

Public Notice NHPA/NEPA¹
Notice of Intent to Prepare Programmatic Agreement Regarding Amite River and Tributaries-East of the Mississippi River, Louisiana, Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New Orleans District (CEMVN), is initiating the process to develop a Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the Amite River and Tributaries-East of the Mississippi River, Louisiana (ART), Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended (54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq.), and Section 110 of the NHPA, that require Federal agencies to take into account the effect of their undertakings on historic properties during the planning process and consult with stakeholders regarding these effects.

The study area, which includes the Amite River Basin, encompasses an area of approximately 3,450 square miles consisting of eight Louisiana parishes (East Feliciana, St. Helena, East Baton Rouge, Livingston, Iberville, Ascension, St. James, and St. John the Baptist) and four Mississippi counties (Amite, Wilkinson, Franklin, and Lincoln). None of the initial array of alternates being considered are located within the state of Mississippi. Proposed measures are intended to provide the best comprehensive solutions to the Amite River Basin that meet the study objective: to reduce flood damages along the main channel and tributary streams of the Amite River, Bayou Manchac, and Comite Rivers. USACE began providing to the public NEPA compliance documentation on the designated project website at <https://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Amite-River-and-Tributaries/>. CEMVN intends to continue to use this website to post additional project information.

CEMVN has determined that the proposed action constitutes an Undertaking as defined in 36 CFR § 800.16(y) and has the potential to cause effects on historic properties. Accordingly, CEMVN proposes to develop a project-specific PA pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.14(b)(3) to provide a framework for addressing this complex Undertaking and establish protocols for continuing consultation with the LA State Historic Preservation Officer (LA SHPO), Tribal Governments, and other stakeholders. The PA would identify consulting parties, define applicability, establish review timeframes, stipulate roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, summarize Tribal consultation procedures, consider the views of the SHPO/ Tribal Historic Preservation Officer and other consulting parties, afford for public participation, develop programmatic allowances to exempt certain actions from Section 106 review, provide the measures CEMVN will implement to develop an Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with external stakeholders, outline a standard review process for plans and specifications as they are developed, determine an appropriate level of field investigation to identify and evaluate historic properties and/or sites of religious and cultural significance within the APE, streamline the assessment and resolution of Adverse Effects through avoidance, minimization, and programmatic treatment approaches for mitigation, establish reporting frequency and schedule, provide provisions for post-review unexpected discoveries and unmarked burials, and incorporate the procedures for amendments, duration, termination, dispute resolution, and implementation.

To help further develop a course of action for this project CEMVN is requesting your input by June 29, 2019, concerning the proposed Undertaking and its potential to significantly affect historic properties and/or of relevant parties who may have an interest in participating in this consultation. Comments can be sent electronically to: AMITEFS@usace.army.mil, or, mail comments to: Cultural & Social Resources Section (CEMVN-PDP-CSR), USACE, Room 140, 7400 Leake Ave., New Orleans, LA 70118-3651.



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 ART Flood Risk Management Feasibility Study under the standing authority of The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Pub. L. 115-123), Division B, Subdivision 1, H. R. 1892-13, Title IV, Corps of Engineers-Civil, Department of the Army, Investigations, for flood and storm damage risk reduction. 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.