

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

GRAND PRAIRIE AREA DEMONSTRATION PROJECT POST GENERAL REEVALUATION DESIGN CHANGES

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Memphis District, intends to make several 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 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/or reduce costs. In addition, these changes will reduce adverse impacts to wetlands and upland hardwood forests. The project modifications are: (1) relocation of administrative offices and control room, (2) construction of 113 acres of borrow pits, (3) elimination of the use of existing streams (and associated weirs) for delivery of irrigation water (4) conversion of approximately 29 miles of small canals to pipelines, (5) replacement of Canal 3200 with pipelines, (6) a 99-acre widened section of Canal 1000 to improve operation efficiency, (7) alignment changes to canals and pipelines, and (8) rehabilitation/alteration of existing reservoirs. The 2 March 2004 draft EA included a 235-acre regulation reservoir for which some reviewers expressed concern. Subsequently, a value engineering study showed that a 99-acre widened canal (item 6) could replace the regulation reservoir. This new feature is less costly and reduces impacts to upland hardwoods from 62 acres with the reservoir to only two acres. In accordance with the Environmental Policy Act regulations at 40 CFR 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 will result in a net decrease in the amount of fill material placed in wetlands.

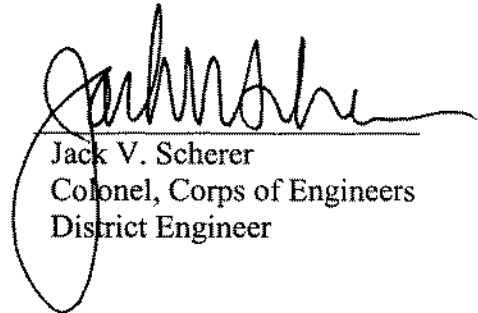
All current rights-of-way have been surveyed for cultural resources. Any new rights-of-way will have to be surveyed. Any cultural resources revealed by additional surveys will be avoided if possible or tested for significance if unavoidable. Data recovery will be undertaken on any unavoidable, significant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

No impacts will 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. Project design changes will result in fewer overall impacts to wetland and upland wildlife habitat, and compensatory mitigation will be reduced by 56 acres.

The environmental documentation of the proposed GPADP design changes does not indicate this to be a major federal action with substantial changes in the proposed action. Nor does it indicate significant new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed action or its impacts. Thus, I have determined that an environmental impact statement is not required.

2 Jul 04

Date



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District Engineer