

TIER 3 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

**ARDOT JOB 061614
FAP NHPP-0059(17)
WATTENSAW BAYOU & RELIEF STRS. & APPRS. (S)
ROUTE 86, SECTION 0
BRIDGES M1581 & M1582
PRAIRIE COUNTY**

Submitted Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)

By the

U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Highway Administration

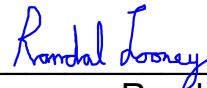
And the

Arkansas Department of Transportation

July 2021

July 26, 2021

Date of Approval



Randal Looney
Environmental Coordinator
Federal Highway Administration

The Environmental Division reviewed the referenced project and has determined it falls within the definition of the Tier 3 Categorical Exclusion as defined by the ARDOT/FHWA Programmatic Agreement on the processing of Categorical Exclusions. The following information is included for your review and, if acceptable, approval as the environmental documentation for this project.

The purpose of this project is to replace two weight posted bridges on Highway 86 over Wattensaw Bayou and a relief waterway in Prairie County. Total length of the project is 0.8 mile. A project location map is attached.

The existing roadway consists of two 10' wide paved travel lanes with 3' wide unpaved shoulders. The existing bridges (M1581 & M1582) are 237' x 25.1' and a 105' x 24', respectively. Average existing right of way width is 80'.

Proposed improvements include two new bridges, both on new location. The roadway will consist of two 11' wide paved travel lanes with 4' wide (2' paved) shoulders. The proposed right of way width will vary between 80' and 135'. Approximately 6.7 acres of additional right of way (ROW) and 0.2 acre of temporary construction easements will be required for this project.

Design data for this project is as follows:

Design Year	Average Daily Traffic	Percent Trucks	Design Speed
2022	350	8	55 mph
2042	400	8	55 mph

There are no relocations or environmental justice issues associated with this project. Field inspections found no evidence of existing underground storage tanks. Approximately 0.6 acre of Prime Farmland and 5.3 acres of Farmland of Statewide Importance will be converted to highway ROW. Form NRCS-CPA-106 is attached.

Based on the ARDOT noise policy, a noise analysis is not required for this project. The bridge replacements will not involve adding capacity, substantially changing the roadway alignment, or exposing noise sensitive land uses to traffic noise sources. In compliance with federal guidelines, local authorities will not require notification.

A small farm debris pile was found in the project area. The debris pile consisted mainly of construction materials such as blocks of concrete, metal pipes and other

metal debris, along with some plastics. No hazardous materials were detected. The debris will need to be removed and properly disposed of in a Class I landfill.

ARDOT Bridge M151 is a timber multi-beam structure constructed circa 1945 and reconstructed in 1967 by an unknown builder that carries Highway 86 over Wattensaw Bayou in Prairie County. Although Bridge M1581 is not the longest wood or timber stringer/multi-beam or girder bridge, it shows the design of this bridge type much clearer. Through consultation between the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program and the ARDOT staff, the bridge was deemed eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as a good example of the wood or timber stringer/multi-beam or girder bridge at an exceptional length for its design type. The bridge is going to be replaced on new location, and it is not the policy of the ARDOT to retain ownership of a bridge once it is removed from vehicular service. Finding no other prudent or feasible alternative to demolition, the bridge was marketed to federal and state agencies, county, and local governments, as well as the local and state historical societies for relocation of the bridge. No interest letters were received. As no entity was found willing to take ownership of the bridge, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was executed between the FHWA, ARDOT, and State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) stipulating mitigation for the demolition of the bridge. This mitigation includes architectural documentation and photographs to SHPO standards, as well as laser scanning. The Programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation for the historic bridge is attached and includes the approved MOA. No other historic or cultural resources will be impacted as part of the proposed project. Concurrence from the SHPO is attached.

The official species list obtained from the US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation identified the following listed species as potentially occurring within the project area: the threatened Eastern Black Rail (*Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis*), Red Knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*), Ivory-Billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*), Fat Pocketbook (*Potamilus capax*), and pondberry (*Lindera melissifolia*). See attached USFWS species list.

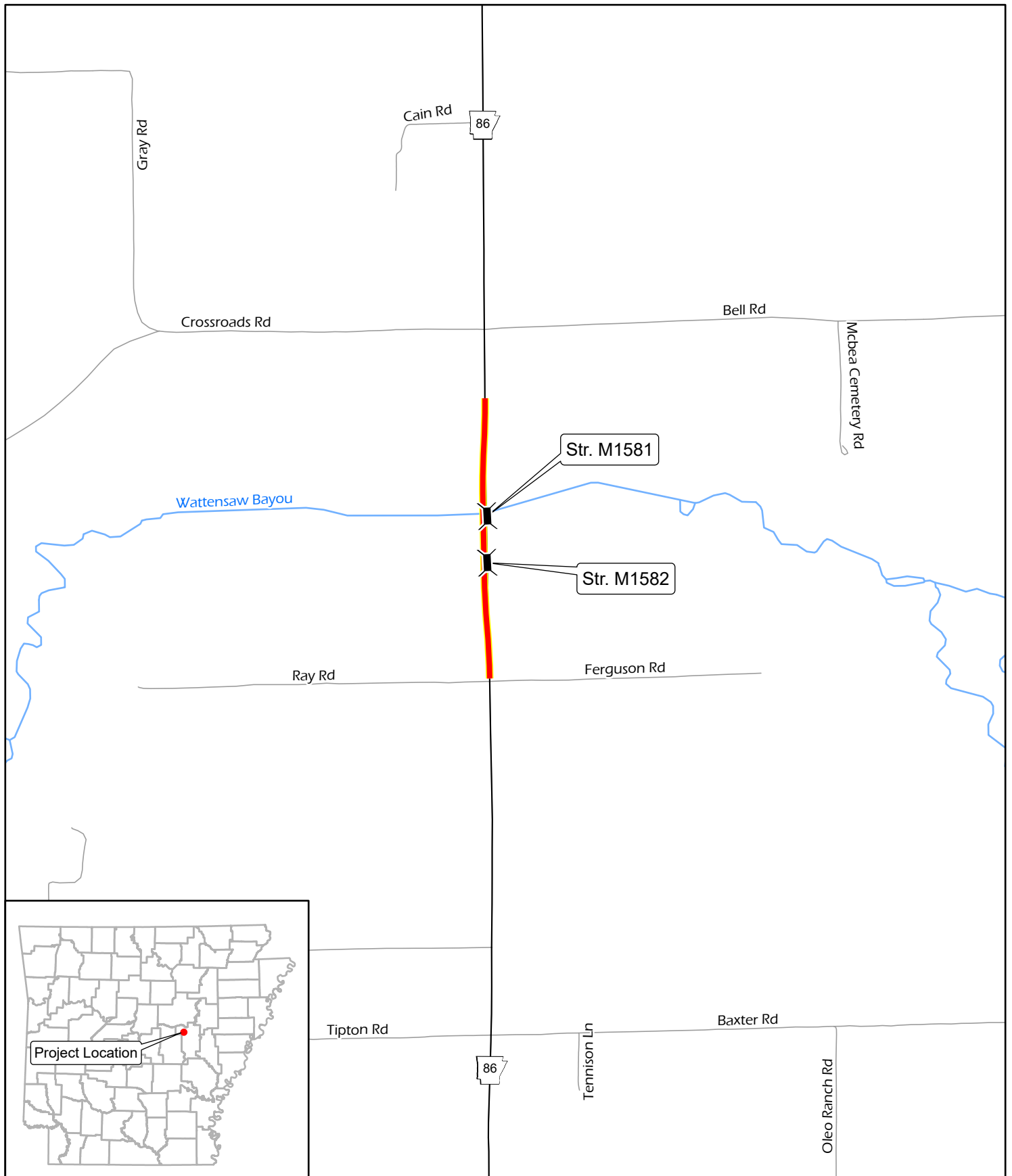
Due to lack of habitat and distance to known populations, a determination of "no effect" was reached for all listed species.

The project will have a discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States associated with the bridge construction; therefore, a Section 404 permit will be required. The project will impact approximately 150 linear feet of the Wattensaw Bayou and approximately 1.0 acre of wetland. Compensatory mitigation for the wetland impacts will be provided at ARDOT's Glaise Creek Mitigation Bank. The project should be authorized by Nationwide Permit 23 for Approved Categorical Exclusions as defined in Federal Register 82(4): 1860-2008.

This project has been determined to generate minimal air quality impacts for *Clean Air Act* criteria pollutants and has not been linked with any special mobile source air toxic (MSAT) concerns. As such, this project will not result in changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, basic project location, or any other factor that would cause a meaningful increase in MSAT impacts of the project from that of the no-build alternative.

Prairie County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. The project lies within a Zone A Special Flood Hazard Area. The final project design will be reviewed to confirm that the design is adequate and that the potential risk to life and property are minimized. Adjacent properties should not be impacted nor have a greater flood risk than existed before construction of the project. None of the encroachments will constitute a substantial floodplain encroachment or a risk to property or life.


No other adverse environmental impacts were identified. The checklist used to verify consideration of potential environmental impacts is attached.



0 1,000 2,000
Feet

ARDOT - Environmental GIS - Dudley
May 21, 2021

Job 061614
Wattensaw Bayou & Relief
Strs. & Apprs. (Hwy. 86)
Prairie County

 Project Location

**FARMLAND CONVERSION IMPACT RATING
FOR CORRIDOR TYPE PROJECTS**

PART I (To be completed by Federal Agency) Job 061614		3. Date of Land Evaluation Request	4. Sheet 1 of _____		
1. Name of Project		5. Federal Agency Involved			
2. Type of Project		6. County and State			
PART II (To be completed by NRCS)		1. Date Request Received by NRCS	2. Person Completing Form		
3. Does the corridor contain prime, unique statewide or local important farmland? (If no, the FPPA does not apply - Do not complete additional parts of this form). YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		4. Acres Irrigated Average Farm Size			
5. Major Crop(s)	6. Farmable Land in Government Jurisdiction Acres: _____ % _____	7. Amount of Farmland As Defined in FPPA Acres: _____ % _____			
8. Name Of Land Evaluation System Used	9. Name of Local Site Assessment System	10. Date Land Evaluation Returned by NRCS			
PART III (To be completed by Federal Agency)		Alternative Corridor For Segment _____			
		Corridor A	Corridor B	Corridor C	Corridor D
A. Total Acres To Be Converted Directly					
B. Total Acres To Be Converted Indirectly, Or To Receive Services					
C. Total Acres In Corridor					
PART IV (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information					
A. Total Acres Prime And Unique Farmland					
B. Total Acres Statewide And Local Important Farmland					
C. Percentage Of Farmland in County Or Local Govt. Unit To Be Converted					
D. Percentage Of Farmland in Govt. Jurisdiction With Same Or Higher Relative Value					
PART V (To be completed by NRCS) Land Evaluation Information Criterion Relative value of Farmland to Be Serviced or Converted (Scale of 0 - 100 Points)					
PART VI (To be completed by Federal Agency) Corridor Assessment Criteria (These criteria are explained in 7 CFR 658.5(c))		Maximum Points			
1. Area in Nonurban Use		15			
2. Perimeter in Nonurban Use		10			
3. Percent Of Corridor Being Farmed		20			
4. Protection Provided By State And Local Government		20			
5. Size of Present Farm Unit Compared To Average		10			
6. Creation Of Nonfarmable Farmland		25			
7. Availability Of Farm Support Services		5			
8. On-Farm Investments		20			
9. Effects Of Conversion On Farm Support Services		25			
10. Compatibility With Existing Agricultural Use		10			
TOTAL CORRIDOR ASSESSMENT POINTS		160			
PART VII (To be completed by Federal Agency)					
Relative Value Of Farmland (From Part V)		100			
Total Corridor Assessment (From Part VI above or a local site assessment)		160			
TOTAL POINTS (Total of above 2 lines)		260			
1. Corridor Selected:	2. Total Acres of Farmlands to be Converted by Project:	3. Date Of Selection:	4. Was A Local Site Assessment Used? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>		
5. Reason For Selection:					

Signature of Person Completing this Part:

DATE

Joshua Graham

NOTE: Complete a form for each segment with more than one Alternate Corridor



Asa Hutchinson
Governor
Stacy Hurst
Secretary

June 4, 2021

Mr. John Fleming
Division Head
Environmental Division
Arkansas Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 2261
Little Rock, AR 72203-2261

RE: Prairie County: General
Section 106 Review: FHWA
Proposed Undertaking: Wattensaw Bayou & Relief Strs. & Apprs. (S)
Route 86, Section 0
ARDOT Job Number: 061614
AHPP Tracking Number: 107602.02

Dear Mr. Fleming:

The staff of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program (AHPP) reviewed the submission for the above-referenced project. The proposed undertaking entails replacing two bridges (Bridge Numbers M1581 and M1582) on Highway 86 in Prairie County in Sections 28 and 29, Township 4 North, Range 6 West. The direct area of potential effects (APE) includes an approximately 6.7 acres of proposed right-of-way and .25 acre of temporary construction easement. Bridge M1581 (AHPP structure number PR0143) is eligible for inclusion in the NRHP. Twenty-six shovel tests associated with the direct APE proved negative for cultural materials.

Based on the provided information, including the Memorandum of Agreement regarding this undertaking, the AHPP concurs with the finding of **adverse affect to bridge M1581 and no affect to bridge M1582 or any other historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.4(d)(1)** for the proposed undertaking. We look forward to receiving the executed MOA as soon as it is completed.

Tribes that have expressed an interest in the area include the Cherokee Nation, the Chickasaw Nation, the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, the Osage Nation, the Quapaw Nation, and the Shawnee Tribe. We recommend consultation in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.2(c)(2).

Thank you for the opportunity to review this undertaking and report. Please refer to the AHPP Tracking Number listed above in all correspondence. If you have any questions, call Jessica Cogburn at 501-324-9357 or email jessica.cogburn@arkansas.gov.

Sincerely,

for
Scott Kaufman
Director, AHPP

cc: Mr. Randal Looney, Federal Highway Administration
Dr. Melissa Zabecki, Arkansas Archeological Survey



WATTENSAW BAYOU BRIDGE

BRIDGE NUMBER M1581

PROGRAMMATIC SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION FOR FEDERALLY-AIDED HIGHWAY PROJECTS THAT NECESSITATE THE USE OF HISTORIC BRIDGES

ARDOT Job 061614

Wattensaw Bayou & Relief Strs. & Apprs.

Prairie County

July 2021

Submitted Pursuant to 49 USC Section 303 and 23 USC Section 138 by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration and the Arkansas Department of Transportation.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway
Administration

Arkansas Department
of Transportation



Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation – Historic Bridges

1 Why is this report being prepared?

Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 declared a national policy to make a special effort to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside, public parks and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites. The current Section 4(f) legislation permits the Secretary of Transportation to approve a project that requires the use of historic bridge structures scheduled to be replaced or rehabilitated with Federal funds. Approval depends on a determination that no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the property existed, and all possible planning occurred to minimize harm to the property resulting from such use. These determinations, pursuant to 49 United States Code (USC) Section 303 and 23 USC Section 138, are described in this Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation.

2 What would the project accomplish?

The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT), in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), proposes construction of new bridges across Wattensaw Bayou and Wattensaw Bayou Relief along Highway 86 in Prairie County, Arkansas. The project improves safety and transportation needs in central Arkansas. As part of the project, a historic bridge will be replaced.

ARDOT Bridge Number M1581 (Wattensaw Bayou Bridge) is a sixteen span timber multi-beam bridge. The bridge measures 237 feet in length. It carries two 10-foot wide travel lanes and a clear roadway width of approximately 25 feet. The Bridge Inspection Report dated August 10, 2020, lists the condition of the deck and substructure as fair (code 5) and the superstructure as satisfactory (code 6).

Plans show the new bridge as a four-span, continuous integral composite W-beam structure, meaning the steel is fixed to the concrete to increase strength. The new bridge will be approximately 330 feet long with two 75-foot spans and two 90-foot spans. The clear roadway width will total 30 feet. The new bridge roadway meets current standards by carrying two 11-foot wide paved travel lanes and 4-foot shoulders.

What are Section 4(f) protected properties?

Section 4(f) protected properties include significant publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife or waterfowl refuges, or any publicly or privately owned historic site listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places with national, state, or local significance. The ARDOT considers historic bridges as historic sites.

What is a timber multi-beam or girder bridge?

The primary structure of the bridge consists of three or more parallel wooden beams or girders as seen under this pictured bridge.



3 What Section 4(f) properties are being impacted?

ARDOT Bridge Number M1581 (Wattensaw Bayou Bridge) contains sixteen spans of varying lengths (14 to 15 feet each). The bridge is comprised of timber multi-beam or girder construction resting on timber plank abutments (Figure 1) and 12-inch round timber piles with timber cross bracing (Figure 2). The maintenance staff has previously made repairs replacing some of the piles with 12-inch square piles. The railings contain timber posts and metal guardrails flanking a 4-inch deep concrete deck. An unknown builder constructed the bridge in 1945, and it was reconstructed in 1967.

Wattensaw Bayou Bridge



Figure 1

Through consultation, the State Historic Preservation Officer staff and the ARDOT determined the Wattensaw Bayou Bridge as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in 2021. It is eligible under Criterion C for its design. While the bridge is neither the earliest nor longest of its type, it is a good example of the wood or timber multi-beam or girder design and does have an exceptional length for its type. This bridge illustrates the design more clearly than other examples. The bridge has had some repairs and piles replaced, and the changes are compatible but differentiated; therefore, it retains integrity of design, materials, and

What are the National Register Criteria for evaluation?

Properties that possess significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture that retain aspects of integrity, and:

- A) associated with an event, broad patterns, or trends of history;
- B) associated with an important person(s);
- C) embody typical features of a type, period, or construction method, that represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values; or
- D) that have yielded, or will likely yield, significant information for history or prehistory.

(National Register Bulletin 15: <https://www.nps.gov/NR/PUBLICATIONS/bulletins/nrb15/>)

What are the elements of integrity for evaluating National Register eligibility?

Integrity is the ability of a property to show its significance. The seven elements for evaluating integrity are as follows:

- 1) Location,
- 2) Design,
- 3) Setting,
- 4) Materials,
- 5) Workmanship,
- 6) Feeling, and
- 7) Association.

(National Register Bulletin 15: <https://www.nps.gov/NR/PUBLICATIONS/bulletins/nrb15/>)

feeling. Although eligible for the NRHP, the Wattensaw Bayou Bridge is not considered a National Historic Landmark.

Wattensaw Bayou Bridge



Figure 2

What are the qualifications for a National Historic Landmark?

National Historic Landmarks are properties selected by the Secretary of the Interior for national historic significance. The property should "possess exceptional value in honoring or showing the history of the United States," according to the National Park Service (<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1582/index.htm>).

4 Does this project qualify for the Section 4(f) programmatic for historic bridges?

The FHWA may apply the programmatic Section 4(f) evaluation to projects that meet the criteria shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Criteria To Use Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation For Federally-Aided Highway Projects That Necessitate The Use of Historic Bridges

The bridge is to be replaced or rehabilitated with Federal funds.	√
The project will require the use of a historic bridge structure that is eligible for inclusion or listed in the NHRP.	√
The bridge is not a National Historic Landmark.	√
The FHWA Division Administrator determines that the facts of the project match those set forth in the FHWA Section 4(f) Policy Paper issued March 1, 2005.	√
Agreement has been reached among the FHWA, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation through procedures pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).	√

5 Could the project avoid demolishing the historic bridge?

For a Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation and Approval for FHWA Projects That Necessitate the Use of Historic Bridges to be applied to a project, each of the three following alternatives must be supported by circumstances, studies, and consultations on the project:

- 1) No Action,
- 2) Rehabilitation of the Existing Structure, and
- 3) Build on New Location and Retain the Existing Structure.

To this effect, ARDOT established a Historic Bridge Analysis Committee (HBAC) to evaluate viable alternatives for the preservation of historically significant bridges through retention, rehabilitation, or to justify their removal, if necessary. The HBAC evaluated the required alternatives to determine if a feasible and prudent alternative exists to the proposed impacts on this historic bridge. The results of the discussion are listed below.

No Action

This alternative involves no improvements to the existing facility and continues providing only routine maintenance. The bridge is weight restricted in an agricultural area. The rail on the bridge does not meet current crash test requirements or AASHTO's *Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware* (MASH) criteria.

This alternative does nothing to improve the weight restriction or railing of the bridge. It is not prudent to leave the bridge as is, resulting in safety and operational issues.

Rehabilitation of the Existing Structure

Two rehabilitation alternatives were considered for this project.

Rehabilitation Alternative One rehabilitates the existing historic bridge for two-way traffic operations. The alternative would require a minimum width of 30 feet to meet current design standards. This bridge is too narrow, measuring approximately 25 feet clear roadway width. Widening compromises its historic integrity by changing design and requires a new railing to meet crash test standards, which also compromises its integrity of design and materials. Rehabilitation to less than design standards leaves the bridge with a weight restriction. Even after complete rehabilitation (using Secretary of Interior Standards), the bridge design is not meant to carry today's traffic weights/sizes. The railing would also remain deficient per MASH criteria leaving a safety issue. *Rehabilitation Alternative One* is feasible, but it is not prudent. It impacts the structure's

What is meant by feasible?

Per 23 CFR 774.17, Feasible and prudent avoidance alternative definitions:

(2) An alternative is not feasible if it cannot be built as a matter of sound engineering judgment.

What is meant by prudent?

Per 23 CFR 774.17, Feasible and prudent avoidance alternative definitions:

(3) An alternative is not prudent if:

(i) It compromises the project to a degree that it is unreasonable to proceed with the project in light of its stated purpose and need;

(ii) It results in unacceptable safety or operational problems;

(iii) After reasonable mitigation, it still causes:

(A) Severe social, economic, or environmental impacts
(B) Severe disruption to established communities;

(C) Severe disproportionate impacts to minority or low income populations; or
(D) Severe impacts to environmental resources protected under other Federal statutes;

(iv) It results in additional construction, maintenance, or operational costs of an extraordinary magnitude;

(v) It causes other unique problems or unusual factors; or
(vi) It involves multiple factors in paragraphs (3)(i) through (3)(v) of this definition, that while individually minor, cumulatively cause unique problems or impacts of extraordinary magnitude.

historic integrity and results in unacceptable safety and operational problems.

Rehabilitation Alternative Two rehabilitates the existing historic bridge for one-way traffic operations and constructs a new bridge for one-way traffic operations in the opposite direction. While the bridge is not too narrow for one-way traffic, as a couplet bridge, it has the same weight restriction and railing issues addressed above. *Rehabilitation Alternative Two* is feasible, but it is not prudent due to unacceptable safety and operational problems.

New Location

The *New Location Alternative* constructs a new bridge according to the approved ARDOT project design criteria in a new location. The owner maintains possession of the historic bridge, either preserving it in place or at another location. ARDOT owns the Wattensaw Bayou Bridge. The design of the proposed bridge on a new alignment is feasible; however, it is the ARDOT's policy to no longer retain bridges following removal from the highway system.

ARDOT can build a new bridge to current, minimum design standards with another entity accepting ownership of the historic bridge for preservation in place. The HBAC determined that relocation destroys the historic integrity, creating a total bridge reconstruction due to its original construction method. ARDOT marketed the bridge on March 24, 2021, to find an entity to accept bridge donation (see Appendix A for marketing correspondence). No entity was found willing to assume bridge ownership and maintenance responsibility for preservation in place.

The *New Location Alternative* is feasible but not prudent, resulting in additional maintenance costs of extraordinary magnitude and liability concerns or destroying the bridge's historic integrity.

6 How will the ARDOT mitigate for the harm being done to the historic property?

The FHWA and the SHPO reached an agreement through the Section 106 process (36 CFR 800) of NHPA (16 USC 470) on measures to minimize harm. These measures have been incorporated into this project. Through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), it was agreed that ARDOT Bridge Number M1581 would be documented to the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program's (AHPP) architectural documentation standards and then demolished. A copy of the MOA, which includes all agreed-upon mitigation stipulations, can be found in Appendix B.

Could an outside entity accept, maintain, and use the bridge in place or at another location?

The Surface Transportation & Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987, Historic Bridges Section 144(g) requires states to make a historic bridge available for donation before its replacement. When no other alternatives are feasible or prudent, the ARDOT markets historic bridges to federal and state agencies, county and local governments, as well as state and local historical societies. Any interested responsible parties must demonstrate willingness to accept title for, preserve the historically significant features, and assume financial responsibility for the continued maintenance on the structure (23 USC 144).

7 What are the findings of the alternatives analysis and this evaluation?

Table 2 contains a summary of the analysis and decision-making information included in this evaluation.

Table 2

Section 4(f) Analysis Summary

Alternative	Feasible	Prudent	Uses Section 4(f) Property	Harm to Section 4(f) Property
No Action	Yes	No	No	None
Rehabilitation One	Yes	No	Yes	Adverse Effect
Rehabilitation Two	Yes	No	Yes	Adverse Effect
New Location	Yes	No	No	Adverse Effect*

* No entity was found willing to take title for the bridge.

Based on the above considerations, no feasible and prudent alternative exists to avoid the use of the historic bridge. The proposed action includes all possible planning to minimize the harm to the historic bridge resulting from such use.

8 What are the recommendations on this project?

ARDOT recommends that the Wattensaw Bayou Bridge is documented to AHPP architectural documentation standards and demolished as agreed under the stipulations in the MOA (Appendix B).

The above documentation illustrates that the proposed project complies with all requirements of the Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation for Federal-aid highway projects that require the use of a historic bridge.

Appendix A: Marketing Correspondence



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ARDOT.gov | IDriveArkansas.com | Lorie H. Tudor, P.E., Director

ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION

10324 Interstate 30 | P.O. Box 2261 | Little Rock, AR 72203-2261 | Phone: 501.569.2281 | Fax: 501.569.2009

March 24, 2021

RE: Historic Bridge M1581
Job Number 061614
Wattensaw Bayou & Relief
Strs. & Apprs. (S)
Prairie County
Historic Bridge Marketing Request

To Whom It May Concern:

The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) is planning to replace Bridge Number M1581 (Wattensaw Bayou Bridge) on Highway 86 in Prairie County. This bridge was determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) through consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer's staff in March 2021. A location map and further information about the bridge is enclosed.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, 23 USC § 144 (g)(5) states: "Any State which proposes to demolish a historic bridge for a replacement project ... shall first make the bridge available for donation to a State, locality, or responsible private entity..." As part of the mitigation process, the ARDOT offers to donate Bridge Number M1581 to any government or entity that demonstrates a willingness to accept title for, maintain in place, preserve the historic features of, and assume the financial responsibility for the continued maintenance on the structure.

The ARDOT, through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), can reimburse costs associated with preservation up to the demolition estimate expense for bridges preserved in place. The demolition estimated reimbursement will be determined by the FHWA, not to exceed 100% of the costs of demolition of the bridge, which will be based on the estimate by ARDOT. The costs associated with preservation could include rehabilitation of the bridge or minor modifications for recreational use.

If you are interested in acquiring this bridge, please respond with a letter of interest addressed to me within 45 days from this letter's date. Such letter submission does not commit an entity to accept the bridge. Following its receipt, the ARDOT Historic Bridge Analysis Committee will request a preservation plan, including required information for consideration, before a preferred recipient is selected. For further information, contact Nikki Senn at (501) 569-2979 or at Nikki.Senn@ardot.gov.

Sincerely,



John Fleming
Division Head
Environmental Division

JF:NS:cb

Enclosures

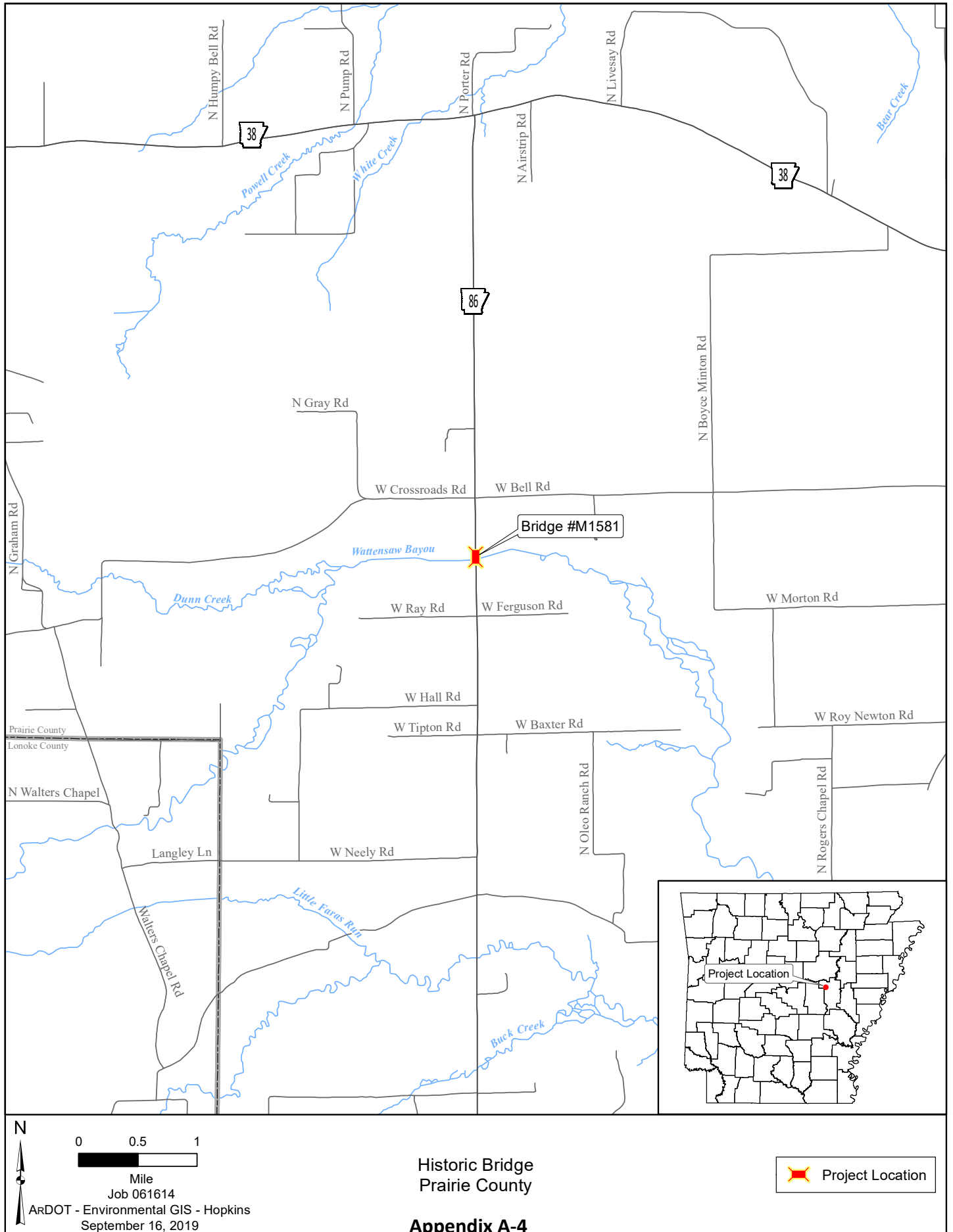
c: Assistant Chief Engineer - Planning
Bridge Division
District 6 Engineer

ARDOT Job Number 061614
Historic Bridge Marketing Description



The Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) Bridge Number M1581 is on Highway 86 in Prairie County. Through consultation, the State Historic Preservation Office and the ARDOT determined the bridge as eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places in 2021. The bridge was constructed over Wattensaw Bayou by an unknown builder in 1945 and reconstructed in 1967. The bridge length measures 237 feet with a width of approximately 25 feet.

While the bridge is neither the earliest nor longest of its type, it is a good example of the wood or timber stringer/multi-beam or girder design and does have an exceptional length for its design type. It illustrates the design more clearly than other examples. Bridge M1581 is one of 230 bridges with the wood or timber construction still in use on the Arkansas highway system.



**Job 050422 Marketing
Bridge M2381**

Marketing Groups	Greeting	Name	Title	Agency	Address 1	Address 2	City
Mayor	Mayor Garth	James B. Garth	Mayor	City of Des Arc	P.O. Box 263	City Hall 107 S. 3rd St.	Des Arc, AR 72040
Chamber of Commerce	Ms. Smith	Lana Smith	President	Des Arc Chamber of Commerce	PO Box 845		Des Arc, AR 72040
County Judge	Judge Skarda	The Honorable Mike Skarda		Prairie County Judge	605 Hwy. 38 East		Des Arc, AR 72040
County Historical Society	To Whom it May Concern	Unknown	Unknown	Praire County Historical Museum			Des Arc, AR 72040
Arkansas Historical Association	Ms. Matkin-Rawn	Story Matkin-Rawn	President	Arkansas Historical Association	Department of History, University of Arkansas	416 Old Main	Fayetteville, AR 72701
Preserve Arkansas	Ms. Patton	Rachel Patton	Executive Director	Preserve Arkansas	P.O. Box 305		Little Rock, AR 72203-0305
Association of Arkansas Counties	Ms. Smith	Christy Smith	Communications Director	Association of Arkansas Counties	1415 W. Third St.		Little Rock, AR 72203
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Mr. Fitts	Pat Fitts	Director	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	2 Natural Resources Drive		Little Rock, AR 72205
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Mr. Bowman	Darrell Bowman	Assistant Chief of Fisheries Management	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	2 Natural Resources Drive		Little Rock, AR 72205
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Mr. Wentz	Tate Wentz	Stream Team Biologist	AGFC Stream Team Region III	915 East Sevier Street		Benton, AR 72015
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Mr. Burnley	Tim Burnley	Stream Habitat Programs' Coordinator	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	201 E. 5th Street		Mountain Home, AR 72653
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission	Mr. Saunders	Sean Saunders	Region I Stream Team Coordinator	Arkansas Game and Fish Commission			
US Corps of Engineers	Colonel Miller	Colonel Eric M. Noe	Commander and District Engineer	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Little Rock District, P.O. Box 867	P.O. Box 867	Little Rock, AR 72203-0867
Metro Planning Org, if applicable	Ms. Spencer	Conya Spencer	Director of Economic Development	Central Arkansas Planning and Development District, Inc.	902 N. Center Street	P.O. Box 300	Lonoke, AR 72086
Central Arkansas Water	Ms. Lawson	Raven Lawson	Watershed Protection Manager	Central Arkansas Water	221 East Capitol Avenue, P.O. Box 1789	P.O. Box 1789	Little Rock, AR 72203

**Job 050422 Marketing
Bridge M2381**

Marketing Groups	Greeting	Name	Title	Agency	Address 1	Address 2	City
Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism (ADPHT)/ Arkansas State Parks	Mr. Thomas	Jordan Thomas	Chief Planner & Landscape Architect	Division of Arkansas State Parks	One Capitol Mall, 4B.215		Little Rock, AR 72201
Arkansas Natural Resources Commission/ Arkansas Unpaved Roads Program	Mr. Stake	Steve Stake	Grants Coordinator	Arkansas Unpaved Roads	101 E Capitol, Suite 350		Little Rock, AR 72201
Ecological Design Group	Mr. Smith	Martin Smith	PLA,ASLA, Principal	Ecological Design Group	210 East Merriman Avenue		Wynne, AR 72396
CC on letter							
ACE-Planning		Jared Wiley					
Bridge Engineer		Rick Ellis					
District Engineer		Mark Headley					
FHWA	Ms. Hoang	Vivien Hoang	Arkansas Division Administrator	Federal Highway Administration	700 West Capitol Ave, Suite 3130		Little Rock, AR 72201
SHPO, and Parks and Tourism	Secretary Hurst	Stacy Hurst	Arkansas State Historic Preservation Officer	Department of Arkansas Parks, Heritage and Tourism	1100 North Street		Little Rock, AR 72201

Appendix B: Memorandum of Agreement

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
AMONG THE
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION,
THE ARKANSAS STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER
AND THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
REGARDING
ARDOT JOB 061614
WATTENSAW BAYOU & RELIEF STRS. & APPRS. (S)
HIGHWAY 86, PRAIRIE COUNTY, ARKANSAS
ARDOT BRIDGE NUMBER M1581

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) wish to construct a new bridge across Wattensaw Bayou along Highway 86 in Prairie County; and the old Wattensaw Bayou Bridge (Bridge) will be demolished as part of completing ARDOT Job 061614; and

WHEREAS, the Bridge is a historic property that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) in consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO); and

WHEREAS, the FHWA has marketed the Bridge to federal and state agencies, the Prairie County Judge, the City of Des Arc, the area chamber of commerce, the area metro planning organization, other interested parties, and state and local historical societies; and

WHEREAS, during the recent marketing, no entities were found willing to accept title for the Bridge for preservation in place; and

WHEREAS, through the Programmatic Section 4(f) Evaluation process, the FHWA has determined that no feasible and prudent alternative to the demolition of the historic bridge exists; and

WHEREAS, the FHWA and ARDOT have determined that this undertaking will have an adverse effect on a historic property and in accordance with the 36 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 800, regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended [54 United States Code (USC) 306108], must address this effect; and

WHEREAS, the definitions set forth in 36 CFR § 800.16 are applicable throughout this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA); and

WHEREAS, the FHWA has consulted with the Quapaw Nation, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians in Oklahoma, the Mississippi Band of

Choctaw Indians, the Osage Nation, the Shawnee Tribe, and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana, Inc., for which the Bridge or sites and properties in the immediate area might have religious and cultural significance; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6(a)(1), the FHWA has notified the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) of its adverse effect determination, and the ACHP has chosen not to participate in the consultation pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6(a)(1)(iii).

NOW THEREFORE, the FHWA, the SHPO and ARDOT agree that the undertaking shall be implemented in accordance with the following stipulations in order to take into account the adverse effect of this undertaking on the Bridge.

STIPULATIONS

The FHWA, through ARDOT, shall ensure that the following stipulations are carried out.

I. MITIGATION OF ADVERSE EFFECT TO THE HISTORIC PROPERTY

- A. The ARDOT produced architectural documentation for the Bridge that meets the Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation* set forth in 48 FR 44716 and the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program's (AHPP) 2016 *Survey Procedures Manual: Guidelines for Historic and Architectural Surveys in Arkansas*. Documentation for the Bridge included the AHPP Arkansas Architectural Resources Form (AHPP assigned resource number PR0243) and color digital photographs.
- B. The documentation was provided for curation to the AHPP and will be provided for curation to the Arkansas State Library, the Arkansas Studies Institute, the Arkansas State Archives, and the Torreyson Library at the University of Central Arkansas.
- C. The Bridge will be laser scanned and the data housed in ARDOT's Environmental Division file server.
- D. No construction will be undertaken on the historic property until all fieldwork portions of the required mitigation have been completed.
- E. The FHWA shall ensure that adequate time and funding are provided in order to carry out all aspects of the required mitigation.

II. HUMAN REMAINS

Human remains are not expected to be discovered on this undertaking; however, if they are encountered during implementation of the project, all activity in the vicinity of the discovery shall cease and procedures shall follow those as outlined in Stipulation XII of the *Programmatic Agreement Among the FHWA, the SHPO, the ACHP, the Osage Nation, and ARDOT Regarding Section 106 Implementation for Federal-Aid Transportation Projects*. The treatment of human remains shall follow the guidelines developed for the *Arkansas Burial Law* (Act 753 of 1991, as amended) and the ACHP's *Policy Statement Regarding Treatment of Burial Sites, Human Remains, and Funerary Objects* published February 23, 2007. As such, a permit will be obtained from the AHPP prior to exaction of any remains.

III. DURATION

This MOA will expire if its terms are not carried out within ten (10) years from the date of its execution. Prior to such time, the FHWA may consult with the other signatories to reconsider the terms of the MOA and amend it in accordance with Stipulation VIII below.

IV. PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS STANDARDS

The FHWA shall ensure that all archeological investigations and other historic preservation activities pursuant to this MOA are carried out by, or under the direct supervision of, a person or persons meeting the appropriate qualifications set forth in the Secretary of the Interior's professional qualification standards (36 CFR Part 61).

V. POST-REVIEW DISCOVERY SITUATIONS

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.13, if cultural material is discovered during implementation of the project, then procedures shall follow those as outlined in Stipulation XI of the *Programmatic Agreement Among the FHWA, the SHPO, the ACHP, the Osage Nation, and ARDOT Regarding Section 106 Implementation for Federal-Aid Transportation Projects*.

VI. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Should the SHPO or any consulting party to this MOA object within thirty (30) calendar days to any findings, proposed actions or determinations made pursuant to this MOA, the FHWA shall consult with the objecting party to resolve the objection. If the FHWA determines that the objection cannot be resolved, it shall request further comments from the ACHP pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.7. Any ACHP comment provided in response to such a request shall be taken into account by the FHWA in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6(b)(2) with reference only to the subject of the dispute; the FHWA's responsibility to carry out all actions under this MOA that are not subject to dispute shall remain unchanged.

VII. MONITORING

The consulting parties or one or more parties in cooperation may monitor the undertaking and stipulations carried out pursuant to this MOA.

VIII. AMENDING THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Should any of the signatories to this MOA believe that the terms of this MOA are not being met or cannot be met, that party shall immediately notify the other signatories and request consultation to amend this MOA in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.6. The process to amend this MOA shall be conducted in a manner similar to that leading to the execution of this MOA.

IX. TERMINATING THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

If any signatory to this MOA determines that its terms of this MOA will not or cannot be carried out, that party shall immediately consult with other signatories to attempt to develop an amendment per Stipulation VIII, above. If within thirty (30) days an amendment cannot be reached, any signatory may terminate the MOA upon written notification to the other signatories. In the event of termination, the FHWA shall comply with 36 CFR § 800.4 through 800.6 with regard to the undertaking covered by this MOA.

X. FAILURE TO CARRY OUT THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

In the event that the FHWA does not carry out the terms of this MOA, the FHWA shall comply with 36 CFR § 800.4 through 800.6 with regard to the undertaking covered by this MOA.

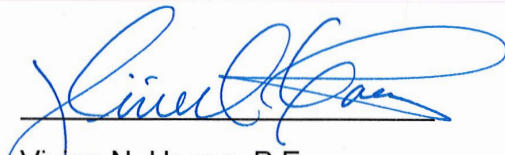
XI. FULFILLMENT OF SECTION 106 RESPONSIBILITIES

Execution of this MOA and implementation of its terms evidences that the FHWA and ARDOT have taken into account the effect of the undertaking on the historic property and have fulfilled its Section 106 responsibilities under the NHPA of 1966, as amended.

ARDOT Job 061614
Memorandum of Agreement
Page 6 of 8

Signatory

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION



Vivien N. Hoang, P.E.
Arkansas Division Administrator

7/20/2021

Date

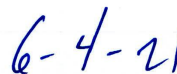
ARDOT Job 061614
Memorandum of Agreement
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Signatory

ARKANSAS STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER



Secretary Stacy Hurst
Arkansas State Historic Preservation Officer



Date

ARDOT Job 061614
Memorandum of Agreement
Page 8 of 8

Signatory

ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



Lorie H. Tudor, P.E.
Director



7-6-2021

Date



United States Department of the Interior



FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Arkansas Ecological Services Field Office
110 South Amity Suite 300
Conway, AR 72032-8975
Phone: (501) 513-4470 Fax: (501) 513-4480
<http://www.fws.gov/arkansas-es>

In Reply Refer To:

June 07, 2021

Consultation Code: 04ER1000-2021-SLI-1092

Event Code: 04ER1000-2021-E-03138

Project Name: 061614 - Wattensaw Bayou & Relief Strs. & Apprs. (S

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project location or may be affected by your proposed project

To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). **This letter only provides an official species list and technical assistance; if you determine that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected in any way by the proposed project, even if the effect is wholly beneficial, consultation with the Service will be necessary.**

If you determine that this project will have no effect on listed species and their habitat in any way, then you have completed Section 7 consultation with the Service and may use this letter in your project file or application.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found on our website.

Please visit our website at <http://www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/IPaC/home.html> for species-specific guidance to avoid and minimize adverse effects to federally endangered, threatened, proposed, and candidate species. Our web site also contains additional information on species life history and habitat requirements that may be useful in project planning.

If your project involves in-stream construction activities, oil and natural gas infrastructure, road construction, transmission lines, or communication towers, please review our project specific guidance at <http://www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/IPaC/ProjSpec.html>.

The karst region of Arkansas is a unique region that covers the **northern third of Arkansas** and we have specific guidance to conserve sensitive cave-obligate and bat species. **Please visit <http://www.fws.gov/arkansas-es/IPaC/Karst.html> to determine if your project occurs in the karst region and to view karst specific-guidance.** Proper implementation and maintenance of best management practices specified in these guidance documents is necessary to avoid adverse effects to federally protected species and often avoids the more lengthy formal consultation process.

If your species list includes any mussels, Northern Long-eared Bat, Indiana Bat, Yellowcheek Darter, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, or American Burying Beetle, your project may require a presence/absence and/or habitat survey prior to commencing project activities. Please check the appropriate species-specific guidance on our website to determine if your project requires a survey. We strongly recommend that you contact the appropriate staff species lead biologist (see office directory or species page) prior to conducting presence/absence surveys to ensure the appropriate level of effort and methodology.

Under the ESA, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or its designated representative to determine if a proposed action "may affect" endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or designated critical habitat, and if so, to consult with the Service further. Similarly, it is the responsibility of the Federal action agency or project proponent, not the Service, to make "no effect" determinations. If you determine that your proposed action will have "no effect" on threatened or endangered species or their respective critical habitat, you do not need to seek concurrence with the Service. Nevertheless, it is a violation of Federal law to harm or harass any federally-listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species without the appropriate permit.

Through the consultation process, we will analyze information contained in a biological assessment that you provide. If your proposed action is associated with Federal funding or permitting, consultation will occur with the Federal agency under section 7(a)(2) of the ESA. Otherwise, an incidental take permit pursuant to section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA (also known as a habitat conservation plan) is necessary to harm or harass federally listed threatened or endangered fish or wildlife species. In either case, there is no mechanism for authorizing incidental take "after-the-fact." For more information regarding formal consultation and HCPs, please see the Service's Consultation Handbook and Habitat Conservation Plans at www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/index.html#consultations.

