

*Final Environmental Impact Statement*

**Louisiana 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon**

**Lafourche Parish**

**LA1**





# LOUISIANA 1 IMPROVEMENTS Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon

## Final Environmental Impact Statement

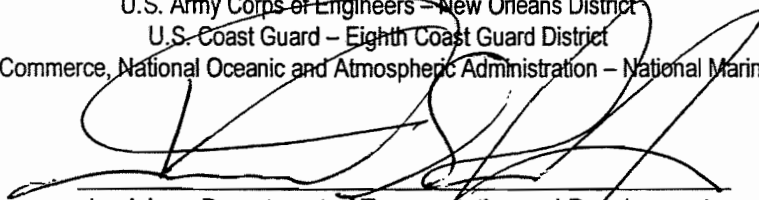
Submitted Pursuant to: 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c)

by the  
*U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Highway Administration*  
and the  
*Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development*

Cooperating Agencies:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - New Orleans District  
U.S. Coast Guard - Eighth Coast Guard District  
U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - National Marine Fisheries Service

9/5/02  
Date of Approval

  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

9/19/02  
Date of Approval

  
Federal Highway Administration

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This project is a proposal to construct a four-lane, divided, fully controlled access elevated highway facility on new alignment between Louisiana 3235 west of Golden Meadow, Louisiana and Louisiana 3090 at its intersection with Louisiana 1, north of Port Fourchon. Bridges would span navigable waterways. The proposed highway would be approximately 17 miles in length through Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. Several alternatives were considered including the No-Action alternative.

Comments on this EIS are due by **November 20, 2002**  
and should be sent to:

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# SUMMARY

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## INTRODUCTION

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing to construct a four-lane fully controlled access elevated highway on new location. Bridges would span navigable waterways. The proposed facility would be approximately 17 miles in length and would generally parallel Louisiana Highway 1 (LA 1) between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon. The project is known as the LA 1 Improvements Project, extending from Louisiana Highway 3235 (LA 3235) west of Golden Meadow to Louisiana Highway 3090 (LA 3090) at its intersection with LA 1, north of Port Fourchon. The project Study Area lies entirely within Lafourche Parish, Louisiana and includes or is near the communities of Golden Meadow and Leeville as well as Port Fourchon (see Exhibit S-1).

Access to the proposed facility would be limited to on and off ramps and two-lane connector roads constructed on new location at proposed interchange locations at LA 3235, LA 1 at Leeville and LA 3090.

LA 1 from I-10 at Port Allen to LA 3090 at Port Fourchon is designated as a principal arterial of the National Highway System (NHS). The NHS was created with the signing of the National Highway

System Designation Act in November 1995 and designates 160,955 miles of interstate highway and other roads that are critical for the economy, defense and mobility of the nation. These highways provide access to major ports, airports, rail stations, public transit facilities and other border crossings. LA 1 is included as part of the NHS because of its intermodal link to the nation's energy supply. The proposed facility would complete the southernmost portion of this NHS route, connecting to LA 3235, an existing four-lane divided highway west of Golden Meadow. When completed, a four-lane divided highway facility will be available from LA 3090 north of Port Fourchon to north of Galliano, Louisiana.

In the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the United States Congress designated certain highway corridors of national significance be included in the National Highway System. Twenty-one "High Priority Corridors" were so designated mainly in regions that are not well served by the existing Interstate Highway System. Since 1991, Congress has amended the ISTEA legislation, identifying additional High Priority Corridors. The Department of Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2002 further amended ISTEA, adding LA 1 from Grand Isle to its intersection with U.S. 90 as High Priority Corridor No. 44.

The proposed project satisfies the Logical Termini and Section of Independent Utility criteria established by FHWA and would provide independent utility even if no additional transportation improvements in the region were made. Furthermore, construction of the proposed project may be staged or programmed for discrete construction elements as funding permits (see Section 1). Funding has not been identified for the entire project and several sources are being considered, including tolls.

As the only highway in the area, LA 1 services both local and through traffic, is the only transportation route for workers and supplies entering and exiting Port Fourchon and is the only hurricane evacuation route for thousands of people in south Lafourche Parish. The current study of alternatives and the environmental consequences of the proposed action was initiated by DOTD and FHWA in 1999. This study is fully documented in the remaining sections of this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

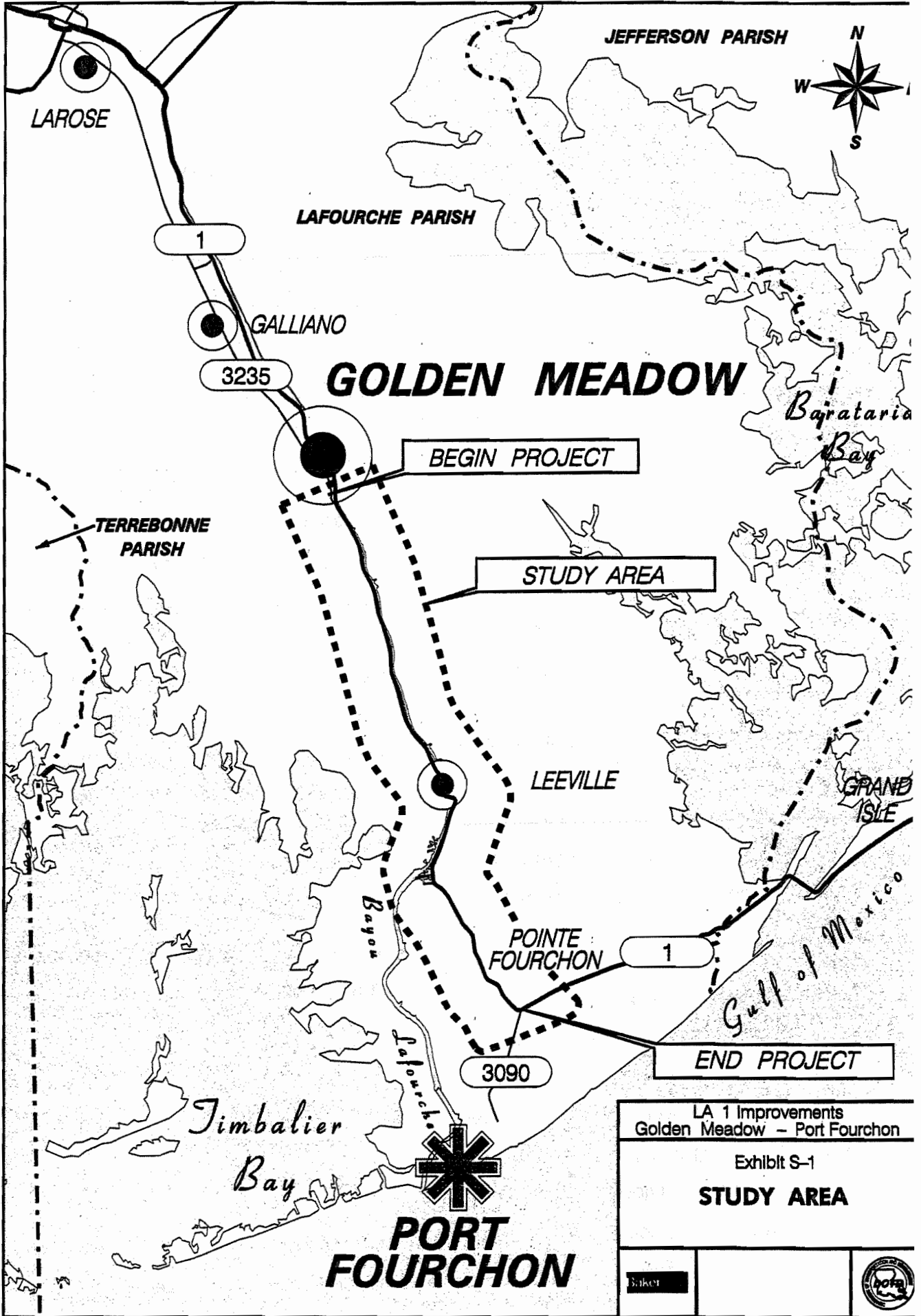
#### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED AND THE SELECTED ALIGNMENT**

