



PRESS RELEASE

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Public comment period extended for West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Project

Work related to the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Project (WSLP).

New Orleans – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District has extended the formal public scoping comment period through Oct. 31, 2021 for the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

A notice of intent to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to the 2014 West Shore Lake Pontchartrain EIS was published in the Federal Register on August 13, 2021 with an initial 45-day comment period. The comment period has been extended due to the damage caused by Hurricane Ida to Southeast Louisiana.

This SEIS would provide an assessment of proposed alternative projects to compensate for the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction Project (WSLP Project) in St. Charles, St. James, and St. John the Baptist Parishes and it would identify the Tentatively Selected Alternative.

The comment period opens in preparation of a SEIS to reevaluate alternatives to compensate for unavoidable impacts to swamp habitat associated with the construction of the WSLP Project.

Compensatory mitigation for impacts due to construction of the WSLP Project was described in the 2014 WSLP EIS and in Environmental Assessment (EA) 576, which addressed mitigation for habitat impacts associated with each Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 funded risk reduction projects. The Finding of No Significant Impact for EA 576 was signed by the District Commander on April 4, 2020. Public comment on EA 576 included requests that the Mississippi River Diversion into Maurepas Swamp Project be considered as a mitigation alternative for impacts to swamp habitat associated with the construction of the WSLP Project.

The general public, interested parties, and stakeholders are invited to submit comments in preparation of the SEIS. The draft report will contain a description of the project, an evaluation of the alternatives under consideration, and an analysis of potential environmental impacts. All public comments received will be addressed and considered accordingly as part of the continued development of the SEIS into a more detailed recommended plan.

Due to COVID-19, USACE will host virtual public meetings to provide information on the SEIS and to receive public comments; times and meeting details will follow in a subsequent media release and advertisements. Information about public meetings, including login information, will be posted to the New Orleans District website: <https://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Media/Public-Meetings/>.

The New Orleans District will accept written scoping comments for an extended period starting Aug. 13, 2021 through Oct. 31, 2021. All comments received during the public scoping period will be considered as part of the decision-making process. Written comments should be sent by mail to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Regional Planning and Environmental Division South PDS-C
7400 Leake Ave, New Orleans, LA 70118

Comments can also be submitted by e-mail to mvnenvironmental@usace.army.mil.

Supporting information will be available online at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District website: <https://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/NEPA-Compliance-Documents/Bipartisan-Budget-Act-2018-BBA-18/West-Shore-Lake-Pontchartrain/>

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