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, **the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days.** This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be

completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. **Please include the Consultation Tracking Number in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.**

Attachment(s):

- Official Species List

Endangered Species Act Species

There is a total of 6 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries¹, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

1. [NOAA Fisheries](#), also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of Commerce.

Birds

NAME	STATUS
Eastern Black Rail <i>Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/10477	Threatened
Ivory-billed Woodpecker <i>Campephilus principalis</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/8230	Endangered
Piping Plover <i>Charadrius melodus</i> Population: [Atlantic Coast and Northern Great Plains populations] - Wherever found, except those areas where listed as endangered. There is final critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/6039	Threatened
Red Knot <i>Calidris canutus rufa</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1864	Threatened

Clams

NAME	STATUS
Fat Pocketbook <i>Potamilus capax</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/2780	Endangered

Flowering Plants

NAME	STATUS
Pondberry <i>Lindera melissifolia</i> No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/1279	Endangered

Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

ARDOT ENVIRONMENTAL VERIFICATION CHECKLIST FOR CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

ARDOT Job 061614 FAP NHPP-0059(17)
Job Title Wattensaw Bayou & Relief Strs. & Apprs (S)

Environmental Resource	None	Minimal	Major	Comments
Air Quality	X			No impacts anticipated
Cultural Resources		X		Historic bridge to be demolished, will be mitigated to SHPO standards
Economic	X			No impacts anticipated
Endangered Species	X			"No effect" determination
Environmental Justice/Title VI	X			No impacts anticipated
Fish and Wildlife		X		Minor impacts during construction
Floodplains		X		Zone A SFHA
Forest Service Property	X			None in project area
Hazardous Materials/Landfills		X		Small debris pile, SP included
Land Use		X		6.7 acres new ROW; 024 acre TCE
Migratory Birds	X			Migratory Bird SP included
Navigation/Coast Guard	X			None in project area
Noise Levels	X			No impacts anticipated
Prime Farmland		X		0.6 acre PFL; 5.4 acres Farmland of Statewide Importance converted to ROW
Protected Waters	X			None in project area
Public Recreation Lands	X			No impacts anticipated
Public Water Supply/WHPA	X			None in project area
Relocatees	X			No relocations
Section 4(f)/6(f)	X			No impacts anticipated
Social	X			No impacts anticipated
Underground Storage Tanks	X			No impacts anticipated
Visual	X			No impacts anticipated
Streams		X		150' stream impacts; NW23
Water Quality		X		Temporary decrease during construction
Wetlands		X		1.0 acre wetland impacts; NW23
Wildlife Refuges	X			None in project area

Section 401 Water Quality Certification Required? N
 Short-term Activity Authorization Required? Y
 Section 404 Permit Required? Y Type NWP 23
 Remarks: _____

Signature of Evaluator Kathryn Rose Date 6/15/2021

Date Sent: May 20, 2021

ROADWAY DESIGN REQUEST

Job Number 061614 FAP No. _____ County Prairie

Job Name Wattensaw Bayou & Relief Strs. & Apprs. (S)

Design Engineer Neel-Schaffer Environmental Staff _____

Detailed Project Description This project is reconstructing two existing Highway 86 hydraulic bridge structures over Wattensaw Bayou and Wattensaw Bayou Relief, respectively. Each of the new bridges will be constructed on new location, adjacent to the existing structures.

A. Existing Conditions:

Roadway Width: 26' Shoulder Type/Width: 3' unpaved

Number of Lanes and Width: 2-10' Existing Right-of-Way: 80' avg.

Sidewalks? N/A Location: _____ Width: _____

Bike Lanes? N/A Location: _____ Width: _____

B. Proposed Conditions:

Roadway Width: 30' Shoulder Type/Width: 4' (2' paved)

Number of Lanes and Width: 2-11' Proposed Right-of-Way: Var. (80'-135')

Sidewalks? N/A Location: _____ Width: _____

Bike Lanes? N/A Location: _____ Width: _____

C. Construction Information:

If detour: Where: n/a Length: _____

D. Design Traffic Data:

2022 ADT: 350 2042 ADT: 400 % Trucks: 8

Design Speed: 55 m.p.h.

E. Approximate total length of project: 0.80 mile(s)

F. Justification for proposed improvements: Structure replacement

G. Total Relocates: 0 Residences: 0 Businesses: 0

H. Have you coordinated with any outside agencies (e.g., FHWA, City, County, etc.)? N/A

Agency/Official	Person Contacted	Date



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
LITTLE ROCK DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
POST OFFICE BOX 867
LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72203-0867
www.swl.usace.army.mil

September 12, 2023

Regulatory Division

NATIONWIDE PERMIT NO. MVM 2023-00224

Mr. John Fleming
Division Head, Environmental Division
Arkansas Department of Transportation
PO Box 2261
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-2261

Dear Mr. Fleming:

Please refer to your recent request concerning Department of the Army permit requirements pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. You requested authorization for the placement of dredged and fill material in waters of the United States associated with replacing the bridges over Wattensaw Bayou and Wattensaw Relief, and upgrading the approaches on State Highway 86. The new bridges will be constructed on new alignment approximately 50 feet upstream from the existing structures. The existing roadway consists of two 10-foot-wide paved travel lanes with 3-foot-wide gravel shoulders. Improvements include 11-foot-wide travel lanes with 4-foot-wide (2 feet paved) shoulders. Total length of the project is 0.8 miles and it will require the acquisition of approximately 6.7 acres of additional right-of-way. The project will permanently impact approximately 2.6 acres of wetlands and two work pads will temporarily impact approximately 0.2 acres of the bayou. The Wattensaw Bayou bridge is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and will be removed in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between ArDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and State Historic Preservation Officer. The project lies within a Zone A Special Flood Hazard Area and ArDOT determined that adjacent properties would not be impacted nor have a greater flood risk than existed before construction of the project. There are no impacts to threatened or endangered species. The FHWA approved the project as a Tier 3 Categorical Exclusion on July 26, 2021. The project is located approximately 8 miles southwest of Des Arc in sections 28 and 29, T. 4 N., R. 6 W., Prairie County, Arkansas. A vicinity map, project location map, and wetland impacts map are enclosed.

The proposed activities are authorized by Department of the Army Nationwide Permit (NWP) **No. 23** (copy enclosed), provided you comply with the General Conditions therein, and the following **Special Condition**. We have highlighted the General Conditions of the NWP that are the most pertinent to your project. You should become familiar with the conditions and

maintain a copy of the permit at the worksite for ready reference. If changes are proposed in the design or location of the project, you should submit revised plans to this office for approval before construction of the change begins.

Special Condition:

ArDOT agrees to mitigate for the adverse impacts to 2.6 acres of wetlands with 21.1 wetland credits from their Glaise Creek Mitigation Bank. Documentation of the bank transaction will be provided to the Transportation Program Manager.

Please pay particular attention to General Condition No. 12 which stipulates that appropriate erosion and siltation controls be used during construction and all exposed soil be permanently stabilized. Erosion control measures must be implemented before, during and after construction. Also, in order to fully comply with the conditions of the NWP, you must submit the enclosed compliance certification within 30 days of completion of the project. This is required pursuant to General Condition No. 30 of the permit. We have also enclosed a copy of the general Section 401 water quality certification (WQC). If you have any questions regarding the WQC, please contact Mr. Jim Wiseman at jim.wise@adeq.state.ar.us or (501) 682-0631.

The NWP determination will be valid until March 14, 2026. If NWP **No. 23** is modified, suspended, or revoked during this period, your project may not be authorized unless you have begun or are under contract to begin the project. If work has started or the work is under contract, you would then have twelve (12) months to complete the work.

Your cooperation in the Regulatory Program is appreciated. If you have any additional questions about this permit or any of its provisions, please contact Mr. Johnny McLean at (501) 324-5295 and refer to Permit No. **MVM 2023-00224, Wattensaw Bayou and Relief Structures and Approaches on State Highway 86 in Prairie County, (ArDOT Job No. 061614).**

Sincerely,

Chris Joyner
Chief, Regulatory Evaluation Branch

Copy Furnished:

US Fish and Wildlife Service, Mr. Lindsey Lewis
AR Dept. of Energy and Env., Div. of Envir. Quality, Water Quality Planning Branch, Mr. Jim Wiseman
Memphis District Regulatory

PERMITTEE COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION

PERMIT NO.: MVM 2023-00224, Wattensaw Bayou and Relief Structures and Approaches on State Highway 86 in Prairie County, (ArDOT Job No. 061614)

NWP/S NO.: 23

PERMITTEE NAME: ArDOT

DATE OF ISSUANCE: September 12, 2023

PROJECT MANAGER: Johnny McLean

Upon completion of the activity authorized by this permit and any mitigation required by the permit, sign this certification and return it to the following address:

**US Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock
ATTENTION: CESWL-RD
PO Box 867
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-0867**

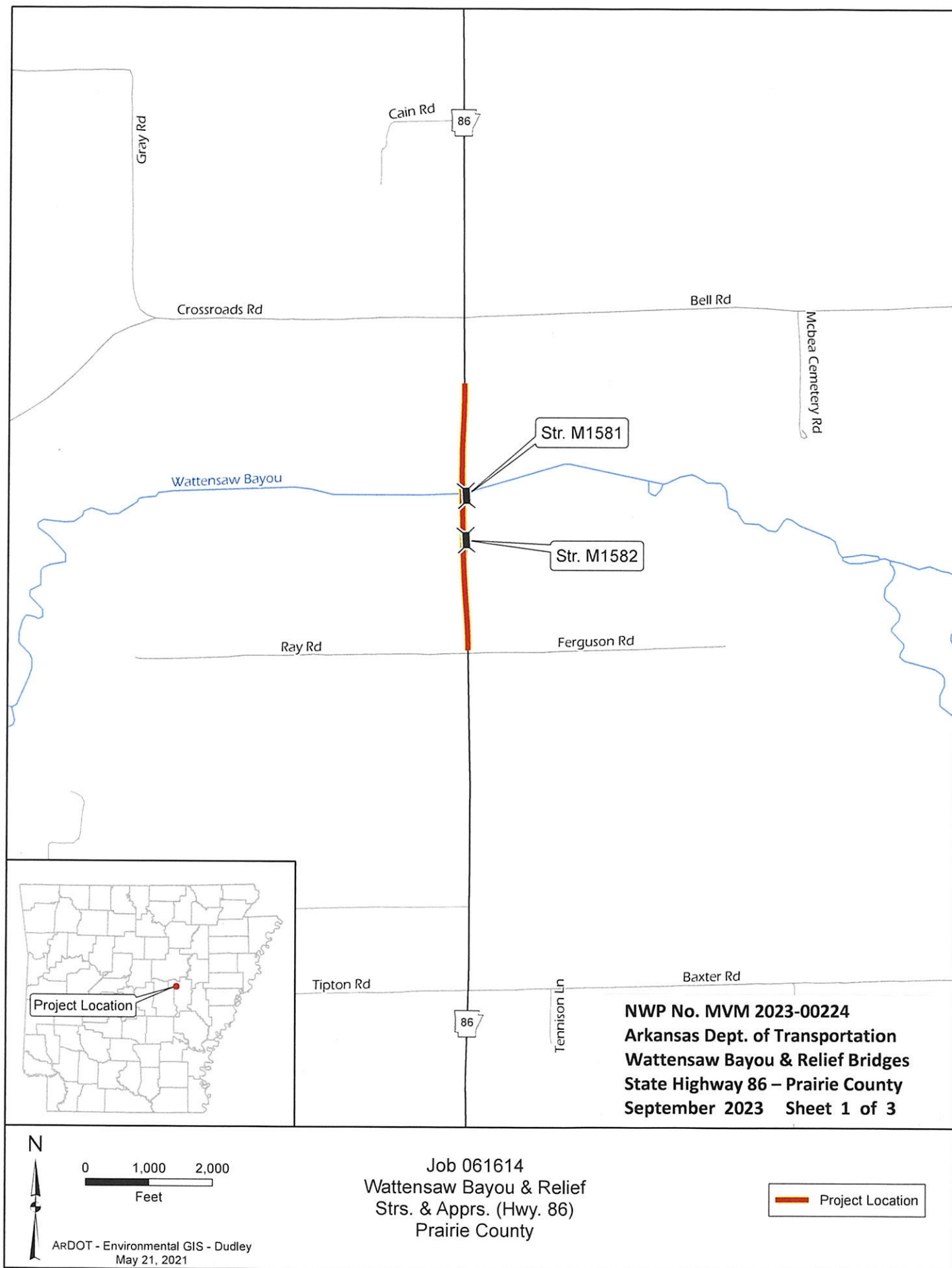
Please note that your permitted activity is subject to a compliance inspection by a US Army Corps of Engineers representative. If you fail to comply with this permit, you are subject to permit suspension, modification, or revocation.

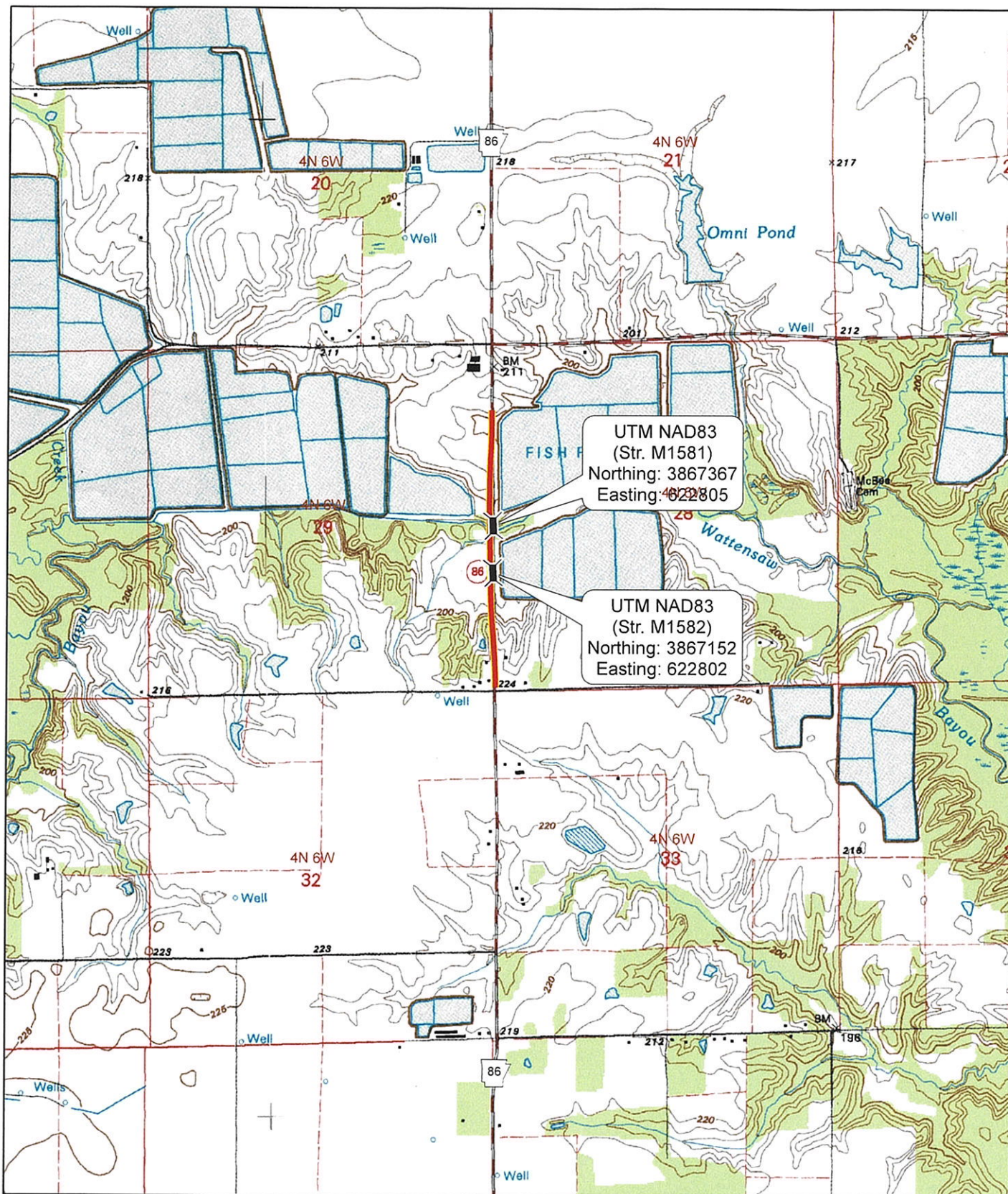
I hereby certify that the work authorized by the above referenced permit has been completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the said permit, and required mitigation was completed in accordance with the permit conditions.

