

Draft Finding of No Significant Impact
San Antonio Channel Improvement Project, General Reevaluation Report,
San Antonio, Texas

At the request of the San Antonio River Authority, and under authority of section 335 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2000, the Fort Worth District Corps of Engineers conducted a reevaluation study to include the purposes of ecosystem restoration and recreation in the flood control project authorized by section 203 of the Flood Control Act of 1954, as modified. Study results are presented in an integrated General Reevaluation Report and Environmental Assessment (EA).

Thirty-nine alternative plans, including the "no action", were examined to identify the National Ecosystem Restoration (NER) Plan. The NER Plan would balance sediment transport, restore two river remnants, 320 acres of riparian corridor, 5.84 acres of backwater habitat, and 7.75 acres of wetland. The San Antonio River Authority, as the local sponsor for this study, fully supports the NER Plan, and the NER Plan is the Recommended Plan.

The recommended plan would impact waters of the United States and subject to provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Restoration activities would meet the terms and conditions of Nationwide Permit (NP) 27, Wetland and Riparian Restoration and Creation Activities. The State of Texas issued a water quality certificate for NP 27 and, therefore, no further coordination is required under Section 404.

The proposed project is located within the flood control channel of the San Antonio River, and requires siting within the floodplain to meet its intended purpose. The project has been formulated to not induce or increase flood damages; therefore, the proposed project is in compliance with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management. The proposed project would neither adversely impact nor result in loss of wetland areas so the project is in compliance with Executive Order 11990.

The recommended plan could impact cultural resources through out the project area, including 49.7 acres located within the San Antonio Missions National Historic Park. As a coordinating agency on the project, the National Park Service has been actively involved and consulted during project planning and impact analysis. In accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.6(b), should adverse impacts to any historic properties throughout the project corridor be unavoidable, an appropriate mitigation plan will be sought in consultation with the Texas Historical Commission and other interested parties and agencies, and fully implemented prior to project construction. Cultural resources compliance issues for the project area are being addressed through on-going consultation with the Texas State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Through implantation of agreed upon mitigation measures, no significant adverse impacts to historic properties are expected as a result of implementing the recommended plan.

The local sponsor would be responsible for proper disposal of identified hazardous, toxic, or radioactive waste (HTRW) materials prior to implementation of the plan. No significant adverse impacts are expected from HTRW materials from implementation of the recommended plan.

An EA has been prepared for the Recommended Plan and alternatives. Based on the EA and results of coordination, I have concluded that the recommended plan will not have a significant adverse impact on the natural or man-made environment. The project as proposed would restore floodplain values to fish and wildlife resources.

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John R. Minahan
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer