

**DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE
ABLE PUMPING PLANT
DALLAS, TEXAS**

Description of Action. The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to assess the potential environmental consequences resulting from implementation of proposed improvements to the Able Pumping Plant in the City of Dallas, Texas. Section 5141 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-114; 121 Stat.1041) provides authorization for improvements to interior drainage for the Dallas Floodway. The proposed improvements to the Able Pumping Plant would be implemented in compliance with 33 United States Code § 408. The City of Dallas (“the City”) is the action proponent.

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide 100-year, 24-hour storm event flood risk management for the area served by the Able Pumping Plant. The City needs to implement Able Pumping Plant improvements because people and property in the Able Basin (which is drained by the Able Pumping Plant) are currently subject to stormwater flooding impacts. By improving the Able Pumping Plant, the City would be able to provide improved flood risk management to people and property in the Able Basin.

Under the Proposed Action, the City would construct a new pump station (Able No. 3) along Riverfront Boulevard, on the north side of the sump basin. Two new service driveway access points would connect the east and west sides of the station site from Riverfront Boulevard and pass beneath the Jefferson Boulevard and Houston Street Viaducts. The new pump station would house four, concrete volute pumps, each rated at 218,750-gpm, and two low flow pumps, each rated at 6,000-gpm. Nominal pumping capacity would be 876,000-gpm, with discharge pipes directed beneath the sump, over the levee, and into a new stilling basin and discharge channel in the Dallas Floodway. The discharge pipes from each pump would be 108-inches in diameter and would be welded steel pipe that is supported on drilled shafts when crossing the sump area or when in areas of deep fill. A 4:1 earthen berm would span through both the upstream and downstream bridges for an approximate longitudinal length of 350-feet and would provide cover for the new Able Pump Station discharge pipes.

The proposed new Able No. 3 Pump Station would be constructed to approximately 50 percent of total design capacity, or two of the new pumps, providing 440,000-gpm of capacity, tested, approved, and functional prior to the demolition of the Large Able and Small Able pump stations. Then the remainder of the pumps would be constructed and brought on-line. This phased approach would ensure continuity of flood protection throughout the construction period. Work is proposed to begin in late 2014 and last approximately 30 months.

Anticipated Environmental Effects. Through the planning process, the City identified five feasible alternatives to address flood risk management needs within the project area and the no action alternative. Under the no action alternative, no flood risk management measures would be implemented. If no action were taken, current flood risk would likely continue and gradually worsen. The lack of protection from a 100-year, 24-hour storm event would likely result in loss of property and threat to human life. Other alternatives addressed various options for sump expansion, use of pressure sewers, improving the sump pond connection, adding an inverted siphon to connect ponds 5 and 6, and increasing pumping capacity by constructing new pumps and potentially demolishing the existing pump station. Improved sump connections are being implemented as part of other transportation projects in the Study Area. Sump expansion, use of pressure sewers, and the installation of an inverted siphon were eliminated from further consideration because either they did not meet flood risk management objectives of the proposed project or had potential for significant impacts if implemented.

The Proposed Action alternative has been determined to be the least environmentally damaging alternative that would meet the project purpose. Implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts on the social, economic, or human and natural environment. No adverse impact on any species that are proposed or listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act is expected. No significant transportation, noise, land use, environmental justice, or hazardous waste concerns were identified within the project area. Long-term effects of the Proposed Action would be beneficial. Implementation of the Proposed Action will have an adverse impact to cultural resources under CEQ regulations Part 1502.16 due to the demolition of the Small Able and Large Able pump stations. USACE has determined the mitigation for the significant impact of the demolition will be black and white digital images and a written narrative to the standards of HABS Level II, distributed to stakeholders, local libraries and the Texas Historical Commission. Once the mitigation is completed, the impacts of the Proposed Action on a historic and cultural resource would be adverse, but less than significant.

The Proposed Action would permanently impact 3.0 acres, and temporarily impact 0.7 acres of jurisdictional waters of the U.S. All the impacted waters are considered open waters and there are no wetland impacts. The loss of these waters of the United States (U.S.) acres would be mitigated by the City of Dallas' purchasing equitable open water credits at an approved mitigation bank in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex region. Mitigation credit calculations will have to be verified and approved by USACE Regulatory personnel prior to execution of this FONSI and the banking credits purchased prior to any work activities being initiated within the project area. In addition, based on hydrologic and hydraulic evaluations, implementation of the proposed action meets the 1988 Record of Decision criteria for water surface rise and valley storage. Therefore, the Proposed Action meets the conditions of Regional General Permit (RGP) 12, which authorizes the discharge of dredge or fill material into waters of the U.S. and work-in, or affecting navigable waters of the U.S., associated with modification and alteration of USACE projects that receive approval under Section 408 and meet the conditions of the RGP.

Facts and Conclusions. Based on a review of the information contained in this EA, it is concluded that the implementation of the Able Pumping Plant improvements in Dallas, Texas is not a major federal action which would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended.

Charles H. Klinge
Colonel, U.S. Army
Commanding

Date