DATE WORK COMPLETED: _____

SIGNATURE OF PERMITTEE

DATE





0 1,000 2,000
Feet

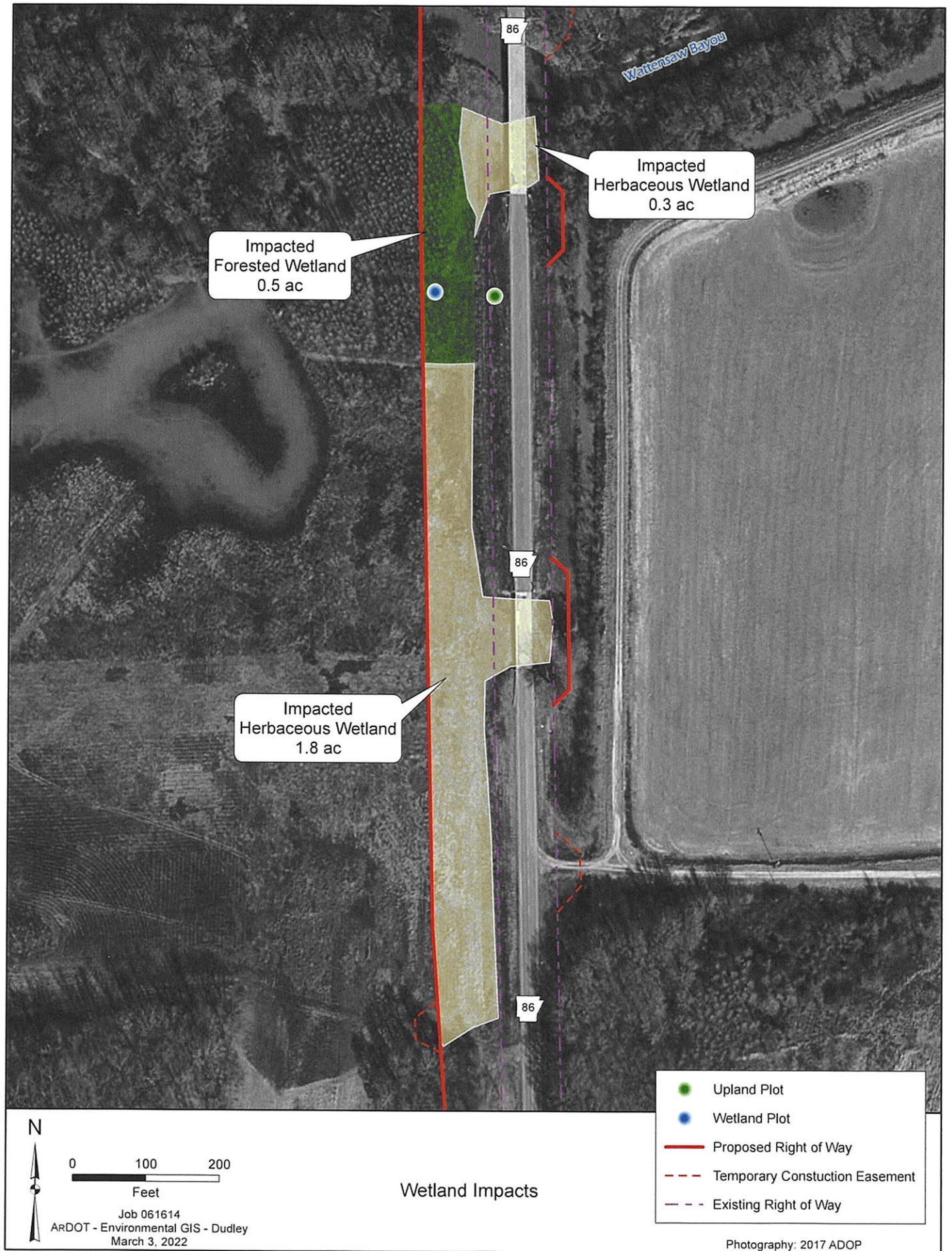
ARDOT - Environmental GIS - Dudley
March 3, 2022

Job 061614
Wattensaw Bayou & Relief
Strs. & Apprs. (Hwy. 86)
Prairie County

Sheet 2 of 3

Project Location

USGS Topographic Map:
Hickory Plains 1994



Nationwide Permit No. 23

Approved Categorical Exclusions. Activities undertaken, assisted, authorized, regulated, funded, or financed, in whole or in part, by another Federal agency or department where:

(a) That agency or department has determined, pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality's implementing regulations for the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR part 1500 et seq.), that the activity is categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental impact statement or environmental assessment analysis, because it is included within a category of actions which neither individually nor cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment; and

(b) The Office of the Chief of Engineers (Attn: CECW-CO) has concurred with that agency's or department's determination that the activity is categorically excluded and approved the activity for authorization under NWP 23.

The Office of the Chief of Engineers may require additional conditions, including pre-construction notification, for authorization of an agency's categorical exclusions under this NWP.

Notification: Certain categorical exclusions approved for authorization under this NWP require the permittee to submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer prior to commencing the activity (see general condition 32). The activities that require pre-construction notification are listed in the appropriate Regulatory Guidance Letter(s). (Authorities: Sections 10 and 404)

Note: The agency or department may submit an application for an activity believed to be categorically excluded to the Office of the Chief of Engineers (Attn: CECW-CO). Prior to approval for authorization under this NWP of any agency's activity, the Office of the Chief of Engineers will solicit public comment. As of the date of issuance of this NWP, agencies with approved categorical exclusions are: the Bureau of Reclamation, Federal Highway Administration, and U.S. Coast Guard. Activities approved for authorization under this NWP as of the date of this notice are found in Corps Regulatory Guidance Letter 05-07. Any future approved categorical exclusions will be announced in Regulatory Guidance Letters and posted on this same web site.

2021 Nationwide Permit General Conditions

Note: To qualify for NWP authorization, the prospective permittee must comply with the following general conditions, as applicable, in addition to any regional or case-specific conditions imposed by the division engineer or district engineer. Prospective permittees should contact the appropriate Corps district office to determine if regional conditions have been imposed on an NWP. Prospective permittees should also contact the appropriate Corps district office to determine the status of Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification and/or Coastal Zone Management Act consistency for an NWP. Every person who may wish to obtain permit authorization under one or more NWPs, or who is currently relying on an existing or prior permit authorization under one or more NWPs, has been and is on notice that all of the provisions of 33 CFR 330.1 through 330.6 apply to every NWP authorization. Note especially 33 CFR 330.5 relating to the modification, suspension, or revocation of any NWP authorization.

1. **Navigation.** (a) No activity may cause more than a minimal adverse effect on navigation.

(b) Any safety lights and signals prescribed by the U.S. Coast Guard, through regulations or otherwise, must be installed and maintained at the permittee's expense on authorized facilities in navigable waters of the United States.

(c) The permittee understands and agrees that, if future operations by the United States require the removal, relocation, or other alteration, of the structure or work herein authorized, or if, in the opinion of the Secretary of the Army or his or her authorized representative, said structure or work shall cause unreasonable obstruction to the free navigation of the navigable waters, the permittee will be required, upon due notice from the Corps of Engineers, to remove, relocate, or alter the structural work or obstructions caused thereby, without expense to the United States. No claim shall be made against the United States on account of any such removal or alteration.

2. **Aquatic Life Movements.** No activity may substantially disrupt the necessary life cycle movements of those species of aquatic life indigenous to the waterbody, including those species that normally migrate through the area, unless the activity's primary purpose is to impound water. All permanent and temporary crossings of waterbodies shall be suitably culverted, bridged, or otherwise

designed and constructed to maintain low flows to sustain the movement of those aquatic species. If a bottomless culvert cannot be used, then the crossing should be designed and constructed to minimize adverse effects to aquatic life movements.

3. Spawning Areas. Activities in spawning areas during spawning seasons must be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Activities that result in the physical destruction (e.g., through excavation, fill, or downstream smothering by substantial turbidity) of an important spawning area are not authorized.

4. Migratory Bird Breeding Areas. Activities in waters of the United States that serve as breeding areas for migratory birds must be avoided to the maximum extent practicable.

5. Shellfish Beds. No activity may occur in areas of concentrated shellfish populations, unless the activity is directly related to a shellfish harvesting activity authorized by NWP 4 and 48 or is a shellfish seeding or habitat restoration activity authorized by NWP 27.

6. Suitable Material. No activity may use unsuitable material (e.g., trash, debris, car bodies, asphalt, etc.). Material used for construction or discharged must be free from toxic pollutants in toxic amounts (see section 307 of the Clean Water Act).

7. Water Supply Intakes. No activity may occur in the proximity of a public water supply intake, except where the activity is for the repair or improvement of public water supply intake structures or adjacent bank stabilization.

8. Adverse Effects From Impoundments. If the activity creates an impoundment of water, adverse effects to the aquatic system due to accelerating the passage of water, and/or restricting its flow must be minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

9. Management of Water Flows. To the maximum extent practicable, the pre-construction course, condition, capacity, and location of open waters must be maintained for each activity, including stream channelization, storm water management activities, and temporary and permanent road crossings, except as provided below. The activity must be constructed to withstand expected high flows. The activity must not restrict or impede the passage of normal or high flows, unless the primary purpose of the activity is to impound water or manage high flows. The activity may alter the pre-construction course, condition,

capacity, and location of open waters if it benefits the aquatic environment (e.g., stream restoration or relocation activities).

10. Fills Within 100-Year Floodplains. The activity must comply with applicable FEMA-approved state or local floodplain management requirements.

11. Equipment. Heavy equipment working in wetlands or mudflats must be placed on mats, or other measures must be taken to minimize soil disturbance.

12. Soil Erosion and Sediment Controls. Appropriate soil erosion and sediment controls must be used and maintained in effective operating condition during construction, and all exposed soil and other fills, as well as any work below the ordinary high water mark or high tide line, must be permanently stabilized at the earliest practicable date. Permittees are encouraged to perform work within waters of the United States during periods of low-flow or no-flow, or during low tides.

13. Removal of Temporary Structures and Fills. Temporary structures must be removed, to the maximum extent practicable, after their use has been discontinued. Temporary fills must be removed in their entirety and the affected areas returned to pre-construction elevations. The affected areas must be revegetated, as appropriate.

14. Proper Maintenance. Any authorized structure or fill shall be properly maintained, including maintenance to ensure public safety and compliance with applicable NWP general conditions, as well as any activity-specific conditions added by the district engineer to an NWP authorization.

15. Single and Complete Project. The activity must be a single and complete project. The same NWP cannot be used more than once for the same single and complete project.

16. Wild and Scenic Rivers. (a) No NWP activity may occur in a component of the National Wild and Scenic River System, or in a river officially designated by Congress as a "study river" for possible inclusion in the system while the river is in an official study status, unless the appropriate Federal agency with direct management responsibility for such river, has determined in writing that the proposed activity will not adversely affect the Wild and Scenic River designation or study status.

(b) If a proposed NWP activity will occur in a component of the National Wild and Scenic River System, or in a river officially designated by Congress as a “study river” for possible inclusion in the system while the river is in an official study status, the permittee must submit a pre-construction notification (see general condition 32). The district engineer will coordinate the PCN with the Federal agency with direct management responsibility for that river. Permittees shall not begin the NWP activity until notified by the district engineer that the Federal agency with direct management responsibility for that river has determined in writing that the proposed NWP activity will not adversely affect the Wild and Scenic River designation or study status.

(c) Information on Wild and Scenic Rivers may be obtained from the appropriate Federal land management agency responsible for the designated Wild and Scenic River or study river (e.g., National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). Information on these rivers is also available at: <http://www.rivers.gov/>.

17. Tribal Rights. No activity or its operation may impair reserved tribal rights, including, but not limited to, reserved water rights and treaty fishing and hunting rights.

18. Endangered Species. (a) No activity is authorized under any NWP which is likely to directly or indirectly jeopardize the continued existence of a threatened or endangered species or a species proposed for such designation, as identified under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), or which will directly or indirectly destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat or critical habitat proposed for such designation. No activity is authorized under any NWP which “may affect” a listed species or critical habitat, unless ESA section 7 consultation addressing the consequences of the proposed activity on listed species or critical habitat has been completed. See 50 CFR 402.02 for the definition of “effects of the action” for the purposes of ESA section 7 consultation, as well as 50 CFR 402.17, which provides further explanation under ESA section 7 regarding “activities that are reasonably certain to occur” and “consequences caused by the proposed action.”

(b) Federal agencies should follow their own procedures for complying with the requirements of the ESA (see 33 CFR 330.4(f)(1)). If pre-construction notification is required for the proposed

activity, the Federal permittee must provide the district engineer with the appropriate documentation to demonstrate compliance with those requirements. The district engineer will verify that the appropriate documentation has been submitted. If the appropriate documentation has not been submitted, additional ESA section 7 consultation may be necessary for the activity and the respective federal agency would be responsible for fulfilling its obligation under section 7 of the ESA.

(c) Non-federal permittees must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer if any listed species (or species proposed for listing) or designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed such designation) might be affected or is in the vicinity of the activity, or if the activity is located in designated critical habitat or critical habitat proposed for such designation, and shall not begin work on the activity until notified by the district engineer that the requirements of the ESA have been satisfied and that the activity is authorized. For activities that might affect Federally-listed endangered or threatened species (or species proposed for listing) or designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed for such designation), the pre-construction notification must include the name(s) of the endangered or threatened species (or species proposed for listing) that might be affected by the proposed activity or that utilize the designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed for such designation) that might be affected by the proposed activity. The district engineer will determine whether the proposed activity “may affect” or will have “no effect” to listed species and designated critical habitat and will notify the non-Federal applicant of the Corps’ determination within 45 days of receipt of a complete pre-construction notification. For activities where the non-Federal applicant has identified listed species (or species proposed for listing) or designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed for such designation) that might be affected or is in the vicinity of the activity, and has so notified the Corps, the applicant shall not begin work until the Corps has provided notification that the proposed activity will have “no effect” on listed species (or species proposed for listing or designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed for such designation), or until ESA section 7 consultation or conference has been completed. If the non-Federal applicant has not heard back from the Corps within 45 days, the applicant must still wait for notification from the Corps.

(d) As a result of formal or informal consultation or conference with the FWS or NMFS the district

engineer may add species-specific permit conditions to the NWP.

