

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
MAUMELLE RIVER AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION
INTEGRATED FEASIBILITY REPORT AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
Continuing Authorities Program - Section 206**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Little Rock District (Corps) and the non-federal sponsor, Central Arkansas Water have conducted an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, for the proposed Maumelle River Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Project (Project) in Pulaski County, Arkansas. The final Environmental Assessment (EA) identifies the potential environmental effects of the Project. The final recommendation was made publicly available in the final Maumelle River Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment (IFR/EA) dated November 2022.

The proposed Project, identified as the National Ecosystem Restoration Plan, entails removal of two low water dams, notching of an existing earthen levee, reconstruction of a historic tributary stream, and reforestation of approximately 140 acres of riparian and bottomland hardwood forest habitat. The proposed Project will reconnect the Maumelle River and side channel habitat to restore more natural river flow regimes, increase backwater wetlands, increase connectivity for numerous aquatic species between the up and downstream reaches, and return current sod farms back to bottomland hardwood forests.

The final IFR/EA for the Project, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated two alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, that would address degraded aquatic ecosystems by restoring aquatic habitats to more natural conditions. Section 2.0 of the IFR/EA discusses the alternative formulation and selection. The proposed Project includes coordination with the public, agencies, and Tribes to comply with the Corps regulations among other laws, policy, and guidance.

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Project are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Proposed Action

Resource	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Aesthetics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aquatic resources/wetlands	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Resource	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Invasive species	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish and wildlife habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Threatened/Endangered species/critical habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic properties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other cultural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous, toxic & radioactive waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hydrology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economics	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental justice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects have been analyzed and incorporated into the Proposed Project. Best management practices (BMPs) as detailed in the final IFR/EA will be implemented to minimize impacts.

An agency and public review of the final IFR/EA and FONSI was completed on March 24, 2022. Three agency comments, and no public comments were received. All comments submitted during the public review period were incorporated into the final IFR/EA, as appropriate.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has determined that the Proposed Project will have No Effect on federally listed species or their designated critical habitat.

Pursuant to Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended, A Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) Analysis was completed for the study with a determination that the proposed placement site for discharge of fill material complies with the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines (40 CFR 230).

A Short Term Activity Authorization (STAA) permit was received by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) for Section 401 water quality certification in a letter dated October 14, 2021 (STAA # 20210339). All conditions of the water quality certification will be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts to water quality.

Pursuant to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that historic properties may be adversely affected by the recommended plan. Compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA has been completed by execution of a Programmatic Agreement with the Muscogee Nation, the Osage Nation, the Quapaw Nation, Central Arkansas Water, and the Arkansas State Historic Preservation Officer, dated July 1, 2021. All terms and conditions resulting from the agreement shall be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts to historic properties.

All applicable environmental laws were considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed.

All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in evaluation of alternatives. Based on the Final IFR/EA conducted by the Corps and the non-federal sponsor, and the reviews by other Federal, State, and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the proposed Project would not cause significant adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment, therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Date

Damon M. Knarr
COL, EN
Commander
Little Rock District, U.S.
Army Corps of Engineers