

Public Notice NHPA/NEPA¹

Seeking Public Comment for Mississippi River and Tributaries, Atchafalaya Basin Levee District (non-federal project sponsor), Lower West Mississippi Seepage Control Project, Ascension Parish, LA

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District (CEMVN), is conducting a Biddability, Constructability, Operability, Environmental, and Sustainability Review for the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T), Atchafalaya Basin Levee District, Lower West Mississippi Seepage Control Project, Ascension Parish, Louisiana.

As part of the MR&T project, CEMVN proposes to continue providing flood risk reduction resulting from Mississippi River high water events by addressing seepage beneath the Mississippi River Levee (MRL), at Modeste, Ascension Parish, Louisiana. The project entails the construction of 15 passive relief wells spaced approximately 200 feet apart along the protected-side of the existing levee. The roadside ditch between the levee and the road will be recontoured to collect well outflow. A total of 4 removable pumps, placed on concrete slabs within the roadside ditch, will convey water discharged from the relief wells back over the levee when the river reaches flood stage. Due to the proximity of the pumps to the road, guard rails will be installed along the road.

Federal regulations require CEMVN, as an agency responsible for funds appropriated by Congress, to identify if properties are historic (listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places); to assess the effects the work will have on historic properties; to seek ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse effects to historic properties; and to evaluate the proposed action's potential for significant impacts to the human and natural environment.

The proposed improvements are located within portion of the former Babin Place/Modeste Place/Africa Plantation complexes, previously recorded archaeological sites determined to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Accordingly, CEMVN determined that the proposed construction will have an adverse effect to these historic properties.

CEMVN is proposing archaeological monitoring during ditch recontouring and documenting the significance of these resources through the development of a public interpretive plan to minimize and mitigate the adverse effects of the proposed improvements, as provided for in a Memorandum of Agreement. To help further develop a course of action for this project *CEMVN is requesting your input by January 15, 2019 on ways to avoid or minimize or mitigate the adverse effects to these Archaeological Sites.*

Comments can be posted at this website: <http://www.crt.state.la.us/.....>

Or mail comments to: Cultural & Social Resources Section (CEMVN-PDP-CSR), USACE, Room 140, 7400 Leake Ave., New Orleans, LA 70118-3651



Map displaying project location (above)
Project area photo 2018 (below)



¹ CEMVN is issuing this public notice as part of its responsibilities under the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations, 36 CFR Part 800, implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (54 U.S.C. § 306108). This notice applies to activities carried out under the Congressional authority for the construction of the "Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T)" project is contained in the Flood Control Acts of 1928, as amended, 1936, 1938, 1941, 1946, 1950, 1954, 1962, 1965 and 1968 and the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986. The Flood Control Act of 1928 committed the Federal government to a definite program of flood control and authorized general and progressive channel stabilization and river regulation from Cairo, Illinois to Head of Passes, Louisiana. CEMVN is also required to fulfill the Council of Environmental Quality regulations (NEPA regulations, 43 FR 55978 (1978)) that provide policy and procedures to enable CEMVN officials to be informed and to take into account environmental considerations when authorizing or approving CEMVN actions that may significantly affect the environment of the United States. It is the intent of NEPA that federal agencies encourage and facilitate public involvement to the extent practicable in decisions that may affect the quality of the environment.