The development of alternatives for the LA 1 Improvements project followed a systematic approach to screen possible highway locations against increasingly more detailed environmental information. This information was gathered for an area approximately 17 miles in length bounded on the north by the most southerly portion of LA 3235

west of Golden Meadow and on the south at LA 3090 and its intersection with LA 1 north of Port Fourchon. The Study Area was approximately 3 miles in width centered on the existing LA 1 corridor.

The compilation and mapping of sensitive environmental resources resulted in a constraint map used for developing several alignments. Detailed alignments were developed that would first avoid, then minimize impacts to sensitive resources. Three alignments were developed.

An integrated, comprehensive public involvement program was conducted for this project. This program included the public, local officials, appropriate resource agencies and Native American tribes. As a result of this program, sufficient information and public opinion was available to identify Line A as the Preferred Alignment for the proposed highway in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. After a thorough consideration of comments received on the Draft EIS, a Selected Alignment was identified and is shown in Exhibit S-2. The Selected Alignment is identical to the Preferred Alignment identified in the Draft EIS. The basis for identification of the Selected Alignment is discussed in detail in Section 2. The Selected Alignment meets the project purpose and need and minimizes wetland impacts.



LA 1 Improvements Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon	
Exhibit S-1	
<b>STUDY AREA</b>	

The Selected Alignment minimizes impacts overall and best balances the benefits expected from the project with the overall impacts.

A No-Action alternative was retained throughout the study as a basis for comparing the relative benefits and impacts of the alternatives. Under this alternative, the only projects undertaken would be currently planned safety and maintenance projects in the Study Area. Safety projects generally involve shoulder widening and curve realignment where necessary.

Safety improvements in the area would be implemented regardless of the decision to construct the proposed highway. A public hearing was held on December 18, 2001 in Larose, Louisiana. Public comments received on the Draft EIS are discussed in Section 7. In addition, over seventy Draft EISs were distributed to the state and federal agencies and Native American tribes listed in Section 6. Comments received were considered in the identification of the Selected Alignment.

### PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The LA 1 Improvements project would be implemented in construction stages, as funding becomes available. All funding methods available to the DOTD, including bonds and tolls/user fees would be considered. Funding allocations will further determine the sequence and scheduling of the construction stages. Either a four-lane facility

or 2 two-lane facilities (for example, northbound for hurricane evacuation, then southbound as funding permits) could be constructed.

Initially, the fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville, elevated roadway, and the interchanges and connector roads immediately north and south of Leeville would be constructed and would provide independent utility and project benefit.

The existing Leeville Lift-Bridge is the critical component of the area's transportation system linking Port Fourchon and Grand Isle to the mainland. Currently, this link is compromised during periods of heavy bayou traffic and bridge maintenance or repair where the bridge becomes unusable and the highway ceases to function. In addition, LA 1 immediately south of the existing lift-bridge experiences the highest frequency of periodic tidal inundation. For traffic safety considerations, should the fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville, elevated roadway, and the interchanges and connector roads immediately north and south of Leeville be constructed as a 4-lane facility, the elevated roadway would be delineated and maintained as a two-lane facility, consistent with existing LA 1, until such time that an adjacent construction stage is complete.

Project implementation would most likely continue with construction south of Leeville to LA 3090 at



Pointe Fourchon followed by construction north of Leeville to LA 3235 west of Golden Meadow. Funding allocations will further determine the sequence and scheduling of the construction stages.

Except for the fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville, construction of the proposed highway would utilize "end on" construction methods as a means to minimize disturbance to the marsh vegetation. "End on" construction uses temporary, movable support structures extending from completed spans to support the construction of the adjacent span. The temporary support structures are then disassembled and reassembled on the newly completed span and construction of the new span continues. Construction beginning at, and progressing from, the highway access from LA 3235, LA 1 and LA 3090 would facilitate delivery of materials via the local roadway network.

The fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville cannot be constructed using "end on" construction techniques due to the roadway grade and structure height. Conventional construction techniques would be used. Temporary construction barges, temporary low-level bridges, and temporary haul roads could be utilized. Construction canal dredging could be used, but was identified by the resource agencies as the least desirable construction method due to

residual resource impacts. Temporary construction impacts would be minimized to the extent possible and appropriate mitigation provided. Construction is further discussed in Section 4.

Barges would also be used in existing navigable channels for construction and for delivery of materials. New canals through the marsh vegetation would not be created. Dredging would be limited to those locations where the ramps and connector roads transition from being on structure to being on fill at their connections with LA 3235, LA 1 or LA 3090.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century authorized a total of \$5.98 million, in four different line items, for the LA 1 Improvements project. The FHWA has obligated \$1.2 million of this amount to date, leaving \$4.98 million in FHWA funds for continued project development. In addition, \$3 million in FHWA discretionary funds, \$1.7 million in Coastal Impact Assistance Program funds, and state matching funds increase this amount to \$11.5 million for continued project development. Estimated construction and right-of-way costs total \$523.5 Million. At this time, funds have not been identified to fully fund this project.

Estimated construction and right-of-way costs for constructing a four-lane facility are shown in Table S-1. The shaded information in Table S-1 represents the Selected Alignment. Constructing 2 two-lane facilities (for example, northbound for

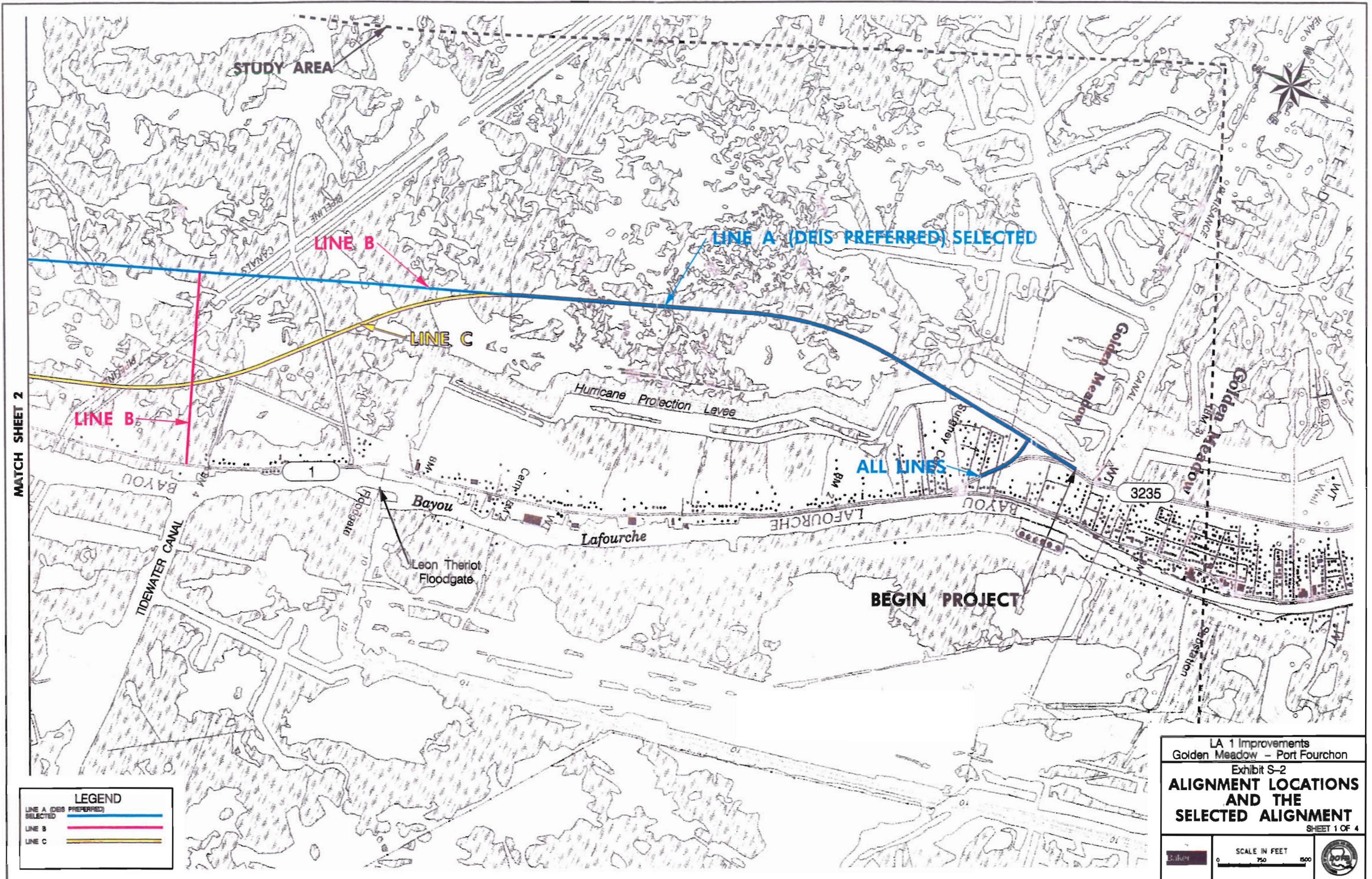
hurricane evacuation, then southbound as funding permits) instead of a four-lane facility could result in an higher costs overall because of changes to the interchanges and the fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville.

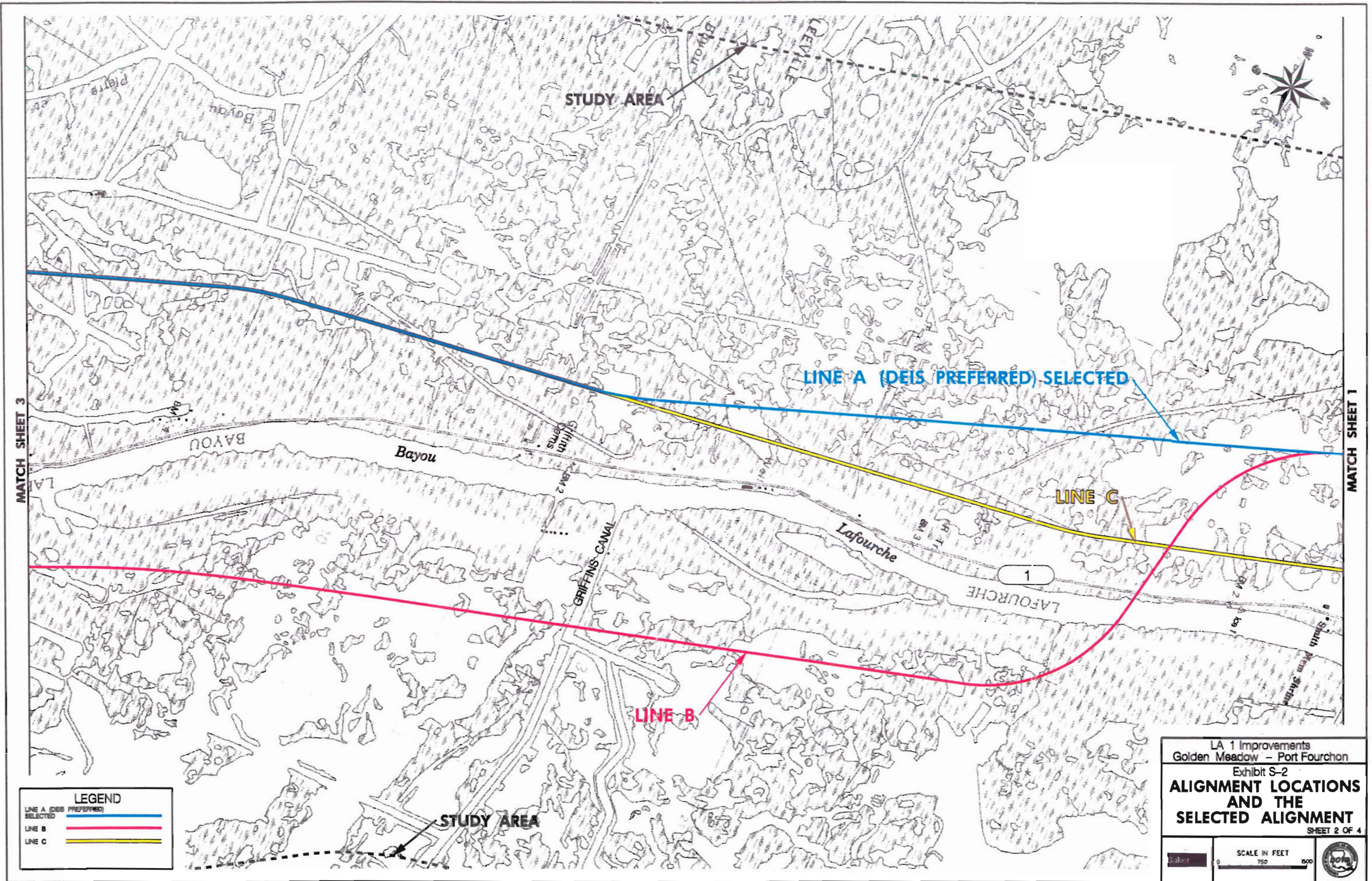
DOTD will determine what can be accomplished within the current total funding levels.

