



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
FORT WORTH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 17300
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76102-0300

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

January 12, 2005

Planning, Environmental, and Regulatory Division

**JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, FORT WORTH DISTRICT
Final Environmental Impact Statement
Upper Trinity River, Fort Worth,
Central City, Fort Worth, Texas**

**WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION
TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Fort Worth District has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) addressing proposed activities to provide flood damage reduction, ecosystem improvement, recreation, and urban revitalization within the Upper Trinity River Basin, Trinity River, Central City, Fort Worth, Texas. The USACE is also requesting water quality certification from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

Authority. This Notice of Availability is being issued to interested parties in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, Public Law 91-190, as amended, and the implementing regulations in Engineering Regulation 200-2-2.

Purpose and Background. The Central City Study Area is bounded generally by the Fort Worth Stockyards to the North, University Drive to the West, I-30 to the South, and Sylvania Avenue to the East. In October 2004 the Study Area was expanded upstream on the West Fork of the Trinity River. The focus of this EIS was to evaluate potential modifications to the existing system of levees and channels that would protect or enhance existing levels of flood protection, restore components of the natural riverine system that were sacrificed in the construction of the existing flood control system, facilitate urban revitalization, and provide major quality-of-life enhancements for citizens of the region.

Proposed Actions and Alternatives. In addition to the No Action, two action alternatives are presented in the Final EIS. The action alternatives were developed under two parallel formulation strategies. Development of the Principles and Guidelines (P&G) Based Alternative followed the principles, standards, and procedures outlined in the Water Resources Council's "Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water Related Land Resources Implementation Studies". The Community Based Alternative was formulated with a broader community input based approach, which included extensive public participation with unconstrained development of goals and objectives. The result of these two different planning processes led to the development of two very different plans for addressing the problems and opportunities of the study area.

Under the No Action Alternative, which is equivalent to the description of the future without-project condition, no measures would be taken to address the objectives and goals developed for flood protection, environmental improvement, urban revitalization, or recreation.

The P&G Based Alternative includes levee raises along portions of the existing channel to bring the system within the study area into compliance with Corridor Development Certificate (CDC) criteria, and return the flood protection levels to the original design criteria of standard project flood (SPF)+4 foot. This alternative provides

approximately \$230,000 in expected annual flood damage reduction benefits. This alternative does not provide any improvements to the existing interior drainage problems. The ecosystem improvement component of the P&G Based Alternative would provide approximately 56 acres of riparian woodland development, and 65 acres of existing riparian corridor would be improved. Recreation features included in the P&G Alternative provide for approximately 7,800 linear feet of new multipurpose trail which would link the southern end of the study area to the Trinity Trail System. Other amenities would include four new trail heads, self-guided interpretive signage, mile marker signage, and six benches. Less than one mile of existing trail would need to be replaced due to disturbance to construct this alternative.

The Community Based Alternative would provide SPF+4 feet of protection through construction of a bypass channel extending just downstream of Fifth Street on the Clear Fork to just upstream of Northside Drive on the West Fork, approximately 8,400 feet in length and 300 – 400 feet wide between the top of the levees. Three isolation gates designed to restrict flood flows to the new bypass channel and to isolate the interior area from flood flows would be constructed. This alternative would provide the same magnitude of economic benefit for flood damage reduction as the P&G Based Alternative; however, the hydraulic efficiency of the bypass channel also improves the interior drainage problems which exist in the system.

Additional features which would enhance the urban revitalization potential of the area include a dam on the West Fork, approximately 1,100 feet downstream of Samuels Avenue, designed to create a normal water surface elevation of approximately 525 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) and an interior water feature approximately 900 feet in length at the confluence area of the Clear Fork and West Fork Channels. The ecosystem improvement components of this plan will be accomplished primarily in the areas proposed for valley storage mitigation following excavation. In addition to restoring 5 acres of riverine habitat through the reconnection of two historic river meanders, the Community Based Alternative would provide approximately 6.2 additional acres of wetlands. Recreational features of the Community Based Alternative would enhance river accessibility by providing approximately 10 miles of waterfront trails, 2 new pedestrian bridges, and approximately 3.5 miles of contiguous boating loop. Three new vehicular bridges would be required to maintain existing traffic flows to and through the area. These bridges would provide access over the bypass channel for North Main Street, Henderson Street, and White Settlement Road and the Henderson Street and White Settlement Road bridges would improve safety due to grade separations with the Fort Worth and Western Railroad.

The identified valley storage losses associated with the Community Based Alternative would be mitigated by the following measures:

- Partial levee removal and excavation in the Riverbend site approximately three miles upstream of University Drive;
- Excavation of additional sites immediately downstream of Samuels Avenue Dam, and adjacent to Interstate Highway 35; and
- Modification of the University Drive roadway embankment, north of the bridge over the West Fork

In combination, these measures have been verified to fully mitigate for 100 percent of the valley storage inputs, in full compliance with CDC criteria and exceeding the criteria relative to mitigation of valley storage for the SPF volume.

Implementation of the Community Based Alternative would fill the lowermost 400 linear feet of Lebow Creek and would inundate stream habitat in Marine Creek. This aquatic habitat in Marine and Lebow Creeks has been assessed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife as being exceptional during some times of the year. Other project impacts include loss of wetlands, riparian and upland forest lands. USACE has coordinated with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and local sponsor (Tarrant Regional Water District) to develop a plan to fully mitigate the impacts to wetlands and forest lands and aquatic resources that would be lost in Marine and Lebow Creeks. A full description of the mitigation plan is included in the EIS. Wetland and forest mitigation would be developed in association with the Ecosystem Improvements area within and adjacent to the in the Riverbend hydraulic mitigation site. Aquatic mitigation measures include providing additional flow to the mid-reach of Lebow Creek, improving

aquatic habitat by modifying the existing channel, and creating aquatic habitat in the rerouted Lebow Creek channel. The aquatic mitigation plan also includes developing a riparian corridor along Ham Branch, a tributary to the West Fork that flows through Harmon Field Park east of I-35. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and project sponsor have reviewed the proposed mitigation plan and agree to implementation of features necessary to sustain aquatic habitat within Lebow Creek and Ham Branch to compensate for project losses. The USACE and the local sponsors have committed to completion of design for a compensatory mitigation plan in coordination with USFWS and Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for impacts to Marine Creek and Lebow Creek stream habitat prior to construction of project features that would induce aquatic habitat impacts. The project would not affect threatened or endangered species or critical habitat for those species.

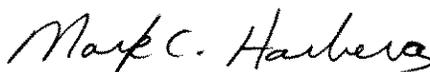
After careful consideration of the impacts associated with the three presented alternatives, the Community Based Alternative is recommended for implementation, subject to additional feedback and comments received as a result of agency and public review.

Public Meeting. No public meetings have been scheduled during the review period on the Final EIS.

Copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement are available for review at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, P.O. Box 17300, 819 Taylor Street, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300. Copies have also been distributed to the main libraries in Fort Worth, Texas. The Final EIS is also available for review on the Fort Worth District Internet Home Page at <http://www.swf.usace.army.mil/>.

Water Quality Certification. This project would result in a direct impact of greater than three acres of waters of the state or 1,500 linear feet of streams (or a combination of the two is above the threshold), and as such would not fulfill Tier I criteria for the project. Therefore, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) certification is required. Concurrent with the processing of this Department of the Army project, the TCEQ is reviewing this project under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, and Title 30, Texas Administrative Code Section 279.1-13 to determine if the work would comply with State water quality standards. By virtue of an agreement between the USACE and the TCEQ, this public notice is also issued for the purpose of advising all known interested persons that there is pending before the TCEQ a decision on water quality certification under such act. **Any comments concerning this request for water quality certification may be submitted to TCEQ, 401 Coordinator, MSC-150, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087.** The public comment period for the water quality certification request extends 30 days from the publication of this notice. A copy of the public notice with a description of the work is made available for review in the TCEQ's Austin office. The complete project information may be reviewed in the USACE's office. The TCEQ may conduct a public hearing to consider all comments concerning water quality if requested in writing. A request for a public hearing must contain the following information: the name, mailing address, application number, or other recognizable reference to the application; a brief description of the interest of the requestor, or of persons represented by the requestor; and a brief description of how the application, if granted, would adversely affect such interest.

The FEIS will be available for public review for 30 days subsequent to publication of the Federal Register Notice of Availability, which is anticipated to be on or about January 20, 2005. Comments or other inquires should be addressed to: Dr. Rebecca Griffith, at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Attention: CESWF-PER-P, P.O. Box 17300, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-0300, telephone (817) 886-1820.



for William Fickel, Jr.
Chief, Planning, Environmental, and
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