

## Executive Summary

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has prepared this DEIS at the direction of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA-CW). The purpose of the DEIS is to evaluate flood risk management alternatives that can be implemented under Section 3104 of WRDA 2007. Alternatives considered include the Non-Federal Interest Rankin-Hinds (NFI) final array of alternatives as described in their Section 211 Draft Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement titled, “Pearl River Basin, Mississippi Federal Flood Risk Management Project, Hinds & Rankin Counties Integrated Final Feasibility Study & Environmental Impact Statement (NFI Section 211 Report)” dated June 22, 2022, and new alternatives developed through USACE and NFI collaboration (referred to as USACE-developed alternatives). The NFI alternatives evaluated include, a “nonstructural plan” (Alternative A), a “levee plan” (Alternative B) and a “channel clearing/weir/levee plan” (Alternative C). USACE-developed alternatives include a modified nonstructural plan proposing elevating/floodproofing/acquisition of structures (Alternative A1) and Combination Thereof (CTO) Alternatives which may combine Alternative A1 and flood damage risk reduction structural features with consideration of including a new weir (Alternative D) or no weir (Alternative E). USACE alternatives were developed based on analytical findings, public input and comment, and agency coordination.

The NFI Section 211 Report), responding to the Section 3104 authority, was submitted to the ASA-CW as a recommendation for Federal participation in flood risk management within the Pearl River Basin in Mississippi. The NFI Section 211 Report underwent an Independent External Peer Review and USACE Agency Technical Review (ATR) in 2018. Reviews were concluded in 2020.

This DEIS was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA implementing regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), as reflected in the USACE Engineer Regulation (ER) 200-2-2 (33 CFR Part 230) and coordinating laws and regulations. This DEIS drew heavily on the NFI Section 211 Report. The NFI Section 211 Report is incorporated by reference and is available upon request.

**Authority:** This DEIS is authorized by Section 3104 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007 (Public Law 110-114).

*(a) In General- The project for flood damage reduction, Pearl River Basin, including Shoccoe, Mississippi, authorized by section 401(e)(3) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (100 Stat. 4132), is modified to authorize the Secretary, subject to subsection ( c ), to construct the project generally in accordance with the plan described in the 'Pearl River Watershed, Mississippi, Feasibility Study Main Report, Preliminary Draft', dated February 2007, at a total cost of \$205,800,000, with an estimated Federal cost of \$133,770,000 and an estimated non-Federal cost of \$72,030,000.*

*(b) Comparison of Alternatives- Before initiating construction of the project, the Secretary shall compare the level of flood damage reduction provided by the plan that maximizes national economic development benefits of the project and the locally preferred plan, referred to as the Lefleur Lakes plan, to that portion of Jackson, Mississippi, and vicinity, located below the Ross Barnett Reservoir Dam.*

*(c) Implementation of Plan-*

*(1) IN GENERAL- If the Secretary determines under subsection (b) that the locally preferred plan provides a level of flood damage reduction that is equal to or greater than the level of flood damage reduction provided by the national economic development plan and that the locally preferred plan is environmentally acceptable and technically feasible, the Secretary may construct the project identified as the national economic development plan, or the locally preferred plan, or some combination thereof.*

*(2) CONSTRUCTION BY NON-FEDERAL INTERESTS- The Non-Federal interest may carry out the project under section 211 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (33 U.S.C. 701b-13).*

*(d) Project Financing- In evaluating and implementing the project under this section, the Secretary shall allow the non-Federal interests to participate in the financing of the project in accordance with section 903(c) of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (100 Stat. 4184) if the detailed project report evaluation indicates that applying such section is necessary to implement the project.*

*(e) Non-Federal Cost Share- If the locally preferred plan is selected for construction of the project, the Federal share of the cost of the project shall be limited to the share as provided by law for the elements of the national economic development plan.*

Congressional resolutions adopted 9 May 1979 authorized studies of the Pearl River Watershed, Mississippi. The authorizations read as follows:

*Resolved by the Committee on Public Works and Transportation of the House of Representatives, United States, That the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors is hereby requested to review the reports of the Chief of Engineers on Pearl River Basin, Mississippi and Louisiana, published as House Document Number 282, Ninety-Second Congress, Second Session, and other pertinent reports, with a particular view toward determining whether any further improvements for flood damage prevention and related purposes are advisable at this time. The alternatives are to be reviewed with local interests to insure a viable, locally supported project.*

*Resolved by the Committee on Public Works and Transportation of the House of Representatives, United States, That the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors is hereby requested to review the report of the Chief of Engineers on*

*the Pearl River and Tributaries, Mississippi, contained in House Document 441, 86th Congress, and other reports with a view to determining whether measures for prevention of flood damages and related purposes are advisable at this time, in Rankin County, Mississippi.*

*Resolved by the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the United States Senate, That the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors, created under Section 3 of the River and Harbor Act, approved June 13, 1902, and is hereby requested to review the reports of the Chief of Engineers on Pearl River Basin, Mississippi and Louisiana submitted in House Document Numbered 92-282, 92d Congress, 2nd Session and other pertinent reports with a view to determining whether any further improvements for flood damage prevention and related purposes are warranted at this time.*

The NFI Section 211 Report was completed under authority of Section 211 of WRDA 1996, pursuant to terms prescribed in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) executed July 19, 2012, between the NFI and the USACE.

**Study Area:** The Pearl River Basin, as shown later in Section 1, Figure 1-1, is located in the south central portion of Mississippi and in a small section of southeastern Louisiana. The Pearl River drains an area of 8,760 square miles consisting of all, or parts, of 23 counties in Mississippi and parts of three Louisiana parishes.

**Scope:** The “scope,” or extent of evaluation, for purposes of this DEIS includes the range of actions, alternatives, and impacts analyzed. Those impacts are direct, indirect, or cumulative. The scope includes the geographic range, as well as elements of the human-built and natural environment studied to determine all reasonable alternatives for flood control in the study area. This evaluation includes a preliminary determination of the NED Plan as required by Section 3104 Pearl River Basin, Mississippi, of WRDA 2007.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the DEIS is to evaluate flood risk management alternatives that could be implemented under Section 3104 of WRDA 2007.

**Need (Problems):** For more than 100 years, headwater flooding of the Pearl River (greater than 10 feet deep in some areas) has caused disruption to businesses and industry throughout the Jackson, Mississippi, metropolitan area. This area of flood risk includes 5,000 commercial and residential structures and affects a population of over 500,000. Numerous flood events have affected the Study Area, and most notably the Easter Flood of 1979, the May Flood of 1983, and the February flood of 2020. The 1979 event flooded transportation routes, homes, and businesses, causing damages that, at that time, totaled approximately \$223 million. If the same event occurred in the present day, damages would surpass \$1.2 billion. More recently, the Pearl River crested at 36.67 feet in Jackson on February 17, 2020, the third highest crest ever recorded. The communities sustaining the most devastation from this flood event were located in minority and low-income areas of Jackson.

**Planning Objectives:** As a result of the problem, the objectives below formed the basis for the evaluation of the final array of alternative plans.

- Reduce risk of flooding for the city of Jackson, MS and adjacent areas in Hinds and Rankin Counties, MS.
- Reduce flood risk to human life and well-being.
- Reduce flood risk to critical infrastructure (e.g., medical centers, schools, transportation, etc.).
- Provide long-term drinking water security for the city of Jackson, MS and adjacent areas served.
- Create a self-sustaining project that allows for minimal operation and maintenance cost.
- Minimize the potentially reasonably foreseeable impacts to downstream areas, the environment, and cultural resources.

**Planning Opportunities:** As a result of the objectives stated above, the following opportunities could be considered.

- Consider the regional economic impacts associated with the development of recreational opportunities along the Pearl River in the project area. Provide recreational opportunities along the Pearl River for the city of Jackson, MS and adjacent areas in Hinds and Rankin Counties, MS.
- Consider the regional economic impacts associated with the development of recreational opportunities along the Pearl River in the project area.

**Planning Constraints and Considerations:** A planning constraint identified was to avoid promoting development within the floodplain (in accordance with E.O. 11988) to the maximum extent practicable, which contributes to increased life safety risk. Planning considerations in the plan formulation process included:

- Avoid or minimize adverse impacts to:
  - Threatened or endangered (T&E) and protected species.
  - T&E designated critical habitat.
  - Water quality.
  - Cultural, historic, and Tribal trust resources.
  - Areas of EJ Concern.
- Avoid or minimize impacts to Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste Sites (HTRW).
- Maintain consistency with local floodplain management plans by not inducing flooding in other areas.
- Closely coordinate with operators of Ross Barnett Reservoir on operations and maintenance of minimum flows.

**Alternatives:** Alternatives considered in the evaluation were the NFI “nonstructural plan” (Alternative A), a “levee plan” (Alternative B) and a “channel improvement/weir/levee plan” (Alternative C). In addition to these alternatives, USACE, in collaboration with the NFI, developed two new flood risk management alternatives based on analytical findings, public comment, and agency coordination. They are a modified nonstructural plan proposing

elevating/floodproofing/acquisition of structures (Alternative A1) and Combination Thereof (CTO) Alternatives which may combine Alternative A1 and flood damage risk reduction structural features with consideration of including a new weir (Alternative D) or no weir (Alternative E). The NFI Alternatives A and B were determined to not be economically justified and were removed from further consideration early in the evaluation process (see Section 3). A description of the alternatives carried forward are summarized below. Refer to Section 3 for a more complete discussion.

Alternative A1 includes elevation of residential structures to the future 1 percent Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood stage extending up to 13 feet (NAVD88) above ground level, and floodproofing of nonresidential structures up to 3 feet above the ground level within the cumulative percent AEP floodplain. Approximately 143 structures, 81 residential and 62 nonresidential, are included. The option of nonstructural property acquisition (buyout) on a voluntary basis is also included in the implementation plan. Participation in the non-structural plan would be on a voluntary basis by the individual property owners.

Total potential benefits based on 100 percent participation are used to assess potential non-structural plan viability. Based on a 100 percent participation, the project first cost of \$50,243,000 is estimated to produce nearly \$2,149,000 in net benefits with a benefit to cost ratio (BCR) of 2.2 (greatest net economic benefits) and is consistent with USACE policies for protecting the environment and applicable environmental laws and regulations. The expected annual damages in the without-project condition in the study area are \$27,126,000 when accounting only for the flooding that occurs from the main stem of the Pearl River and the backwater flooding that occurs on the tributaries. Alternative A1 accrues a damage reduction of \$4,040,000, approximately 15 percent of the without-project damages caused from flooding from the main stem of the Pearl River and backwater flooding on the tributaries.

Alternative C as described in the NFI Section 211 Report and Environmental Impact Statement is the NFI Recommended Plan and considered the Locally Preferred Plan (LPP) in this EIS. Alternative C consists of clearing and expanding a cross-sectional area of the river channel corridor to increase hydraulic conveyance, demolition of the existing weir near the J. H. Fewell Water Treatment Plant (WTP), construction of a new weir with a low-flow gate structure further downstream to create a year-round recreational lake and provide an alternative raw water supply intake location should one be needed in the future, improvements to Federal levees (excavated material plan), and upgrading an existing non-Federal levee into a Federalized ring levee around the Savanna Street Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). Alternative C includes features to avoid and/or minimize impacts to Federally listed threatened, endangered, and protected species. This alternative would have adverse impacts to the environment requiring mitigation and compensatory habitat mitigation along with associated monitoring and adaptive management plans. Residual impacts associated with Alternative C include headwater flooding along the tributaries contributing to high frequency flooding; roadways being inundated by flood events in certain areas of the study area, impacting emergency services; and impacts to water distribution where flooding is not addressed.

Alternative C, as presented in the Section 211 Report, is not justified under the traditional USACE benefit-cost analysis. The LPP costs and benefits are presented as a range of costs and benefits due to the current level of design. The LPP estimated project first cost range between a low of \$1,046,068,000 to a high of \$ 2,122,260,000 to produce a range of net benefits of - \$25,915,800 to - \$66,300,800 with a BCR of 0.4 to 0.2. Alternative C accrues a damage reduction of \$14,279,000, approximately 30 percent of the future without-project damages. Alternative C would accrue expected annual damage (EAD) reductions of \$8,573,000, approximately 20 percent of the without-project EAD of \$42,330,000.

Alternatives CTO with/without a weir. Section 3104 of the WRDA provided that the Secretary of the Army may select any or all of the features presented in other alternatives to form a “combination thereof” Plan so long as the combined features provide the same level of flood risk reduction as the NED Plan, or better. Various combinations of features were evaluated with and without a new weir (Alternatives D and E). The combination of features consists of the following:

- Alternative A1
- Reduced Excavation of Main Channel
- Federal levee improvements.
- New weir and fish ladder.
- Utilization of existing weir.
- Non-Federal levee improvements (Savanna Street WWTP).
- Levees.
- Countermeasures for Bridges.
- Mitigation features.
- Year-round recreational lake.

Alternative CTO w/weir (Alternative D) does not provide any flood control benefits, and construction of the weir necessitates additional pumping needs at existing levees as well as seepage protection in the form of berms and slurry walls on existing levee features upstream of the weir. However, the weir provides a lake surface for future water supply concerns, as well as adding attractive locations for recreation and future economic development. The proposed weir would result in an expanded, year-round recreational water body capable of supporting recreational facilities. Potential recreation sites would be limited to areas disturbed by construction and design of these facilities would be coordinated during PED (Figure 3-14). The potential recreational opportunities could include boat ramps, camping areas, fishing piers, trails, or wildlife viewing areas. The Alternative D CTO with weir alternative estimated project first cost range between a low of \$487 million to a high of \$655 million to produce a range of net benefits of \$8.2 million to \$1.6 million with a BCR of 1.4 to 1.1. Alternative CTO w/weir accrues benefits of \$27.7 million, reducing the future without-project damages by approximately 50 percent.

The Alternative E CTO without weir alternative estimated project first cost range between a low of \$399 million to a High of \$508 million to produce a range of net benefits of \$6.8 million



to \$2.4 million with a BCR of 1.4 to 1.1. Alternative CTO wo/weir accrues project benefits of \$22.4 million, reducing the future without-project damages by approximately 50 percent.

The economic summary contained within Table 3-8 indicates that the CTO without Weir Alternative provides the highest net benefits when assuming high costs. However, the anticipated costs of the alternatives are provided as an estimated range of low to high costs due to limited design maturity and the inability to sufficiently refine alternative costs. Should the high costs be reduced by as little as 15% for both CTO alternatives, a small reduction considering the wide range of cost and conservative nature of these anticipated costs, the Alternative D CTO with weir would provide the highest net benefits of the two CTO alternatives as indicated in Table 3-11 and could be considered the likely NED plan as a result.

Residual impacts for the CTO Alternative Plans are similar to Alternative C.

**National Economic Development:** While total potential benefits based on 100 percent participation are used to assess potential non-structural plan viability (Alternative A1), the actual average participation in non-structural flood risk reduction plans varies. A reasonable expectation for homeowner participation in a non-structural plan is 50 percent. Realization of this participation would mean that the Non-structural and Non-structural/Levee (assuming median cost) plans would be expected to produce approximately \$1.075 and \$1.508 million in Net Benefits respectively. By comparison the Structural plans, CTO wo/weir (Alt E) and CTO w/ weir (Alt D), assuming 85 percent of the high estimated costs, would produce approximately \$5.305 and \$5.413 million in Net Benefits respectively. The structural plans contain a non-structural sub element that has a set cost.

Preliminary economic analysis identified Alternative A1 as the likely NED Plan. However, significant uncertainties and risks are associated with the implementation of Alternative A1 including a potentially reduced participation rate from the assumed rate, the inability of residents to address ineligible project costs (i.e., bringing residential structures to code), and residual impacts that are not addressed by the alternative. Residual impacts include the headwater flooding along the tributaries contributing to high frequency flooding; roadways being inundated by flood events across the study area, impacting emergency services; and impacts to water distribution and wastewater treatment.

Net benefits for Alternative A1 were the highest among the assessed alternatives; however, these significant residual risks and the inability of this alternative to address the stated problems and objectives of the Project may prohibit selection of Alternative A1 as the NED plan.

Comparing the potential of the expected and variable outputs for all plans it appears that the plans likely to best meet the NED requirement would be one of the CTO structural plans, either without or with a weir. The possible difference in Net Benefits between the CTO w/weir and CTO wo/weir plans could range between \$0.63 and \$1.4 million. However, the difference between the total benefits between the CTO w/weir and CTO wo/weir plans is approximately \$27.7 versus \$22.4 million. An approximate difference of \$5.3 million. The

structural plans also provide approximately 4 to 5 times the total damage reduction provided by the Non-structural plans. As a result, it can be reasonably expected that one of the CTO plans, likely the CTO w/weir, would be the NED plan.

Of the implementable alternatives assessed and considering the potential for varying cost or plan participation during implementation, the CTO with weir Alternative minimizes implementation risks, maximizes the difference between monetized benefits and costs, and satisfies the USACE Planning Principles and Guidelines (P&G) criteria of completeness, effectiveness, efficiency, and acceptability. Accordingly, the CTO with weir Alternative (Alt D) could be considered the NED plan.

**Environmental Compliance:** Important resources identified include but are not limited to migratory birds; threatened and endangered species (T&E) and protected species; wetlands; aquatic resources; essential fish habitat; water quality; air quality; Tribal resources; cultural resources; socioeconomics; EJ; agricultural lands; HTRW; recreation; aesthetics; and noise. Detailed descriptions of these resources and associated impact analyses are included respectively in Section 2 and Section 4 of this report.

Direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of the Final Array of Alternatives are addressed in the evaluation of the features and alternatives. The Project area includes mixed forested wetlands, emergent wetlands, mixed scrub-shrub wetlands, mixed upland forests, upland scrub-shrub, grassland, evergreen forest, and riverine habitat. Table E-1 displays the unavoidable habitat impacts and terrestrial mitigation requirements associated with the Pearl River Flood Risk Management (PR FRM) Project. A project specific mitigation plan would be developed during pre-construction engineering and design (PED) and included in a subsequent NEPA document(s). The goal of this mitigation plan will be to fully compensate, in kind, for the unavoidable impacts to significant fish and wildlife habitat resources that would occur due to implementation of the PR FRM project. The Interagency Mitigation Team (IMT), which includes the US Fish and Wildlife Service (the Service), US Army Corps of Engineers MVK, NFI and MDWFP, will work closely to complete a detailed mitigation plan. This mitigation plan will include all of the components set forth in laws, guidance, policy, and regulations. It should be noted that the Average Annual Habitat Units (AAHUs) of riverine impacts have not been adequately determined at this time. Based on current information, only estimated impacted acres are included. During PED, HEP models would be conducted using appropriate obligate riverine species to determine the habitat units of riverine habitat impacted and required for mitigation. The IMT agreed that the lacustrine habitat impacts would be self-mitigating with construction of alternative.

*Table E-1 - Unavoidable Fish and Wildlife Habitat Impacts requiring mitigation.*

Habitat	Alt C Acres of Impact	CTO Acres of Impact	Alt C AAHUs	CTO AAHUs
Lacustrine/Open Water	200	81	1,232	497
BLH wet	1,224	689	3,011	1,695



Swamp	150	55	368	135
Forested Uplands	710	223	2,733	859
Riverine*	287	232	TBD	TBD

If the CTO without a weir was to be implemented, the riverine impacts of approximately 232 acres would no longer be incurred, and riverine mitigation would not be necessary. The terrestrial impacts would still be realized and so BLH, swamp, and forested uplands mitigation would still be required. Additionally, approximately 497 AAHUs of lacustrine habitat would require mitigation as there would be no weir to create a lake and therefore would not be self-mitigating.

*Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act.* The Service provided a Coordination Act Report (CAR) dated January 2020 in response to the EIS effort conducted by the NFI. They then provided a Draft CAR on August 23, 2023, in response to this effort. The Draft CAR is located in Appendix J. The Draft FWS recommendations and USACE responses are in Section 7.

*Endangered Species Act.* USACE is coordinating with The Service through development of a Biological Assessment which includes potential impacts to and features to avoid and minimize impacts to threatened and endangered species, bald eagles, and other protected species. Coordination with The Service is ongoing. No impacts to species are expected from Alternative A1. Based on currently available historical data, a review of current literature and studies, and with the employment of avoidance measures, the USACE has determined that Alternative C and CTO with a weir may affect but would not likely adversely affect the Northern Long Eared Bat (NLEB) and the Tricolored Bat (TCB); would likely adversely affect but not jeopardize the continued existence of the Gulf Sturgeon (GS), ringed map turtle, Alligator Snapping Turtle (AST), Pearl River Map Turtle (PRMT), Louisiana pigtoe, and monarch butterfly. Alternative CTO without a weir may affect but would not likely adversely affect the GS, NLEB, TCB, LA pigtoe, and monarch butterfly; would likely adversely affect the ringed map turtle, AST, and PRMT. Based upon the assessment completed, it was determined that Alternative C, CTO with a weir, and CTO without a weir would not result in an adverse modification to Gulf sturgeon critical habitat.

*Tribal Resources.* USACE is continuing to consult with Federally-Recognized Tribal Governments on a Government-to-Government basis as required in E.O. 13175 (“*Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*,” U.S. President 2000) and USACE Tribal Consultation Policy (December 05, 2023), as described in Section 2 of this report.

*Section 106 NHPA Consultation.* USACE is continuing to follow its Section 106 NHPA procedures described in Section 2 of this report to develop a project-specific PA in furtherance of USACE’s Section 106 NHPA responsibilities for this Undertaking. The PA would then govern USACE’s subsequent NHPA compliance efforts.

*Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 401, 402 and Section 404.* A Section 401 water quality certification would be obtained prior to construction of the proposed action. A Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit will be obtained prior to construction. A Section 404(b)(1) report will be prepared and provided for public review and comment during PED.

*Environmental Site Assessment.* There is a high probability of encountering HTRW during construction with implementation of Alternative C or if implemented as part of the CTO Alternative. Prior to construction, an ASTM E 1527-13 Phase I & II ESA would be completed due the findings that were discovered during the NFI's reconnaissance of the study area. Please reference the HTRW section within the Environmental Consequence section of this document for additional information regarding any HTRW concerns.

*Environmental Justice.* The Flood Risk Management systems, Alternative C, A1, and CTO all benefit areas of EJ concern by reducing flood risk to those living in vulnerable communities. The vast majority of the study area is comprised of disadvantaged communities and would benefit from either alternative but to different degrees. The EJ assessment in Sections 4.2.2.11 - 4.2.2.14 discusses possible benefits and adverse impacts of each alternative.

**Public and Agency Coordination:** A Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the Federal Register on May 18, 2023 (88 Fed. Reg. 31738) notifying the public of the USACE's intent to prepare a DEIS for the Pearl River Flood Risk Management Project, Pear River Watershed, Rankin and Hinds Counties, Mississippi and to conduct public outreach for a study to evaluate potential flood risk management features that can be implemented under Section 3104 WRDA of 2007.

Public outreach meetings were held in Slidell, LA and Jackson, MS, both virtually and in person, on May 23 and 24, 2023, respectively. The deadline for submitting comments to be considered in the DEIS planning process was June 30, 2023. There were 3,314 emails received containing approximately different 225 comments. A large number of the comment letters received were considered "form letters" representing the same comments; therefore, these were counted as a single comment made by multiple individuals. The majority of the comments received aligned with five primary themes. These themes consisted of: (1) environmental impacts including downstream effects, (2) ecosystem Impacts (wildlife, threatened & endangered species), (3) flood risk, (4) water supply, (5) and alternative formulation. The input received was considered during the assessment of the alternatives. See Section 9 and Appendix A: *Scoping Report*.

Cooperating and participating agencies include the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (The Service) Jackson, MS and Lafayette, LA offices; Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IV (FEMA); United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4; and Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ). Agencies invited to participate as participating agencies include: Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP), Mississippi Department of Mineral Resources (MDMR), Mississippi Natural Resources Conservation Service (MNRCS), Louisiana Department of Wildlife and

Fisheries (LDWF), Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), and Mississippi Department of Archives & History (MDAH; SHPO). Federally-Recognized Tribes were invited to become Cooperating or Participating agencies for this Action; however, to-date, no Tribal governments have elected to participate in either role.

Participants in the Section 106 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) consultation process include RHDD, MDAH, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and the following Federally-Recognized Tribes that have expressed aboriginal interest in Mississippi and the Study Area: Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (ACTT), Chickasaw Nation (CN), the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO), the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana (CTL), the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians (JBCI), the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians (MBCI; also holds reservation lands in close proximity to the Study Area), the Muscogee (Creek) Nation (MCN), Quapaw Nation (QN), and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Mississippi (TBTL). The RHDD, MDAH, ACHP, QN, MBCI, and CNO are participating as consulting parties and are invited as signatory parties to the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA).

**Incomplete or Unavailable Information:** Section 6.6 provides a discussion regarding incomplete or unavailable information to inform the alternative evaluation and assessment constraints

**Timeline:** The 45-day review period begins 7 June 2024 and ends 22 July 2024. The Notice of Availability will be published in the Federal Register. Comments postmarked on or before the end of the 45-day public comment period will be considered.

Comments should be mailed or emailed to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Attention: Eric Williams, Chief, Environmental Branch, RPEDS  
CEMVN-PDS, Room 136,  
7400 Leake Avenue New Orleans, LA 70118  
Email: [PearlRiverFRM@usace.army.mil](mailto:PearlRiverFRM@usace.army.mil)