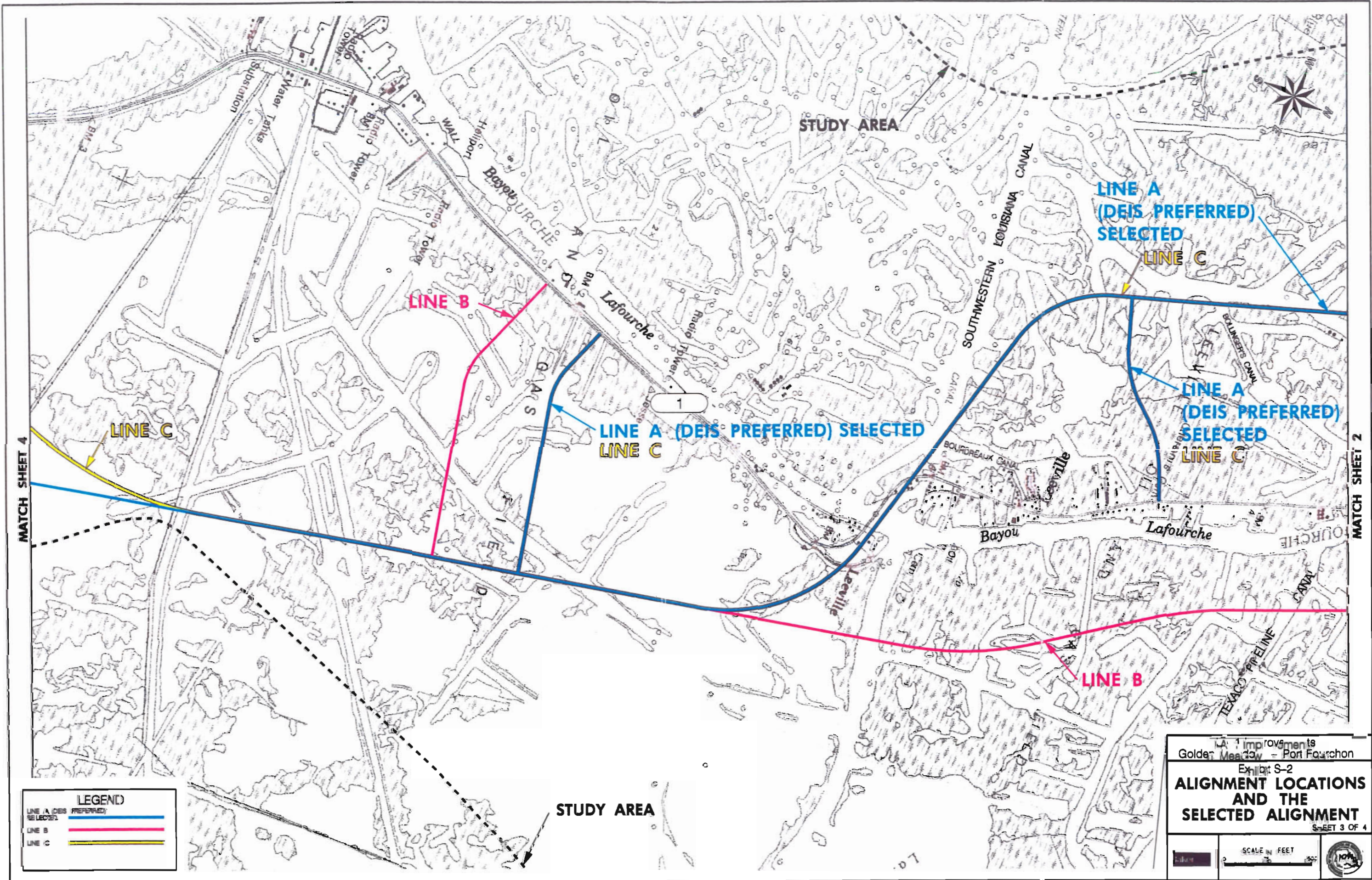
Construction Stage	Alignment		
	Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected (in 000s)	Line B (in 000s)	Line C (in 000s)
<b>Fixed-Span High-Level Bridge over Bayou Lafourche and Leeville Interchanges</b>			
Construction Cost	\$114,261	\$301,806	\$114,261
Right of Way Cost	\$266	\$632	\$266
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$114,527</b>	<b>\$302,438</b>	<b>\$114,527</b>
<b>South of Leeville to LA 3090</b>			
Construction Cost	\$151,256	\$119,604	\$162,374
Right of Way Cost	\$288	\$256	\$320
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$151,544</b>	<b>\$119,860</b>	<b>\$162,694</b>
<b>North of Leeville to LA 3235</b>			
Construction Cost	\$256,956	\$99,714	\$259,642
Right of Way Cost	\$448	\$210	\$448
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$257,404</b>	<b>\$99,924</b>	<b>\$260,090</b>
<b>Totals</b>			
Construction Cost	\$522,473	\$521,124	\$536,277
Right of Way Cost	\$1,002	\$1,098	\$1,034
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$523,475</b>	<b>\$522,222</b>	<b>\$537,311</b>

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

<sup>1</sup> Constructing 2 two-lane facilities instead of a four-lane facility could result in higher costs overall