(e) Authorization of an activity by an NWP does not authorize the “take” of a threatened or endangered species as defined under the ESA. In the absence of separate authorization (e.g., an ESA Section 10 Permit, a Biological Opinion with “incidental take” provisions, etc.) from the FWS or the NMFS, the Endangered Species Act prohibits any person subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to take a listed species, where “take” means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct. The word “harm” in the definition of “take” means an act which actually kills or injures wildlife. Such an act may include significant habitat modification or degradation where it actually kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behavioral patterns, including breeding, feeding or sheltering.

(f) If the non-federal permittee has a valid ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) incidental take permit with an approved Habitat Conservation Plan for a project or a group of projects that includes the proposed NWP activity, the non-federal applicant should provide a copy of that ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit with the PCN required by paragraph (c) of this general condition. The district engineer will coordinate with the agency that issued the ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit to determine whether the proposed NWP activity and the associated incidental take were considered in the internal ESA section 7 consultation conducted for the ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit. If that coordination results in concurrence from the agency that the proposed NWP activity and the associated incidental take were considered in the internal ESA section 7 consultation for the ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit, the district engineer does not need to conduct a separate ESA section 7 consultation for the proposed NWP activity. The district engineer will notify the non-federal applicant within 45 days of receipt of a complete pre-construction notification whether the ESA section 10(a)(1)(B) permit covers the proposed NWP activity or whether additional ESA section 7 consultation is required.

(g) Information on the location of threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat can be obtained directly from the offices of the FWS and NMFS or their world wide web pages at <http://www.fws.gov/> or <http://www.fws.gov/ipac> and <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/species/esa/> respectively.

19. Migratory Birds and Bald and Golden Eagles.

The permittee is responsible for ensuring that an action authorized by an NWP complies with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The permittee is responsible for contacting the appropriate local office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine what measures, if any, are necessary or appropriate to reduce adverse effects to migratory birds or eagles, including whether “incidental take” permits are necessary and available under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act or Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act for a particular activity.

20. Historic Properties. (a) No activity is authorized under any NWP which may have the potential to cause effects to properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places until the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) have been satisfied.

(b) Federal permittees should follow their own procedures for complying with the requirements of section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (see 33 CFR 330.4(g)(1)). If pre-construction notification is required for the proposed NWP activity, the Federal permittee must provide the district engineer with the appropriate documentation to demonstrate compliance with those requirements. The district engineer will verify that the appropriate documentation has been submitted. If the appropriate documentation is not submitted, then additional consultation under section 106 may be necessary. The respective federal agency is responsible for fulfilling its obligation to comply with section 106.

(c) Non-federal permittees must submit a pre-construction notification to the district engineer if the NWP activity might have the potential to cause effects to any historic properties listed on, determined to be eligible for listing on, or potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, including previously unidentified properties. For such activities, the pre-construction notification must state which historic properties might have the potential to be affected by the proposed NWP activity or include a vicinity map indicating the location of the historic properties or the potential for the presence of historic properties. Assistance regarding information on the location of, or potential for, the presence of historic properties can be sought from the State Historic Preservation Officer, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, or designated tribal representative, as appropriate, and the National Register of Historic Places (see 33 CFR 330.4(g)).

When reviewing pre-construction notifications, district engineers will comply with the current procedures for addressing the requirements of section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The district engineer shall make a reasonable and good faith effort to carry out appropriate identification efforts commensurate with potential impacts, which may include background research, consultation, oral history interviews, sample field investigation, and/or field survey. Based on the information submitted in the PCN and these identification efforts, the district engineer shall determine whether the proposed NWP activity has the potential to cause effects on the historic properties. Section 106 consultation is not required when the district engineer determines that the activity does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties (see 36 CFR 800.3(a)). Section 106 consultation is required when the district engineer determines that the activity has the potential to cause effects on historic properties. The district engineer will conduct consultation with consulting parties identified under 36 CFR 800.2(c) when he or she makes any of the following effect determinations for the purposes of section 106 of the NHPA: no historic properties affected, no adverse effect, or adverse effect.

(d) Where the non-Federal applicant has identified historic properties on which the proposed NWP activity might have the potential to cause effects and has so notified the Corps, the non-Federal applicant shall not begin the activity until notified by the district engineer either that the activity has no potential to cause effects to historic properties or that NHPA section 106 consultation has been completed. For non-federal permittees, the district engineer will notify the prospective permittee within 45 days of receipt of a complete pre-construction notification whether NHPA section 106 consultation is required. If NHPA section 106 consultation is required, the district engineer will notify the non-Federal applicant that he or she cannot begin the activity until section 106 consultation is completed. If the non-Federal applicant has not heard back from the Corps within 45 days, the applicant must still wait for notification from the Corps.

(e) Prospective permittees should be aware that section 110k of the NHPA (54 U.S.C. 306113) prevents the Corps from granting a permit or other assistance to an applicant who, with intent to avoid the requirements of section 106 of the NHPA, has intentionally significantly adversely affected a historic property to which the permit would relate, or having legal power to prevent it, allowed such significant adverse effect to occur, unless the Corps,

after consultation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), determines that circumstances justify granting such assistance despite the adverse effect created or permitted by the applicant. If circumstances justify granting the assistance, the Corps is required to notify the ACHP and provide documentation specifying the circumstances, the degree of damage to the integrity of any historic properties affected, and proposed mitigation. This documentation must include any views obtained from the applicant, SHPO/THPO, appropriate Indian tribes if the undertaking occurs on or affects historic properties on tribal lands or affects properties of interest to those tribes, and other parties known to have a legitimate interest in the impacts to the permitted activity on historic properties.

21. Discovery of Previously Unknown Remains and Artifacts. Permittees that discover any previously unknown historic, cultural, or archeological remains and artifacts while accomplishing the activity authorized by an NWP, they must immediately notify the district engineer of what they have found, and to the maximum extent practicable, avoid construction activities that may affect the remains and artifacts until the required coordination has been completed. The district engineer will initiate the Federal, Tribal, and state coordination required to determine if the items or remains warrant a recovery effort or if the site is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

22. Designated Critical Resource Waters. Critical resource waters include, NOAA-managed marine sanctuaries and marine monuments, and National Estuarine Research Reserves. The district engineer may designate, after notice and opportunity for public comment, additional waters officially designated by a state as having particular environmental or ecological significance, such as outstanding national resource waters or state natural heritage sites. The district engineer may also designate additional critical resource waters after notice and opportunity for public comment.

(a) Discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States are not authorized by NWPs 7, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21, 29, 31, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 49, 50, 51, 52, 57 and 58 for any activity within, or directly affecting, critical resource waters, including wetlands adjacent to such waters.

(b) For NWPs 3, 8, 10, 13, 15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 30, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, and 54, notification is required in accordance with general condition 32, for any activity proposed by permittees in the designated

critical resource waters including wetlands adjacent to those waters. The district engineer may authorize activities under these NWP's only after she or he determines that the impacts to the critical resource waters will be no more than minimal.

23. Mitigation. The district engineer will consider the following factors when determining appropriate and practicable mitigation necessary to ensure that the individual and cumulative adverse environmental effects are no more than minimal:

(a) The activity must be designed and constructed to avoid and minimize adverse effects, both temporary and permanent, to waters of the United States to the maximum extent practicable at the project site (i.e., on site).

(b) Mitigation in all its forms (avoiding, minimizing, rectifying, reducing, or compensating for resource losses) will be required to the extent necessary to ensure that the individual and cumulative adverse environmental effects are no more than minimal.

(c) Compensatory mitigation at a minimum one-for-one ratio will be required for all wetland losses that exceed 1/10-acre and require pre-construction notification, unless the district engineer determines in writing that either some other form of mitigation would be more environmentally appropriate, or the adverse environmental effects of the proposed activity are no more than minimal and provides an activity-specific waiver of this requirement. For wetland losses of 1/10-acre or less that require pre-construction notification, the district engineer may determine on a case-by-case basis that compensatory mitigation is required to ensure that the activity results in only minimal adverse environmental effects.

(d) Compensatory mitigation at a minimum one-for-one ratio will be required for all losses of stream bed that exceed 3/100-acre and require pre-construction notification, unless the district engineer determines in writing that either some other form of mitigation would be more environmentally appropriate, or the adverse environmental effects of the proposed activity are no more than minimal and provides an activity-specific waiver of this requirement. This compensatory mitigation requirement may be satisfied through the restoration or enhancement of riparian areas next to streams in accordance with paragraph (e) of this general condition. For losses of stream bed of 3/100-acre or less that require pre-construction notification, the district engineer may determine on a case-by-case basis that compensatory

mitigation is required to ensure that the activity results in only minimal adverse environmental effects. Compensatory mitigation for losses of streams should be provided, if practicable, through stream rehabilitation, enhancement, or preservation since streams are difficult-to-replace resources (see 33 CFR 332.3(e)(3)).

(e) Compensatory mitigation plans for NWP activities in or near streams or other open waters will normally include a requirement for the restoration or enhancement, maintenance, and legal protection (e.g., conservation easements) of riparian areas next to open waters. In some cases, the restoration or maintenance/protection of riparian areas may be the only compensatory mitigation required. If restoring riparian areas involves planting vegetation, only native species should be planted. The width of the required riparian area will address documented water quality or aquatic habitat loss concerns. Normally, the riparian area will be 25 to 50 feet wide on each side of the stream, but the district engineer may require slightly wider riparian areas to address documented water quality or habitat loss concerns. If it is not possible to restore or maintain/protect a riparian area on both sides of a stream, or if the waterbody is a lake or coastal waters, then restoring or maintaining/protecting a riparian area along a single bank or shoreline may be sufficient. Where both wetlands and open waters exist on the project site, the district engineer will determine the appropriate compensatory mitigation (e.g., riparian areas and/or wetlands compensation) based on what is best for the aquatic environment on a watershed basis. In cases where riparian areas are determined to be the most appropriate form of minimization or compensatory mitigation, the district engineer may waive or reduce the requirement to provide wetland compensatory mitigation for wetland losses.

(f) Compensatory mitigation projects provided to offset losses of aquatic resources must comply with the applicable provisions of 33 CFR part 332.

(1) The prospective permittee is responsible for proposing an appropriate compensatory mitigation option if compensatory mitigation is necessary to ensure that the activity results in no more than minimal adverse environmental effects. For the NWP's, the preferred mechanism for providing compensatory mitigation is mitigation bank credits or in-lieu fee program credits (see 33 CFR 332.3(b)(2) and (3)). However, if an appropriate number and type of mitigation bank or in-lieu credits are not available at the time the PCN is submitted to the

district engineer, the district engineer may approve the use of permittee-responsible mitigation.

(2) The amount of compensatory mitigation required by the district engineer must be sufficient to ensure that the authorized activity results in no more than minimal individual and cumulative adverse environmental effects (see 33 CFR 330.1(e)(3)). (See also 33 CFR 332.3(f).)

(3) Since the likelihood of success is greater and the impacts to potentially valuable uplands are reduced, aquatic resource restoration should be the first compensatory mitigation option considered for permittee-responsible mitigation.

(4) If permittee-responsible mitigation is the proposed option, the prospective permittee is responsible for submitting a mitigation plan. A conceptual or detailed mitigation plan may be used by the district engineer to make the decision on the NWP verification request, but a final mitigation plan that addresses the applicable requirements of 33 CFR 332.4(c)(2) through (14) must be approved by the district engineer before the permittee begins work in waters of the United States, unless the district engineer determines that prior approval of the final mitigation plan is not practicable or not necessary to ensure timely completion of the required compensatory mitigation (see 33 CFR 332.3(k)(3)). If permittee-responsible mitigation is the proposed option, and the proposed compensatory mitigation site is located on land in which another federal agency holds an easement, the district engineer will coordinate with that federal agency to determine if proposed compensatory mitigation project is compatible with the terms of the easement.

(5) If mitigation bank or in-lieu fee program credits are the proposed option, the mitigation plan needs to address only the baseline conditions at the impact site and the number of credits to be provided (see 33 CFR 332.4(c)(1)(ii)).

(6) Compensatory mitigation requirements (e.g., resource type and amount to be provided as compensatory mitigation, site protection, ecological performance standards, monitoring requirements) may be addressed through conditions added to the NWP authorization, instead of components of a compensatory mitigation plan (see 33 CFR 332.4(c)(1)(ii)).

(g) Compensatory mitigation will not be used to increase the acreage losses allowed by the acreage limits of the NWPs. For example, if an NWP has an

acreage limit of 1/2-acre, it cannot be used to authorize any NWP activity resulting in the loss of greater than 1/2-acre of waters of the United States, even if compensatory mitigation is provided that replaces or restores some of the lost waters. However, compensatory mitigation can and should be used, as necessary, to ensure that an NWP activity already meeting the established acreage limits also satisfies the no more than minimal impact requirement for the NWPs.

(h) Permittees may propose the use of mitigation banks, in-lieu fee programs, or permittee-responsible mitigation. When developing a compensatory mitigation proposal, the permittee must consider appropriate and practicable options consistent with the framework at 33 CFR 332.3(b). For activities resulting in the loss of marine or estuarine resources, permittee-responsible mitigation may be environmentally preferable if there are no mitigation banks or in-lieu fee programs in the area that have marine or estuarine credits available for sale or transfer to the permittee. For permittee-responsible mitigation, the special conditions of the NWP verification must clearly indicate the party or parties responsible for the implementation and performance of the compensatory mitigation project, and, if required, its long-term management.

(i) Where certain functions and services of waters of the United States are permanently adversely affected by a regulated activity, such as discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States that will convert a forested or scrub-shrub wetland to a herbaceous wetland in a permanently maintained utility line right-of-way, mitigation may be required to reduce the adverse environmental effects of the activity to the no more than minimal level.

24. Safety of Impoundment Structures. To ensure that all impoundment structures are safely designed, the district engineer may require non-Federal applicants to demonstrate that the structures comply with established state or federal, dam safety criteria or have been designed by qualified persons. The district engineer may also require documentation that the design has been independently reviewed by similarly qualified persons, and appropriate modifications made to ensure safety.

25. Water Quality. (a) Where the certifying authority (state, authorized tribe, or EPA, as appropriate) has not previously certified compliance of an NWP with CWA section 401, a CWA section 401 water quality certification for the proposed discharge must be obtained or waived (see 33 CFR 330.4(c)). If the

permittee cannot comply with all of the conditions of a water quality certification previously issued by certifying authority for the issuance of the NWP, then the permittee must obtain a water quality certification or waiver for the proposed discharge in order for the activity to be authorized by an NWP.

(b) If the NWP activity requires pre-construction notification and the certifying authority has not previously certified compliance of an NWP with CWA section 401, the proposed discharge is not authorized by an NWP until water quality certification is obtained or waived. If the certifying authority issues a water quality certification for the proposed discharge, the permittee must submit a copy of the certification to the district engineer. The discharge is not authorized by an NWP until the district engineer has notified the permittee that the water quality certification requirement has been satisfied by the issuance of a water quality certification or a waiver.

(c) The district engineer or certifying authority may require additional water quality management measures to ensure that the authorized activity does not result in more than minimal degradation of water quality.

26. Coastal Zone Management. In coastal states where an NWP has not previously received a state coastal zone management consistency concurrence, an individual state coastal zone management consistency concurrence must be obtained, or a presumption of concurrence must occur (see 33 CFR 330.4(d)). If the permittee cannot comply with all of the conditions of a coastal zone management consistency concurrence previously issued by the state, then the permittee must obtain an individual coastal zone management consistency concurrence or presumption of concurrence in order for the activity to be authorized by an NWP. The district engineer or a state may require additional measures to ensure that the authorized activity is consistent with state coastal zone management requirements.

