DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
7400 LEAKE AVENUE
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70118

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

June 11, 2021

Regional Planning and Environment
Division South

Mr. Chris Oliver
NMFS - Protected Species Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

Dear Mr. Chris Oliver,

Draft Integrated Feasibility Report (DIFR) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the St. Tammany Parish Louisiana, Feasibility Study (Study) prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District (CEMVN). The DIFR DEIS is available for your review and comment. The DIFR EIS is available online for download beginning **11 June 2021** at the following URL address: https://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/About/Projects/BBA-2018/studies/St-Tammany/

The DIFR EIS has been prepared in response to the Sections 1201 and 1207 of the Water Infrastructure Improvements Act of 2016 which authorize the St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana Study for water resource development and conservation that include determining the feasibility of implementing projects for multiple purposes, including but not limited to, flood risk management as set forth in the 2015 and 2016 Reports to Congress on Future Water Resources Development. The St. Tammany Parish Louisiana Feasibility Study was authorized for inclusion as a funded study in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Pub. L. 115-123), Division B, Subdivision L Title IV (BBA 2018) in a Memorandum from the Office of the Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations. The Memorandum provided that plan formulation will be limited to Coastal Storm Risk Management and Flood Risk Management in accordance with BBA 2018. The Government is authorized by BBA 2018 to conduct the Study at full Federal expense to the extent that appropriations provided under the Investigations heading of the BBA 2018 are available and used for such purpose.

The DIFR EIS evaluates impacts associated with alternatives considered including the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) as proposed is a comprehensive plan that includes Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM), Flood Risk Management (FRM), and nonstructural features to address flooding in St. Tammany Parish.

Anticipated direct and indirect impacts are discussed in the DIFR DEIS and CEMVN will continue to coordinate with resource agency partners in its efforts to minimize those effects. Indirect impacts are anticipated to be significant where drainage is obstructed by the levee, particularly any drainage that currently empties into the Big Branch National Wildlife Refuge and coordination continues to address these issues.

Due to COVID-19, CEMVN will host virtual public meetings on 28 June at 1:00 PM and 29 June 2021 at 6:00 PM to provide information on the DIFR and DEIS, and to receive verbal public comments: times and meeting details to follow in subsequent media release and advertisements. Information about public meetings, including login info1mation, will be posted to the New Orleans District website: https://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Media/Public-Meetings/

Please review the DIFR EIS from the website and provide comments within 45 days of the date of this letter. Interested parties may express their views on the TSP or proposed action. All comments postmarked on or before the expiration of the comment period will be considered. Comments should be mailed to the attention of Mr. Everard Baker; U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Regional Planning and Environment Division South: New Orleans Environmental Branch; CEMVN PON-UDP; 7400 Leake Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana 70119.

Comments may also be provided by emails to everard.baker@.usace.army.mil. Mr. Everard Baker may be contacted at (504) 862-1514.

Marshall K. Harper

MARSHALL K HARPER
Chief, Environmental Planning Branch