**LEGEND**

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED ———

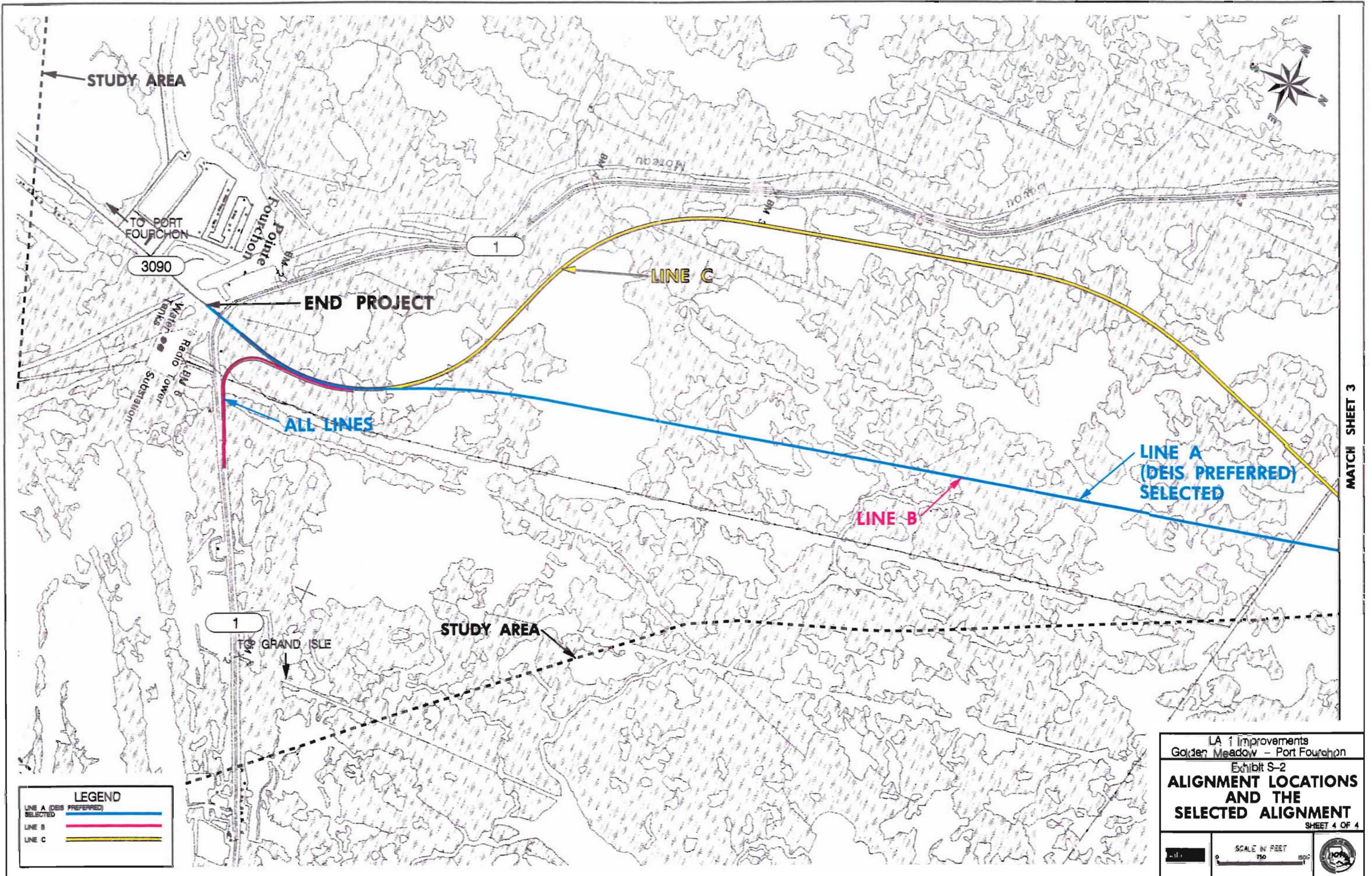
LINE B ———

LINE C ———

LA 1 Improvements  
 Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
 Exhibit S-2  
**ALIGNMENT LOCATIONS  
 AND THE  
 SELECTED ALIGNMENT**  
 SHEET 3 OF 4

SCALE IN FEET

0 25 50



With the exception of the Leeville Lift-Bridge, LA 1 is expected to remain in service after completion of the proposed highway. Louisiana State legislation limits the amount of roadway that can be included in the State highway system. Therefore, before the new highway is authorized for construction, operational and maintenance responsibilities for the equivalent length of LA 1 must shift from the State to local entities, most likely Lafourche Parish, so that the amount of roadway included in the State highway system remains unchanged.

### **SUMMARY OF BENEFICIAL AND ADVERSE IMPACTS**

Construction of the proposed highway would:

- Complete a portion of an important principal arterial on the National Highway System and ISTE A High Priority Corridor
- Provide its own independent utility even if no additional transportation improvements in the region were made
- Facilitate local, regional and national economic growth
- Provide sufficient capacity for the increasing traffic in the Study Area
- Facilitate hurricane evacuation
- Alleviate roadway inundation and weather related road problems
- Improve traffic safety and emergency response times
- Improve oil and hazardous spill response
- Improve the intermodal connectivity of existing rail, air and water transportation modes
- Improve access to medical facilities, other social services, and recreational attractions in the Study Area
- Improve efficiency of transportation for the trucking industries and businesses and facilities dependent on trucking
- Relieve congestion and delays associated with the operation and maintenance of, and repairs to, the Leeville Lift-Bridge
- Require less maintenance than existing LA 1
- Affect estuarine emergent wetlands due to direct impacts associated highway construction
- Potentially affect estuarine emergent wetlands due to secondary impacts associated with shading
- Potentially facilitate secondary residential, commercial, and/or industrial development. The amount and degree of this secondary development is difficult to predict.

Impacts to the social, economic, natural, and cultural environment would result from construction of any of the alignments evaluated in detail in this document. A summary of these impacts is presented in Table S-2. The shaded information in Table S-2 represents the Selected Alignment.

**Table S-2  
IMPACT SUMMARY**

		Alignment			
		No-Action	Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	Line B	Line C
<b>Length</b>	<b>(miles)</b>	-	16.34	16.20	16.92
<b>Construction Cost</b>	<b>(in 000s)</b>	\$ -	\$522,473	\$521,124	\$536,277
<b>Right of Way Cost</b>	<b>(in 000s)</b>	\$ -	\$1,002	\$1,098	\$1,034
<b>Relocations</b>					
House	#	-	1	-	1
Mobile Home	#	-	1	-	1
Business	#	-	1	1	1
Community Facility	#	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Noise Impacts</b>	<b>#</b>	28	3	3	3
<b>Natural Resources</b>					
Wetlands (Direct Impacts)	(acres)	-	5.3	6.8	5.4
Wetlands (Secondary Impacts)	(acres)	-	92.2	96.4	94.5
Floodplains	(miles)	-	16.34	16.20	16.92
Oyster Lease Areas	(acres)	-	0.1	0.1	0.1
Prime Farmland Soils	(acres)	-	-	-	-
<b>Cultural Resources</b>					
Recorded Archaeological Sites	#	-	-	-	-
Recorded Historic Structures	#	-	-	-	-
<b>Pre-Historic Arch Probability Areas</b>					
High Probability	(miles)	-	1.33	3.05	2.70
Medium Probability	(miles)	-	0.65	0.22	0.54
Low Probability	(miles)	-	14.36	12.93	13.68
Oil & Gas Wells	#	-	1	3	1
Potential Hazardous Waste Sites	#	-	-	-	-

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

### **OTHER MAJOR FEDERAL ACTIONS IN THE AREA**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of providing hurricane protection to residents living in Lafourche Parish on the west bank of Bayou Lafourche between Lockport and Larose. The non-Federal sponsor for the study is the North Lafourche Conservation, Levee, and Drainage District.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in a joint partnership with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of restoring and creating wetlands in the southwestern portion of the Barataria Basin, Louisiana. Two coastal restoration strategies described in the December 1998 document "Coast 2050: Toward a Sustainable Coastal Louisiana (Coast 2050 Plan)" – Strategy R2-16 - Dedicated Dredging Along



Louisiana Highway 1, and Strategy R2-17 – Dedicated Dredging near Caminada Bay will be investigated.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Interior, Minerals Management Service, is conducting a study to determine the feasibility of the reformation of the barrier shoreline from the Caminada-Moreau Headland at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche on the west to Sandy Point on the east. The barrier island restoration strategy is identified as Strategy R2-22 in the December 1998 document "Coast 2050: Toward a Sustainable Coastal Louisiana (Coast 2050 Plan)".

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources are implementing the "Marsh Creation South of Leeville" Project (BA-29/BA-32a, CWPPRA Priority Project List 9). The project, south of Leeville, LA, immediately adjacent to LA 1, is part of Region 3 of the Coast 2050 Plan and is funded and authorized in accordance with the provisions of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) (16 USC, Section 3951-3956) and has been approved by the PL 101-646 Task Force. This project would create an estimated 153 acres of marsh habitat in a large open water area adjacent to LA 1. Sediment would be dredged from an open water area northeast of the marsh

creation site. Exhibit 4-1 shows the preliminary alignments and their relationship to the marsh creation project. The marsh creation project is in the early stages of development. Property owner identification is underway and is advancing slowly due to the large number of property owners involved. The marsh creation site design has not begun. The proposed action would traverse the marsh creation project, but should not preclude the full development of the site.

The Caminada Bay Bridge in Jefferson Parish is being replaced and 8.76 miles of LA 1 from Caminada Bay to LA 3090 in Jefferson and Lafourche Parishes is being overlaid. The roadway overlay construction is underway. The bridge replacement is scheduled to begin in 2005. The DOTD has not yet made application to the U.S. Coast Guard for a bridge permit. FHWA is the lead federal agency for these actions.