27. Regional and Case-By-Case Conditions. The activity must comply with any regional conditions that may have been added by the Division Engineer (see 33 CFR 330.4(e)) and with any case specific conditions added by the Corps or by the state, Indian Tribe, or U.S. EPA in its CWA section 401 Water Quality Certification, or by the state in its Coastal Zone Management Act consistency determination.

28. Use of Multiple Nationwide Permits. The use of more than one NWP for a single and complete project is authorized, subject to the following restrictions:

(a) If only one of the NWPs used to authorize the single and complete project has a specified acreage limit, the acreage loss of waters of the United States cannot exceed the acreage limit of the NWP with the highest specified acreage limit. For example, if a road crossing over tidal waters is constructed under NWP 14, with associated bank stabilization authorized by NWP 13, the maximum acreage loss of waters of the United States for the total project cannot exceed 1/3-acre.

(b) If one or more of the NWPs used to authorize the single and complete project has specified acreage limits, the acreage loss of waters of the United States authorized by those NWPs cannot exceed their respective specified acreage limits. For example, if a commercial development is constructed under NWP 39, and the single and complete project includes the filling of an upland ditch authorized by NWP 46, the maximum acreage loss of waters of the United States for the commercial development under NWP 39 cannot exceed 1/2-acre, and the total acreage loss of waters of United States due to the NWP 39 and 46 activities cannot exceed 1 acre.

29. Transfer of Nationwide Permit Verifications. If the permittee sells the property associated with a nationwide permit verification, the permittee may transfer the nationwide permit verification to the new owner by submitting a letter to the appropriate Corps district office to validate the transfer. A copy of the nationwide permit verification must be attached to the letter, and the letter must contain the following statement and signature:

“When the structures or work authorized by this nationwide permit are still in existence at the time the property is transferred, the terms and conditions of this nationwide permit, including any special conditions, will continue to be binding on the new owner(s) of the property. To validate the transfer of this nationwide permit and the associated liabilities associated with compliance with its terms and conditions, have the transferee sign and date below.”

(Transferee)

(Date)

30. Compliance Certification. Each permittee who receives an NWP verification letter from the Corps must provide a signed certification documenting completion of the authorized activity and implementation of any required compensatory mitigation. The success of any required permittee-responsible mitigation, including the achievement of ecological performance standards, will be addressed separately by the district engineer. The Corps will provide the permittee the certification document with the NWP verification letter. The certification document will include:

- (a) A statement that the authorized activity was done in accordance with the NWP authorization, including any general, regional, or activity-specific conditions;
- (b) A statement that the implementation of any required compensatory mitigation was completed in accordance with the permit conditions. If credits from a mitigation bank or in-lieu fee program are used to satisfy the compensatory mitigation requirements, the certification must include the documentation required by 33 CFR 332.3(l)(3) to confirm that the permittee secured the appropriate number and resource type of credits; and
- (c) The signature of the permittee certifying the completion of the activity and mitigation.

The completed certification document must be submitted to the district engineer within 30 days of completion of the authorized activity or the implementation of any required compensatory mitigation, whichever occurs later.

31. Activities Affecting Structures or Works Built by the United States. If an NWP activity also requires review by, or permission from, the Corps pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 408 because it will alter or temporarily or permanently occupy or use a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) federally authorized Civil Works project (a "USACE project"), the prospective permittee must submit a pre-construction notification. See paragraph (b)(10) of general condition 32. An activity that requires section 408 permission and/or review is not authorized by an NWP until the appropriate Corps office issues the section 408 permission or completes its review to alter, occupy, or use the USACE project, and the district engineer issues a written NWP verification.

32. Pre-Construction Notification. (a) Timing. Where required by the terms of the NWP, the prospective permittee must notify the district engineer by submitting a pre-construction notification

(PCN) as early as possible. The district engineer must determine if the PCN is complete within 30 calendar days of the date of receipt and, if the PCN is determined to be incomplete, notify the prospective permittee within that 30-day period to request the additional information necessary to make the PCN complete. The request must specify the information needed to make the PCN complete. As a general rule, district engineers will request additional information necessary to make the PCN complete only once. However, if the prospective permittee does not provide all of the requested information, then the district engineer will notify the prospective permittee that the PCN is still incomplete and the PCN review process will not commence until all of the requested information has been received by the district engineer. The prospective permittee shall not begin the activity until either:

(1) He or she is notified in writing by the district engineer that the activity may proceed under the NWP with any special conditions imposed by the district or division engineer; or

(2) 45 calendar days have passed from the district engineer's receipt of the complete PCN, and the prospective permittee has not received written notice from the district or division engineer. However, if the permittee was required to notify the Corps pursuant to general condition 18 that listed species or critical habitat might be affected or are in the vicinity of the activity, or to notify the Corps pursuant to general condition 20 that the activity might have the potential to cause effects to historic properties, the permittee cannot begin the activity until receiving written notification from the Corps that there is "no effect" on listed species or "no potential to cause effects" on historic properties, or that any consultation required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (see 33 CFR 330.4(f)) and/or section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (see 33 CFR 330.4(g)) has been completed. If the proposed activity requires a written waiver to exceed specified limits of an NWP, the permittee may not begin the activity until the district engineer issues the waiver. If the district or division engineer notifies the permittee in writing that an individual permit is required within 45 calendar days of receipt of a complete PCN, the permittee cannot begin the activity until an individual permit has been obtained. Subsequently, the permittee's right to proceed under the NWP may be modified, suspended, or revoked only in accordance with the procedure set forth in 33 CFR 330.5(d)(2).

(b) Contents of Pre-Construction Notification: The PCN must be in writing and include the following information:

(1) Name, address and telephone numbers of the prospective permittee;

(2) Location of the proposed activity;

(3) Identify the specific NWP or NWP(s) the prospective permittee wants to use to authorize the proposed activity;

(4) (i) A description of the proposed activity; the activity's purpose; direct and indirect adverse environmental effects the activity would cause, including the anticipated amount of loss of wetlands, other special aquatic sites, and other waters expected to result from the NWP activity, in acres, linear feet, or other appropriate unit of measure; a description of any proposed mitigation measures intended to reduce the adverse environmental effects caused by the proposed activity; and any other NWP(s), regional general permit(s), or individual permit(s) used or intended to be used to authorize any part of the proposed project or any related activity, including other separate and distant crossings for linear projects that require Department of the Army authorization but do not require pre-construction notification. The description of the proposed activity and any proposed mitigation measures should be sufficiently detailed to allow the district engineer to determine that the adverse environmental effects of the activity will be no more than minimal and to determine the need for compensatory mitigation or other mitigation measures.

(ii) For linear projects where one or more single and complete crossings require pre-construction notification, the PCN must include the quantity of anticipated losses of wetlands, other special aquatic sites, and other waters for each single and complete crossing of those wetlands, other special aquatic sites, and other waters (including those single and complete crossings authorized by an NWP but do not require PCNs). This information will be used by the district engineer to evaluate the cumulative adverse environmental effects of the proposed linear project and does not change those non-PCN NWP activities into NWP PCNs.

(iii) Sketches should be provided when necessary to show that the activity complies with the terms of the NWP. (Sketches usually clarify the activity and when provided results in a quicker decision. Sketches should contain sufficient detail to provide

an illustrative description of the proposed activity (e.g., a conceptual plan), but do not need to be detailed engineering plans);

(5) The PCN must include a delineation of wetlands, other special aquatic sites, and other waters, such as lakes and ponds, and perennial and intermittent streams, on the project site. Wetland delineations must be prepared in accordance with the current method required by the Corps. The permittee may ask the Corps to delineate the special aquatic sites and other waters on the project site, but there may be a delay if the Corps does the delineation, especially if the project site is large or contains many wetlands, other special aquatic sites, and other waters. Furthermore, the 45-day period will not start until the delineation has been submitted to or completed by the Corps, as appropriate;

(6) If the proposed activity will result in the loss of greater than 1/10-acre of wetlands or 3/100-acre of stream bed and a PCN is required, the prospective permittee must submit a statement describing how the mitigation requirement will be satisfied or explaining why the adverse environmental effects are no more than minimal and why compensatory mitigation should not be required. As an alternative, the prospective permittee may submit a conceptual or detailed mitigation plan.

(7) For non-federal permittees, if any listed species (or species proposed for listing) or designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed for such designation) might be affected or is in the vicinity of the activity, or if the activity is located in designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed for such designation), the PCN must include the name(s) of those endangered or threatened species (or species proposed for listing) that might be affected by the proposed activity or utilize the designated critical habitat (or critical habitat proposed for such designation) that might be affected by the proposed activity. For NWP activities that require pre-construction notification, Federal permittees must provide documentation demonstrating compliance with the Endangered Species Act;

(8) For non-federal permittees, if the NWP activity might have the potential to cause effects to a historic property listed on, determined to be eligible for listing on, or potentially eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places, the PCN must state which historic property might have the potential to be affected by the proposed activity or include a vicinity map indicating the location of the historic property. For NWP activities that require pre-

construction notification, Federal permittees must provide documentation demonstrating compliance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act;

(9) For an activity that will occur in a component of the National Wild and Scenic River System, or in a river officially designated by Congress as a “study river” for possible inclusion in the system while the river is in an official study status, the PCN must identify the Wild and Scenic River or the “study river” (see general condition 16); and

(10) For an NWP activity that requires permission from, or review by, the Corps pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 408 because it will alter or temporarily or permanently occupy or use a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers federally authorized civil works project, the pre-construction notification must include a statement confirming that the project proponent has submitted a written request for section 408 permission from, or review by, the Corps office having jurisdiction over that USACE project.

(c) Form of Pre-Construction Notification: The nationwide permit pre-construction notification form (Form ENG 6082) should be used for NWP PCNs. A letter containing the required information may also be used. Applicants may provide electronic files of PCNs and supporting materials if the district engineer has established tools and procedures for electronic submittals.

(d) Agency Coordination: (1) The district engineer will consider any comments from Federal and state agencies concerning the proposed activity’s compliance with the terms and conditions of the NWPs and the need for mitigation to reduce the activity’s adverse environmental effects so that they are no more than minimal.

(2) Agency coordination is required for: (i) all NWP activities that require pre-construction notification and result in the loss of greater than 1/2-acre of waters of the United States; (ii) NWP 13 activities in excess of 500 linear feet, fills greater than one cubic yard per running foot, or involve discharges of dredged or fill material into special aquatic sites; and (iii) NWP 54 activities in excess of 500 linear feet, or that extend into the waterbody more than 30 feet from the mean low water line in tidal waters or the ordinary high water mark in the Great Lakes.

(3) When agency coordination is required, the district engineer will immediately provide (e.g., via e-mail, facsimile transmission, overnight mail, or other

expeditious manner) a copy of the complete PCN to the appropriate Federal or state offices (FWS, state natural resource or water quality agency, EPA, and, if appropriate, the NMFS). With the exception of NWP 37, these agencies will have 10 calendar days from the date the material is transmitted to notify the district engineer via telephone, facsimile transmission, or e-mail that they intend to provide substantive, site-specific comments. The comments must explain why the agency believes the adverse environmental effects will be more than minimal. If so, contacted by an agency, the district engineer will wait an additional 15 calendar days before making a decision on the pre-construction notification. The district engineer will fully consider agency comments received within the specified time frame concerning the proposed activity’s compliance with the terms and conditions of the NWPs, including the need for mitigation to ensure that the net adverse environmental effects of the proposed activity are no more than minimal. The district engineer will provide no response to the resource agency, except as provided below. The district engineer will indicate in the administrative record associated with each pre-construction notification that the resource agencies’ concerns were considered. For NWP 37, the emergency watershed protection and rehabilitation activity may proceed immediately in cases where there is an unacceptable hazard to life, or a significant loss of property or economic hardship will occur. The district engineer will consider any comments received to decide whether the NWP 37 authorization should be modified, suspended, or revoked in accordance with the procedures at 33 CFR 330.5.

(4) In cases of where the prospective permittee is not a Federal agency, the district engineer will provide a response to NMFS within 30 calendar days of receipt of any Essential Fish Habitat conservation recommendations, as required by section 305(b)(4)(B) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

(5) Applicants are encouraged to provide the Corps with either electronic files or multiple copies of pre-construction notifications to expedite agency coordination.

District Engineer’s Decision

1. In reviewing the PCN for the proposed activity, the district engineer will determine whether the activity authorized by the NWP will result in more than minimal individual or cumulative adverse environmental effects or may be contrary to the

public interest. If a project proponent requests authorization by a specific NWP, the district engineer should issue the NWP verification for that activity if it meets the terms and conditions of that NWP, unless he or she determines, after considering mitigation, that the proposed activity will result in more than minimal individual and cumulative adverse effects on the aquatic environment and other aspects of the public interest and exercises discretionary authority to require an individual permit for the proposed activity. For a linear project, this determination will include an evaluation of the single and complete crossings of waters of the United States that require PCNs to determine whether they individually satisfy the terms and conditions of the NWP(s), as well as the cumulative effects caused by all of the crossings of waters of the United States authorized by an NWP. If an applicant requests a waiver of an applicable limit, as provided for in NWPs 13, 36, or 54, the district engineer will only grant the waiver upon a written determination that the NWP activity will result in only minimal individual and cumulative adverse environmental effects.

2. When making minimal adverse environmental effects determinations the district engineer will consider the direct and indirect effects caused by the NWP activity. He or she will also consider the cumulative adverse environmental effects caused by activities authorized by an NWP and whether those cumulative adverse environmental effects are no more than minimal. The district engineer will also consider site specific factors, such as the environmental setting in the vicinity of the NWP activity, the type of resource that will be affected by the NWP activity, the functions provided by the aquatic resources that will be affected by the NWP activity, the degree or magnitude to which the aquatic resources perform those functions, the extent that aquatic resource functions will be lost as a result of the NWP activity (e.g., partial or complete loss), the duration of the adverse effects (temporary or permanent), the importance of the aquatic resource functions to the region (e.g., watershed or ecoregion), and mitigation required by the district engineer. If an appropriate functional or condition assessment method is available and practicable to use, that assessment method may be used by the district engineer to assist in the minimal adverse environmental effects determination. The district engineer may add case-specific special conditions to the NWP authorization to address site-specific environmental concerns.

3. If the proposed activity requires a PCN and will result in a loss of greater than 1/10-acre of wetlands

or 3/100-acre of stream bed, the prospective permittee should submit a mitigation proposal with the PCN. Applicants may also propose compensatory mitigation for NWP activities with smaller impacts, or for impacts to other types of waters. The district engineer will consider any proposed compensatory mitigation or other mitigation measures the applicant has included in the proposal in determining whether the net adverse environmental effects of the proposed activity are no more than minimal. The compensatory mitigation proposal may be either conceptual or detailed. If the district engineer determines that the activity complies with the terms and conditions of the NWP and that the adverse environmental effects are no more than minimal, after considering mitigation, the district engineer will notify the permittee and include any activity-specific conditions in the NWP verification the district engineer deems necessary. Conditions for compensatory mitigation requirements must comply with the appropriate provisions at 33 CFR 332.3(k). The district engineer must approve the final mitigation plan before the permittee commences work in waters of the United States, unless the district engineer determines that prior approval of the final mitigation plan is not practicable or not necessary to ensure timely completion of the required compensatory mitigation. If the prospective permittee elects to submit a compensatory mitigation plan with the PCN, the district engineer will expeditiously review the proposed compensatory mitigation plan. The district engineer must review the proposed compensatory mitigation plan within 45 calendar days of receiving a complete PCN and determine whether the proposed mitigation would ensure that the NWP activity results in no more than minimal adverse environmental effects. If the net adverse environmental effects of the NWP activity (after consideration of the mitigation proposal) are determined by the district engineer to be no more than minimal, the district engineer will provide a timely written response to the applicant. The response will state that the NWP activity can proceed under the terms and conditions of the NWP, including any activity-specific conditions added to the NWP authorization by the district engineer.

4. If the district engineer determines that the adverse environmental effects of the proposed activity are more than minimal, then the district engineer will notify the applicant either: (a) that the activity does not qualify for authorization under the NWP and instruct the applicant on the procedures to seek authorization under an individual permit; (b) that the activity is authorized under the NWP subject to the applicant's submission of a mitigation plan that

would reduce the adverse environmental effects so that they are no more than minimal; or (c) that the activity is authorized under the NWP with specific modifications or conditions. Where the district engineer determines that mitigation is required to ensure no more than minimal adverse environmental effects, the activity will be authorized within the 45-day PCN period (unless additional time is required to comply with general conditions 18, 20, and/or 31), with activity-specific conditions that state the mitigation requirements. The authorization will include the necessary conceptual or detailed mitigation plan or a requirement that the applicant submit a mitigation plan that would reduce the adverse environmental effects so that they are no more than minimal. When compensatory mitigation is required, no work in waters of the United States may occur until the district engineer has approved a specific mitigation plan or has determined that prior approval of a final mitigation plan is not practicable or not necessary to ensure timely completion of the required compensatory mitigation.

Further Information

1. District engineers have authority to determine if an activity complies with the terms and conditions of an NWP.
2. NWPs do not obviate the need to obtain other federal, state, or local permits, approvals, or authorizations required by law.
3. NWPs do not grant any property rights or exclusive privileges.
4. NWPs do not authorize any injury to the property or rights of others.
5. NWPs do not authorize interference with any existing or proposed Federal project (see general condition 31).

Nationwide Permit Definitions

Best management practices (BMPs): Policies, practices, procedures, or structures implemented to mitigate the adverse environmental effects on surface water quality resulting from development. BMPs are categorized as structural or non-structural.

Compensatory mitigation: The restoration (re-establishment or rehabilitation), establishment (creation), enhancement, and/or in certain circumstances preservation of aquatic resources for the purposes of offsetting unavoidable adverse

impacts which remain after all appropriate and practicable avoidance and minimization has been achieved.

Currently serviceable: Useable as is or with some maintenance, but not so degraded as to essentially require reconstruction.

Direct effects: Effects that are caused by the activity and occur at the same time and place.

Discharge: The term “discharge” means any discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States.

Ecological reference: A model used to plan and design an aquatic habitat and riparian area restoration, enhancement, or establishment activity under NWP 27. An ecological reference may be based on the structure, functions, and dynamics of an aquatic habitat type or a riparian area type that currently exists in the region where the proposed NWP 27 activity is located. Alternatively, an ecological reference may be based on a conceptual model for the aquatic habitat type or riparian area type to be restored, enhanced, or established as a result of the proposed NWP 27 activity. An ecological reference takes into account the range of variation of the aquatic habitat type or riparian area type in the region.

Enhancement: The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of an aquatic resource to heighten, intensify, or improve a specific aquatic resource function(s). Enhancement results in the gain of selected aquatic resource function(s) but may also lead to a decline in other aquatic resource function(s). Enhancement does not result in a gain in aquatic resource area.

Establishment (creation): The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics present to develop an aquatic resource that did not previously exist at an upland site. Establishment results in a gain in aquatic resource area.

High Tide Line: The line of intersection of the land with the water’s surface at the maximum height reached by a rising tide. The high tide line may be determined, in the absence of actual data, by a line of oil or scum along shore objects, a more or less continuous deposit of fine shell or debris on the foreshore or berm, other physical markings or characteristics, vegetation lines, tidal gages, or other suitable means that delineate the general height reached by a rising tide. The line encompasses

spring high tides and other high tides that occur with periodic frequency but does not include storm surges in which there is a departure from the normal or predicted reach of the tide due to the piling up of water against a coast by strong winds such as those accompanying a hurricane or other intense storm.

Historic Property: Any prehistoric or historic district, site (including archaeological site), building, structure, or other object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the Secretary of the Interior. This term includes artifacts, records, and remains that are related to and located within such properties. The term includes properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization and that meet the National Register criteria (36 CFR part 60).

Independent utility: A test to determine what constitutes a single and complete non-linear project in the Corps Regulatory Program. A project is considered to have independent utility if it would be constructed absent the construction of other projects in the project area. Portions of a multi-phase project that depend upon other phases of the project do not have independent utility. Phases of a project that would be constructed even if the other phases were not built can be considered as separate single and complete projects with independent utility.

Indirect effects: Effects that are caused by the activity and are later in time or farther removed in distance but are still reasonably foreseeable.

Loss of waters of the United States: Waters of the United States that are permanently adversely affected by filling, flooding, excavation, or drainage because of the regulated activity. The loss of stream bed includes the acres of stream bed that are permanently adversely affected by filling or excavation because of the regulated activity. Permanent adverse effects include permanent discharges of dredged or fill material that change an aquatic area to dry land, increase the bottom elevation of a waterbody, or change the use of a waterbody. The acreage of loss of waters of the United States is a threshold measurement of the impact to jurisdictional waters or wetlands for determining whether a project may qualify for an NWP; it is not a net threshold that is calculated after considering compensatory mitigation that may be used to offset losses of aquatic functions and services. Waters of the United States temporarily filled, flooded, excavated, or drained, but restored to pre-construction contours and elevations after construction, are not included in the measurement of

loss of waters of the United States. Impacts resulting from activities that do not require Department of the Army authorization, such as activities eligible for exemptions under section 404(f) of the Clean Water Act, are not considered when calculating the loss of waters of the United States.

Navigable waters: Waters subject to section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. These waters are defined at 33 CFR part 329.

Non-tidal wetland: A non-tidal wetland is a wetland that is not subject to the ebb and flow of tidal waters. Non-tidal wetlands contiguous to tidal waters are located landward of the high tide line (i.e., spring high tide line).

Open water: For purposes of the NWPs, an open water is any area that in a year with normal patterns of precipitation has water flowing or standing above ground to the extent that an ordinary high water mark can be determined. Aquatic vegetation within the area of flowing or standing water is either non-emergent, sparse, or absent. Vegetated shallows are considered to be open waters. Examples of “open waters” include rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds.

Ordinary High Water Mark: The term ordinary high water mark means that line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas.

Perennial stream: A perennial stream has surface water flowing continuously year-round during a typical year.

Practicable: Available and capable of being done after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of overall project purposes.

Pre-construction notification: A request submitted by the project proponent to the Corps for confirmation that a particular activity is authorized by nationwide permit. The request may be a permit application, letter, or similar document that includes information about the proposed work and its anticipated environmental effects. Pre-construction notification may be required by the terms and conditions of a nationwide permit, or by regional conditions. A pre-construction notification may be voluntarily submitted in cases where pre-construction

notification is not required, and the project proponent wants confirmation that the activity is authorized by nationwide permit.

Preservation: The removal of a threat to, or preventing the decline of, aquatic resources by an action in or near those aquatic resources. This term includes activities commonly associated with the protection and maintenance of aquatic resources through the implementation of appropriate legal and physical mechanisms. Preservation does not result in a gain of aquatic resource area or functions.

Re-establishment: The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning natural/historic functions to a former aquatic resource. Re-establishment results in rebuilding a former aquatic resource and results in a gain in aquatic resource area and functions.

Rehabilitation: The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of repairing natural/historic functions to a degraded aquatic resource. Rehabilitation results in a gain in aquatic resource function but does not result in a gain in aquatic resource area.

Restoration: The manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning natural/historic functions to a former or degraded aquatic resource. For the purpose of tracking net gains in aquatic resource area, restoration is divided into two categories: re-establishment and rehabilitation.

Riffle and pool complex: Riffle and pool complexes are special aquatic sites under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines. Riffle and pool complexes sometimes characterize steep gradient sections of streams. Such stream sections are recognizable by their hydraulic characteristics. The rapid movement of water over a coarse substrate in riffles results in a rough flow, a turbulent surface, and high dissolved oxygen levels in the water. Pools are deeper areas associated with riffles. A slower stream velocity, a streaming flow, a smooth surface, and a finer substrate characterize pools.

Riparian areas: Riparian areas are lands next to streams, lakes, and estuarine-marine shorelines. Riparian areas are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, through which surface and subsurface hydrology connects riverine, lacustrine, estuarine, and marine waters with their adjacent wetlands, non-wetland waters, or uplands. Riparian areas provide a variety of ecological functions and

services and help improve or maintain local water quality. (See general condition 23.)

Shellfish seeding: The placement of shellfish seed and/or suitable substrate to increase shellfish production. Shellfish seed consists of immature individual shellfish or individual shellfish attached to shells or shell fragments (i.e., spat on shell). Suitable substrate may consist of shellfish shells, shell fragments, or other appropriate materials placed into waters for shellfish habitat.

Single and complete linear project: A linear project is a project constructed for the purpose of getting people, goods, or services from a point of origin to a terminal point, which often involves multiple crossings of one or more waterbodies at separate and distant locations. The term “single and complete project” is defined as that portion of the total linear project proposed or accomplished by one owner/developer or partnership or other association of owners/developers that includes all crossings of a single water of the United States (i.e., a single waterbody) at a specific location. For linear projects crossing a single or multiple waterbodies several times at separate and distant locations, each crossing is considered a single and complete project for purposes of NWP authorization. However, individual channels in a braided stream or river, or individual arms of a large, irregularly shaped wetland or lake, etc., are not separate waterbodies, and crossings of such features cannot be considered separately.

Single and complete non-linear project: For non-linear projects, the term “single and complete project” is defined at 33 CFR 330.2(i) as the total project proposed or accomplished by one owner/developer or partnership or other association of owners/developers. A single and complete non-linear project must have independent utility (see definition of “independent utility”). Single and complete non-linear projects may not be “piecemealed” to avoid the limits in an NWP authorization.

Stormwater management: Stormwater management is the mechanism for controlling stormwater runoff for the purposes of reducing downstream erosion, water quality degradation, and flooding and mitigating the adverse effects of changes in land use on the aquatic environment.

Stormwater management facilities: Stormwater management facilities are those facilities, including but not limited to, stormwater retention and detention

ponds and best management practices, which retain water for a period of time to control runoff and/or improve the quality (i.e., by reducing the concentration of nutrients, sediments, hazardous substances and other pollutants) of stormwater runoff.

Stream bed: The substrate of the stream channel between the ordinary high water marks. The substrate may be bedrock or inorganic particles that range in size from clay to boulders. Wetlands contiguous to the stream bed, but outside of the ordinary high water marks, are not considered part of the stream bed.

Stream channelization: The manipulation of a stream's course, condition, capacity, or location that causes more than minimal interruption of normal stream processes. A channelized jurisdictional stream remains a water of the United States.

Structure: An object that is arranged in a definite pattern of organization. Examples of structures include, without limitation, any pier, boat dock, boat ramp, wharf, dolphin, weir, boom, breakwater, bulkhead, revetment, riprap, jetty, artificial island, artificial reef, permanent mooring structure, power transmission line, permanently moored floating vessel, piling, aid to navigation, or any other manmade obstacle or obstruction.

Tidal wetland: A tidal wetland is a jurisdictional wetland that is inundated by tidal waters. Tidal waters rise and fall in a predictable and measurable rhythm or cycle due to the gravitational pulls of the moon and sun. Tidal waters end where the rise and fall of the water surface can no longer be practically measured in a predictable rhythm due to masking by other waters, wind, or other effects. Tidal wetlands are located channelward of the high tide line.

Tribal lands: Any lands title to which is either: 1) held in trust by the United States for the benefit of any Indian tribe or individual; or 2) held by any Indian tribe or individual subject to restrictions by the United States against alienation.

Tribal rights: Those rights legally accruing to a tribe or tribes by virtue of inherent sovereign authority, unextinguished aboriginal title, treaty, statute, judicial decisions, executive order or agreement, and that give rise to legally enforceable remedies.

Vegetated shallows: Vegetated shallows are special aquatic sites under the 404(b)(1) Guidelines. They are areas that are permanently inundated and under normal circumstances have rooted aquatic vegetation,

such as seagrasses in marine and estuarine systems and a variety of vascular rooted plants in freshwater systems.

Waterbody: For purposes of the NWP, a waterbody is a "water of the United States." If a wetland is adjacent to a waterbody determined to be a water of the United States, that waterbody and any adjacent wetlands are considered together as a single aquatic unit (see 33 CFR 328.4(c)(2)).



ARKANSAS ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

November 18th, 2020

Colonel Eric M. Noe, District Commander
Little Rock District Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 867
Little Rock, Arkansas 72203-0867

RE: Public Notice: Re-issuance of Nationwide Permits 2020

Dear Colonel Noe,

The Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment (E&E), Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has completed its review of the above referenced public notice for re-issuance of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permits (NWP) for the State of Arkansas.

DEQ has determined discharges from projects covered under these NWP will comply with water quality requirements according to Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission's (APC&EC) Rule 2.

Therefore, pursuant to §401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act, the DEQ hereby issues water quality certification for all NWP, contingent upon the following conditions:

- 1) An individual water quality certification request must be submitted to DEQ for activities which may impact Extraordinary Resource Waters, Ecologically Sensitive Waterbodies, and Natural Scenic Waterways as identified in APC&EC Rule 2, Water Quality Standards for Surface Waters of the State of Arkansas. In order to determine compliance with the standards set forth in APC&EC Rule 2.203 for these Outstanding Resource Waters, projects covered under NWP on these waters shall be reviewed by DEQ.
- 2) In accordance with APC&EC Rule 2.305, the applicant shall obtain a Short Term Activity Authorization (STAA) when performing work in the wetted area of waters of the state as defined by Arkansas Code Annotated (A.C.A.) §8-4-102. Activities approved under a STAA, are subject to the provisions that no permanent or long-term impairment of beneficial uses is likely to result from such activity. More information can be obtained by visiting <https://www.adeq.state.ar.us/water/planning/instream/> or <https://portal.adeq.state.ar.us/>.
- 3) The applicant shall implement all practicable best management practices (BMPs) to avoid excessive impacts of turbidity to waters of the state, 40 CFR §122.26(c).
- 4) The applicant will take all reasonable measures to prevent the spillage or leakage of any chemicals, oil, grease, gasoline, diesel, or other fuel in accordance with A.C.A. §8-4-217. In the unlikely event such spillage or leakage occurs, the applicant must contact E&E Emergency Response at 501-682-0716 immediately.

- 5) If a construction site will disturb equal to or greater than one (1) acre and less than five (5) acres, the applicant shall comply with the requirements in APC&EC Rule 6.203 for Stormwater discharge associated with a small construction site, as defined in APC&EC Rule No. 6. If the construction site will disturb five (5) acres or more, the applicant shall comply with the terms of the Stormwater Construction General Permit Number ARR150000 prior to the start of construction. BMPs must be implemented regardless of the size. More information can be obtained by contacting the NPDES Stormwater Section of DEQ at (501) 682-0623.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Blanz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert E. Blanz, Ph.D., P.E.
Associate Director, Office of Water Quality

Cc: Sarah Chitwood, Regulatory Division Chief USACE
Lisa Boyle, Project Manager USACE
Wanda Boyd, U.S. EPA