

DRAFT

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

GRAND PRAIRIE AREA DEMONSTRATION PROJECT POST GENERAL REEVALUATION DESIGN CHANGES

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District, proposes modifications to the project as presented in the general reevaluation report (GRR) and environmental impact statement (EIS) that were circulated for public review in December 1999. Detailed design of the Grand Prairie Area Demonstration Project (GPADP) was initiated following completion of the GRR. During detailed design, it became apparent that modifications needed to be made in order to increase project efficiency and/or flexibility, resolve landowner disputes, and address cost issues. In addition, these changes would reduce adverse impacts to wetlands. The project modifications are: (1) relocation of administration building/system control room from pump station, (2) construction of borrow pits for canal levees, (3) use of pipelines instead of streams to deliver irrigation water, (4) use of pipelines instead of small canals, (5) replacement of Canal 3200 with pipelines, (6) construction of regulation reservoir, (7) alignment changes to canals and pipelines, and (8) rehabilitation/alteration of existing irrigation reservoirs. Further analysis of these project modifications is contained in the Environmental Assessment (EA) issued in March 2004. In accordance with National Environmental Policy Act regulations at 40 C.F.R. Part 1508.13, the EA and all documents discussed therein are incorporated by reference.

A Section 404(b)(1) evaluation was completed during the general reevaluation and presented in the EIS. The project design changes would result in a net decrease in the amount of fill material placed in wetlands.

All current rights-of-way have been surveyed for cultural resources. Any new rights-of-way would have to be surveyed. Any cultural resources revealed by additional surveys would be avoided if possible or tested for significance if unavoidable. Mitigation would be undertaken on any unavoidable, significant sites. All cultural resources work would be coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Officer and concerned federally recognized American Indian tribes. Project modifications would be constructed in full compliance with all cultural resources laws.

No impacts would occur to endangered or threatened species as a result of project modifications. All project design changes have been coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In terms of cumulative effects, project design changes would result in fewer overall impacts to wetlands. There would be an increase in upland hardwood forest impacts, but these impacts would be fully mitigated through acquisition and reforestation of an additional 180 acres of cleared upland.

In conclusion, the proposed project will not significantly harm wetlands or hardwood forests, threatened or endangered species, farmlands, ecologically critical areas, historic resources, water quality, fish and wildlife resources, nor will it conflict with approved local, regional, or state regulations or policies. The proposed project conforms with all applicable federal statutes and executive orders.

As the environmental documentation of the proposed GPADP design changes does not indicate this to be a major federal action significantly affecting the human environment, I have determined that a supplemental environmental impact statement is not required.

Date

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District Engineer