

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
RAW WATER INTAKE PIPELINE REPLACEMENT
STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE
WEST HACKBERRY FACILITY**

AGENCY: Department of Energy (DOE)
ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

SUMMARY:

DOE has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA), DOE/EA-1497, for the proposed replacement of the existing [REDACTED] raw water intake pipeline (RWIPL). This action is necessary to allow for continued, optimum operations at the West Hackberry facility (main site/facility). The EA described the proposed action (including action alternatives) and three alternatives to the proposed action. The EA evaluated only the potential environmental consequences of the proposed action (one action alternative), and Alternative 3, which consisted of the No Build Action that is required by 10 CFR 1021.321(c).

Based on the analysis in DOE/EA-1497, DOE has determined that the proposed action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting humans or the natural environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 USC 4321 *et seq.* Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required, and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). To further minimize impacts to environmental media, the DOE will also implement a Mitigation Action Plan (MAP) for this action. The MAP is included as Appendix F of this EA, which is appended to this FONSI.

A Floodplains and Wetlands Assessment is included in Section 4.0 of this EA. As required by 10 CFR 1022.15, a Floodplain Statement of Findings is included as Appendix C of this EA, which is appended to this FONSI.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION:

The Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (EPCA), as amended, authorizes the creation of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to store crude oil to reduce the United States' vulnerability to energy supply disruptions. Crude oil is stored in geologic formations, or salt domes, located under these facilities. The purpose of this proposed project is to construct a new RWIPL at the main site to replace the existing RWIPL which services this facility.

The existing [REDACTED] pipeline is currently utilized for the transportation of raw water from the Raw Water Intake Structure (RWIS) at the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW), located in Calcasieu Parish, southward [REDACTED] to an extraction point at the main facility. The raw water transported to the site is used to displace stored oil. Approximately [REDACTED] of this existing pipeline traverses Black Lake while [REDACTED] of the pipeline traverses a freshwater impoundment, land adjacent to and including the RWIS and land adjacent to

and including the main site. The existing RWIPL was installed in 1978 and is beginning to show signs of long-term use, wear and corrosion.

ALTERNATIVES:

The proposed action (including action alternatives) and alternatives to the proposed action were evaluated to determine which actions were reasonable and feasible with respect to the proposed RWIPL project from an environmental and engineering perspective. Several actions and action alternatives were not chosen for further evaluation of potential environmental impacts in this EA because they did not meet the reasonable/feasible criteria from an environmental or engineering prospective. Actions and action alternatives not further evaluated included Proposed Action, Action Alternative 2 (directional drilling construction method), Alternative 1 (lining the existing RWIPL), and Alternative 2 (constructing a new Raw Water Intake Structure in Black Lake).

Based on analysis of the reasonableness and feasibility of the proposed action (including action alternatives), and the alternatives to the proposed action for this project, the only two options that advanced for further study included the Proposed Action (Placement of the Proposed RWIPL), Action Alternative 1 (purchase a new easement for the proposed RWIPL, standard open trench construction) and Alternative 3, the No Build Action. Based on the following findings, no significant adverse impacts to the environment are expected to result from the proposed action.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

Based on the following findings, no significant adverse long-term impacts are expected to result from the proposed action. Short-term/temporary impacts that may be adverse are limited to the duration of the pipeline construction activities and may affect air quality, noise, habitat, water resources, soils, surface geology, and permitting. A Mitigation Action Plan (MAP), in accordance with 10 CFR 1021.331, is included as Appendix F in this EA. This MAP details the DOE's mitigation commitment and corresponding actions to ensure that minimization of the short-term/temporary impacts associated with the RWIPL installation project occurs.

FLOODPLAIN STATEMENT OF FINDINGS:

This EA document incorporates a Floodplain Statement of Findings (Appendix C) prepared in accordance with 10 CFR 1022, Compliance with Floodplain and Wetlands Environmental Review Requirements. The draft Floodplain Statement of Findings was made available with the draft EA during the public review and comment period (July 16 through July 31, 2004). For the installation of the RWIPL, excavation and trenching would be required prior to the placement of the buried pipeline 1.5 m (5 ft) beneath the ground surface in all areas of the project. Once installed, the pipeline trench would be backfilled and regraded to pre-construction conditions (with a tolerance of approximately ± 6 inches). Soil disturbances would be temporary and kept to the minimum necessary for the trenching effort. Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as the installation of silt fences, hay bale berms/dikes, and/or revegetation, will be used by the construction

contractor in landward areas to minimize soil disturbances during the RWIPL installation process.

Aside from trenching material temporarily side-cast during construction, no surface fill in the floodplain would occur unless necessary to return the affected area to pre-construction conditions (with a tolerance of approximately ± 6 inches). No volume of water would be displaced by the completed project; no base flood elevations would be changed by the implementation of the proposed RWIPL project. Once constructed, this RWIPL project would not affect flow, capacity or the present hydraulics/hydrology (water movement) in the project area. While the proposed action would have short-term/direct construction impacts in the floodplain, the project would not exhibit long-term, indirect impacts in the floodplain or impacts on lives or property located within or near the floodplain. Once installed, the proposed RWIPL project would have no adverse impacts to the surrounding floodplain and would not raise any floodplain management issues.

MITIGATION:

General mitigation practices are part of DOE's construction standard specifications. Specific mitigation practices are determined by the type of construction project being considered and its anticipated environmental impacts. Customarily, environmental impacts are reduced with the employment of mitigation measures. SPR adopted mitigation measures in the MAP to ensure their implementation. The MAP is a living document and will be updated as appropriate to identify any modifications to the mitigation measures employed.

PRE-DECISIONAL DRAFT REVIEW AND COMMENT:

On May 3, 2004, DOE sent out 51 notification letters pertaining to DOE's intent to prepare an EA and invited Federal, State and Parish agencies, Elected Officials, Special Interest Parties and Adjacent Property Owners to express their interest in the proposed project and in review of the draft EA. On July 9, 2004, respondents to the May 3rd letter and several Federal, State and Parish agencies were notified by letter of the availability of the draft EA. Notice of the availability of the draft EA for review was also published in the Lake Charles newspaper, *American Press*, on July 16, 2004. Copies of the draft EA were provided upon request and made available on the DOE website at www.spr.doe.gov/esh and at the following four Public Libraries:

Hackberry Library
983 Main Street
Hackberry, LA 70645

Cameron Parish Library
498 Marshall
Cameron, LA 70631

Calcasieu Parish Public Library
301 W. Claude Street
Lake Charles, LA 70605

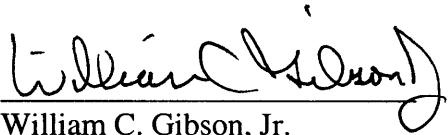
East Baton Rouge Parish Library
7711 Goodwood Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

The review and comment period began on July 9, 2004 and ended on July 31, 2004. Comments received on the draft EA were documented as part of the Administrative Record for this project. Based on comments received on the draft EA, this EA document was modified as appropriate.

DETERMINATION:

Based on the analysis in DOE/EA-1497, DOE has determined that the construction and operation of the raw water intake pipeline at the SPR West Hackberry facility does not constitute a major Federal action that would significantly affect the quality of humans or the natural environment within the meaning of NEPA. Therefore, the preparation of an EIS will not be required, and DOE is issuing this FONSI.

Issued in New Orleans, this 3rd day of September, 2004.



William C. Gibson, Jr.
Project Manager
Strategic Petroleum Reserve