taken to avoid if possible or tested for significance if unavoidable. Data recovery would be undertaken on any unavoidable, significant sites. Project modifications would be constructed in full compliance with all cultural resources laws and the 2009 signed Programmatic Agreement.

No impacts would occur to threatened or endangered species as a result of project modifications. All project design changes have been coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The assessment of backwater fishery impacts identified a need for 27 acres of mitigation required for unquantified backwater fishery impacts. Mitigation would be accomplished in-kind within the Arkansas River watershed.

After review of the Bayou Meto GRR and EIS, the Environmental Assessment and supporting documentation, I have determined the proposed action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, I have determined that an environmental impact statement is not required.

7/26/10
Date


Vernie L. Reichling
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander