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Rankin-Hinds Pearl River Flood & Drainage Control District
Attn: Mr. Keith Turner
Post Office Box 320790
Flowood, MS 39232

Dear Mr. Turner,

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) appreciates being recognized as a stakeholder in the Pearl River Basin Federal Flood Risk Management Project and having the opportunity to review the Integrated Draft Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement developed under Section 211 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996.

MDOT understands the need to reduce the risk of flooding within the Jackson Metropolitan Area to help protect critical infrastructure. In fact, there are nine (9) bridges owned by the State of Mississippi and maintained by MDOT within the proposed project's study area which are directly affected. The bridges of concern are the two (2) main channel bridges on SR 25 (aka Lakeland Drive), two (2) relief bridges on SR 25, two (2) main channel bridges on I-55, one (1) main channel bridge on US 80, and two (2) main channel bridges on I-20 as well as MDOT's wetlands/waters mitigation bank.

The Integrated Draft Feasibility Study and Environmental Impact Statement states that Alternative C, the tentatively selected plan (preferred alternative), will involve the dredging of the Pearl River. This is a concern to MDOT for two (2) reasons: 1) If dredging activities are conducted beneath any of the nine (9) bridges, it will reduce foundation embedment directly affecting the capacity of the bridges, 2) If dredging activities are conducted upstream and downstream of any of the nine (9) bridges but not under the bridges, a collapse due to sudden loss of the non-dredged material could occur. The most recent collapse of a MDOT Bridge was due to this exact situation.

Predicted scour depths at each bridge were provided to MDOT by the engineering firm that has been retained by the project sponsor. If the predicted scour depths occur, there will be catastrophic failure of all seven (7) of the main channel bridges mentioned above and the capacity of the relief bridges on SR 25 will be severely reduced. For this reason all nine (9) bridges will need to be replaced and the cost to replace the nine (9) bridges should be reflected in the cost of the Pearl River Basin Federal Flood Risk Management Project.