#### **OTHER FEDERAL ACTIONS AND PERMITS REQUIRED**

The following actions must occur in order to implement this project:

- The issuance of a Clean Water Act Section 404 permit and a Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 permit by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the placement of dredged and fill material in waters of the United States and a related Section 401 Water Quality issued by

*- what about power by*

the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

- The issuance of a Coastal Use Permit by the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Division, for activities affecting the Coastal Zone.
- Coordination of the Section 106 process for consideration of historic resources to be handled by the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Division of Archaeology and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.
- A National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit as required by Section 402 of the Clean Water Act, issued by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.
- Bridge Permits issued by the U.S. Coast Guard for bridges spanning navigation channels pursuant to the General Bridge Act of 1946.
- An exception to the Coastal Barrier Resources Act issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). (Exception granted. Refer to May 1, 2002 U.S. Fish and Wildlife letter.)

*mitigable or all*

### ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

Throughout this project, the DOTD and FHWA have consulted and coordinated with several state and federal agencies, as well as the public, regarding important issues. Many issues have been resolved throughout the course of the preparation of the Draft and Final EISs. The

resolution of other issues cannot be completed until the project moves forward into the next phase of design, when additional information becomes available. These issues have been resolved by agreeing to the manner in which they will be addressed at a later date. The following list summarizes the agreements and commitments that have been reached for this project.

- The FHWA, DOTD and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer have reached a consensus for the completion of the Section 106 process with respect to the project's effect on cultural resources. This agreement is provided in the Appendix.
- The DOTD will attempt to further minimize wetland impacts in the final design phase of the project when practicable. All unavoidable wetland impacts will be mitigated for by the DOTD and the FHWA. Final mitigation ratios and requirements for direct and secondary wetland impacts will be determined after issuance of the Record of Decision.
- The DOTD will provide relocation assistance to residences and businesses displaced during acquisition of right-of-way in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Policies Act of 1970. The DOT is committed to assist with locating replacement housing within the occupant's financial means and within the general area of the project and when necessary providing

- housing of last resort. Real estate availability will be reassessed once final design of the highway has been completed. The DOTD publication, "Acquisition of Right of Way and Relocation Assistance" is included in the Appendix for further information.
- ❑ The DOTD will minimize non-point discharge water quality impacts and will comply with all requirements of the Clean Water Act, as amended, for the construction of this proposed highway, and will include all specifications and best management practices (BMPs) necessary for control of erosion and sedimentation due to construction related activities.
  - ❑ The DOTD and its contractors will not excavate, fill, or perform land clearing activities within Waters of the United States or any areas under jurisdiction of the COE, except as authorized by the COE. The DOTD shall require its contractors to comply with all local, state, and federal regulations.
  - ❑ The requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and implementing rules with respect to avoiding, mitigating, or offsetting the project's effect on Essential Fish Habitat will be satisfied upon the creation of replacement marsh habitat. Correspondence with the National Marine Fisheries Service is provided in the Appendix.
  - ❑ In accordance with 23 USC 144(h), (23 CFR Section 650.805), the DOTD and FHWA have made a preliminary determination that U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) bridge permits are only required for portions of the project spanning the Boudreaux Canal, the Bollinger Canal, Bayou Lafourche and the Southwestern Louisiana Canal. A final joint determination of the locations requiring a bridge permit will be made with the USCG after issuance of the Record of Decision.
  - ❑ The DOTD will coordinate with the U.S. Coast Guard to provide information relative to navigation and the effects the bridges will have on navigation interests using the waterways. Location of bridge piers, the horizontal clearance provided, the vertical clearance, the proximity of any existing bridges, fendering or collision design alternatives and alignment of the navigational openings will be coordinated with the U.S. Coast Guard during final design.
  - ❑ A survey will be conducted during the nesting season prior to construction, to determine the presence of any waterbird nesting colonies within 1,500 feet of the construction activities.
  - ❑ During final design, the DOTD will review the current Lafourche Parish hazardous spill contingency plan with the Lafourche Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness (LPOEP) and coordinate with the LPOEP to revise the

plan, as appropriate, based on the proposed highway's operation.

- During final design, the DOTD will conduct additional studies, as warranted, to further determine the specific location of potential hazardous materials sites along the Selected Alignment identified in the Final EIS and Record of Decision.
- The DOTD will use environmentally sensitive construction techniques. The location of crossover structures for emergency access and the location and design features of a

pullover site for bird watching or other scenic viewing activities will be determined during final design. The scupper discharge pipes will include additional length so as not to preclude the attachment of a highway runoff collection system, should future research indicate the need for such a system.

- If the project is funded as a toll facility, additional environmental studies would be performed and appropriate mitigation provided for impacts associated with a toll plaza.

# Section 1: PURPOSE AND NEED

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## 1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is proposing to construct a four-lane fully controlled access elevated highway on new location. The proposed facility would be approximately 17 miles in length and would generally parallel Louisiana Highway 1 (LA 1) between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon. The proposed LA 1 Improvements project extends from Louisiana Highway 3235 (LA 3235) west of Golden Meadow to Louisiana Highway 3090 (LA 3090) at its intersection with LA 1, north of Port Fourchon. The project Study Area lies entirely within Lafourche Parish, Louisiana and includes or is near the communities of Golden Meadow and Leeville as well as Port Fourchon (see Exhibit 1-1).

Access to the project would be limited to on and off ramps and two-lane connector roads constructed on new location at proposed interchange locations at LA 3235, LA 1 at Leeville and LA 3090.

## 1.2 PROJECT HISTORY

Over the past decade, LA 1 between Golden Meadow, Port Fourchon, and Grand Isle has been the subject of numerous studies by federal and state agencies. As the only highway in the area, LA 1 services both local and through traffic, is the

only transportation route for workers and supplies entering and exiting Port Fourchon and is the only evacuation route available for thousands of people in south Lafourche Parish. These studies indicate that LA 1 does not adequately serve the area and forms the basis for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) efforts initiated in September 1999. The following summarizes the legislation and studies that support the current development of the LA 1 Improvements project.

### 1.2.1 Federal and State Legislation

In June 1998, Congress enacted the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, which re-authorized Federal Funding for nationwide transportation programs. LA 1 from the Gulf of Mexico to U.S. 90 is one of 1,850 specific transportation projects identified in Section 1601 "High Priority Project Programs".

In the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the United States Congress designated certain highway corridors of national significance be included in the National Highway System. Twenty-one "High Priority Corridors" were so designated mainly in regions that are not well served by the existing Interstate Highway System. Since 1991, Congress has amended the ISTEA legislation, identifying additional High Priority Corridors. The Department of Transportation and

Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2002 further amended ISTEA, adding LA 1 from Grand Isle to its intersection with U.S. 90 as High Priority Corridor No. 44.

State legislation includes Executive Order No. MJF 98-46 (October 8, 1998) which established the Louisiana Highway 1 Project Task Force. The Task Force's primary mission was to evaluate the feasibility of upgrading the current facility from Port Fourchon/Grand Isle to Alexandria, to identify the means for funding, and to document the citizen support for the project.

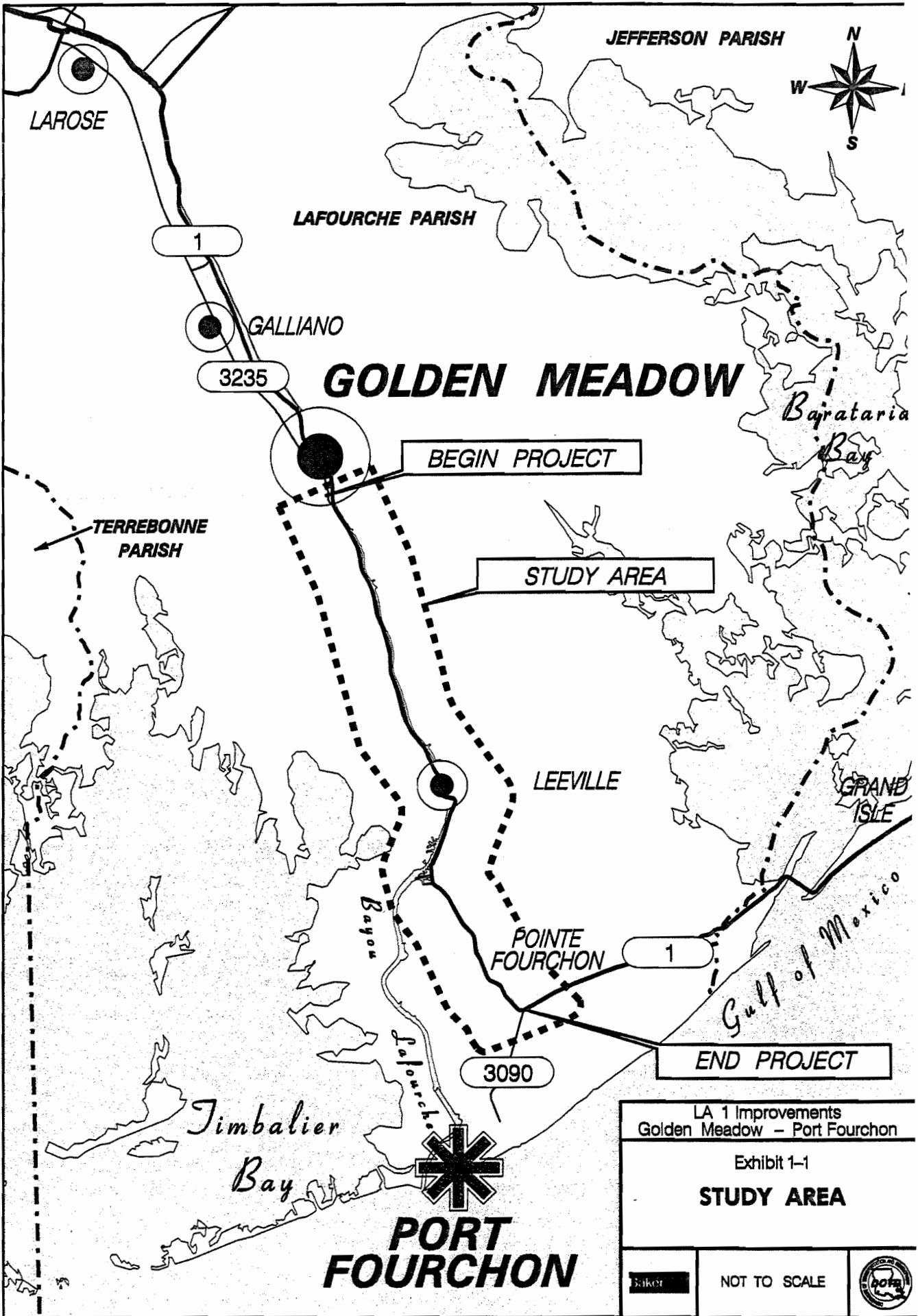
### 1.2.2 Previous Studies

Several studies have focused on the LA 1 transportation corridor from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. These studies provided valuable information that was used in the development of the project Purpose and Need and include:

An Analysis of Louisiana Highway 1 in Relation to Expanding Oil and Gas Activities in the Gulf of Mexico, 1998 (hereinafter referred to as the LSU report). In 1998, Louisiana State University was contracted by the U.S. Department of Interior, Mineral Management Service, to conduct a study that evaluated the current and future impacts of the expanding oil and gas industry on LA 1 from Grand Isle to U.S. 90 in Raceland. This study analyzed the ability of LA 1 to adequately handle the increased traffic expected due to the predicted increase in offshore oil and gas activities in the

Central Gulf of Mexico serviced through Port Fourchon. The study considered future traffic congestion and road deterioration resulting from increased oil and gas related traffic to assess the need for improvements to the existing highway system. The study concluded that continuing traffic growth on the highway would result in a significant decline in the level of service provided by LA 1, increasingly straining its ability to provide adequate service. Additionally, the physical deterioration of the highway will be exacerbated by increased truck traffic related to the expanding oil and gas industry.

Economic and Employment Analysis 1970 to 2020 Port Fourchon Louisiana, prepared by Insight Research Corporation (hereinafter referred to as the Insight Research Report). In 1998, the Greater Lafourche Port Commission funded a study to analyze the regional economic factors influencing the employment base of the Port Fourchon area. This study examined the expected employment growth and resulting traffic demand associated with the future development of Port Fourchon and the potential effect on the area highway system.



The study resulted in the following findings, which strongly support the expectation that LA 1 traffic volumes will continue to grow in the future.

- ❑ Non-agriculture employment in the Houma Metropolitan Statistical Area is forecast to grow by more than 2% annually through 2006, while employment as a whole will grow nearly 4% annually
- ❑ Offshore natural gas production will grow by nearly 2% annually through 2020
- ❑ Recreational and tourist visitors have been increasing at 15% per year and this growth is anticipated to remain in the future.

Proposed Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon Toll Road: Preliminary Feasibility Study – Wilbur Smith Associates (WSA), (hereinafter referred to as the WSA report).

In 1998, the Greater Lafourche Port Commission funded a study to examine the feasibility of an elevated toll road from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. The study included traffic counts, time-delay studies and roadside travel surveys to document travel patterns in the corridor. Based on this information and the previously cited Economic and Employment Analysis, WSA concluded that traffic will grow by 3% annually. The findings of the study indicated that the project's debt service could not be supported solely by toll revenues.

Port Fourchon: Phenomenal Growth and Development Brings New Challenges to the Port and the Local Community (hereinafter referred to as the Keithly report). This 1999 report, prepared by Diane Keithly, Ph.D. for the Minerals Management Service of the U.S. Department of Interior, examined the impacts of increased employment growth at Port Fourchon and the effect on the area communities. The study noted the following trends, which again support the expectation of increasing traffic growth:

- ❑ One new business per month is locating in Port Fourchon. In 1980 there were two businesses, in 1999 there were 124, and by the end of 2001 there will be well over 150 companies
- ❑ The port has grown from 25 acres in 1980 to nearly 600 acres. Developed acreage at the port doubled from 1992 to 1997
- ❑ The number of residential units at the port has increased at a rate of 14% annually.

The study also quotes numerous local officials indicating that traffic congestion and accidents on LA 1 are increasing.

Gateway to the Gulf: An Analysis of Louisiana Highway One. In 1999, the Louisiana Highway 1 Project Task Force prepared a comprehensive history of the related studies that have been conducted. The report (hereinafter referred to as the LA 1 Task Force report) cites these studies to



demonstrate the need for the project, and includes financing options and resolutions and letters of support from residents, users and elected officials. The report states that "For this region to sustain the growth associated with increased deepwater Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas activities, improvements to the highway system are absolutely essential."

### 1.3 PROJECT PURPOSE

The overall importance of LA 1 is stated in the Executive Order No. MJF 98-46, which created the LA 1 Task Force. "LA 1, a 2-lane highway with sections which are impassible during inclement weather, is vital to the citizens who work and live in the region, for hurricane and tropical storm evacuation, work related and shopping commutes, shipping of shellfish and finfish harvested in the region's waters, and support services to the offshore drilling facilities." The overall purpose of this project is to sustain and improve these functions.

The many studies already completed for the region have identified several locally based purposes for the project. These include:

- Facilitate hurricane evacuation
- Improve emergency response time
- Improve safety through higher roadway design standards
- Support the growing economic potential of the area resulting from increased tourism, foreign trade, and increased offshore drilling operations due to new technology.

### 1.4 PROJECT NEED

The need for the LA 1 Improvements project was examined through:

- Identification of functional and safety deficiencies in the Study Area roadway network
- Identification of social needs
- Identification of economic development needs
- Review of area recreation opportunities
- Local official and public involvement.

Information and data gathered from previous studies, DOTD, area local officials, and the public was used to determine if the proposed highway could accommodate or resolve the specific Study Area needs identified.

### 1.5 TRANSPORTATION NEED

With the legislative purpose as a framework, the transportation need for the LA 1 Improvements project was analyzed. This was undertaken to identify needs or deficiencies of existing LA 1 that

could be mitigated by the proposed highway. This analysis considered the transportation needs of the highway and the social and economic needs of the communities through which it passes.

**1.5.1 Traffic Analysis**

A traffic analysis was performed to evaluate existing and future traffic conditions within the Study Area, examine accident statistics for area highways, and assess the potential impacts of the proposed LA 1 Improvements project on the area transportation network.

**Traffic Forecast and Capacity Analysis**

Traffic volumes were evaluated for existing conditions (1998), Opening Year (Year 2010), and estimated future conditions with the proposed highway (Design Year 2030). Existing and future traffic volumes were based on information contained in the WSA report and the LSU report. Traffic volumes from the WSA report showed 1998 traffic counts of 8,270 vehicles between Golden Meadow and Leesville. Counts taken in 1997 for the LSU report showed 3,221 vehicles for the section from Leesville to Pointe Fourchon, and 7,576 for the section from Golden Meadow to Leesville. The 1998 counts were used for the section from Golden Meadow to Leesville and the ratio of the 1997 counts between the two sections was used to determine the 1998 volume for the Leesville to Pointe Fourchon section. The WSA report forecast a 3% annual growth, which was

used to determine Opening Day (2010) and Design Year (2030) volumes. Table 1-1 shows these volumes.

	1998	2010	2030
Golden Meadow to Leesville	8,270	11,790	21,300
Leesville to Pointe Fourchon	4,630	6,600	11,930

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc., WSA Report, LSU Report.

**1.5.2 Capacity**

**Overview**

A capacity analysis was conducted to determine the Level of Service (LOS) for LA 1 within the Study Area, using the 1994 Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) and related computer software. The LOS qualitatively measures traffic operating conditions through consideration of speed, safety, convenience, travel time, driving comfort, maneuverability, traffic interruptions, and travel costs. Level of service is defined in categories from A to F. Level of service A represents the highest quality of service with free flowing traffic conditions, while LOS F represents heavy congestion or traffic breakdown conditions.

Two-lane highway capacity analyses were performed for the two segments of LA 1 for current, Opening Day, and Design Year. The peak hour was assumed to be 10% of the daily volumes (a typical rural condition), the direction split was assumed to be 55/45, and the percentage of trucks

was assumed to be 17%, consistent with the WSA report. The resultant level of service is shown in Table 1-2.

	1998	2010	2030
Golden Meadow to Leeville	D	D	E
Leeville to Pointe Fourchon	B	C	D

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

The Leeville Lift-Bridge is an isolated congestion point that is difficult to analyze. Periodic and unscheduled interruptions due to bayou traffic as well as maintenance needed for this older vertical lift span bridge make it difficult to describe traffic operations in terms of level of service since the highway ceases to function at these times. Various reports indicate that extremely long delays occur when the bridge is lifted.

**Hurricane Evacuation Levels of Service**

Traffic counts during a hurricane evacuation of the southern portions of the Study Area are not available. To estimate the approximate level of service, the daily traffic volumes were adjusted using the following assumptions:

- Each offshore worker had a car and all workers would evacuate within 24 hours
- The number of offshore workers in 1999 was assumed to be 3,000 and the number of

workers in the future will vary in accordance with the Insight Research report

1999	2006	2010	2020	2030
3,000	3,887	3,887	3,596	2,830

Source: Greater Lafourche Port Commission, Insight Research Report.

- The offshore workers were added to the Average Daily Traffic volume
- Peak hour capacities were based on 15% of the daily volume occurring in the peak hurricane evacuation hour. The directional split would be 60/40, and the truck percentages would be reduced to 9%.

The capacity analysis results are provided in the Table 1-4.

	1999	2010	2030
Golden Meadow to Leeville	E	F	F
Leeville to Pointe Fourchon	D	E	E

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**1.5.3 Safety**

**Historical Information**

The ability of the local transportation system to provide safe, timely access to hospitals, schools, government offices, and retail stores as well as movement between communities can influence the quality of life for people living in rural areas. LA 1

is the only surface transportation facility serving the Study Area.

The existing roadway provides for a relatively flat and straight travel way. A 5-foot shoulder is provided throughout most of the length. However, if a driver is unable to regain control of their vehicle within this 5 feet, they may enter the adjacent marsh and waters since little driver recovery area is available beyond the shoulder. On the newly overlaid section of LA 1 south of the Leeville Lift Bridge, there are yellow reflectors embedded in the pavement between the double yellow lines. The rest of the roadway has little or no delineation.

DOTD accident statistics for LA 1 in the Study Area for 1993 to 1997 are summarized in Table 1-5.

	# of Accidents	Property Damage Only	# of Injuries	# of Fatalities
1993	66	33	63	0
1994	93	52	64	1
1995	82	47	58	3
1996	80	49	42	4
1997	101	64	66	6

Source: DOTD.

The highest percentage of accidents occurred during the vacation and hurricane season.

	Month	Percentage
1993	July	15%
1994	September / October	13%
1995	July	17%
1996	August	14%
1997	May	15%

Source: DOTD.

Most accidents occurred during the times of the year when unfamiliar drivers are more prevalent, even though there is more daylight during those months.

Two-lane rural highways in Louisiana typically experience an accident rate approximately 50% higher than the rates on four-lane divided rural highways. The prevalent types of accidents on two-lane, rural highways are head-on accidents, right angle accidents at unsignalized intersections or driveways, and accidents involving vehicles leaving the roadway and striking fixed objects. Typical causes for these types of accidents include driver impairment or excessive speed.

Common countermeasures for head-on accidents include speed limit reductions, widening or addition of lanes, addition of medians or median barriers, shoulder upgrades, channelization improvements, and improved signing and pavement markings. These countermeasures are also effective for right-angle accidents, as are removal of sight obstructions. Run-off road accidents and fixed

object accidents can be mitigated by improved superelevation on curves, lighting improvements, shoulder improvements, relocation of fixed objects, installation of guiderail or cushioning devices, and use of reflective markers. Existing LA 1, while built to the design standards of its day, would have a wider typical section were it built today, using those design standards currently in place.

### ***Hurricane Threat***

An additional safety consideration is that of hurricanes. The LA 1 Task Force report includes an analysis of hurricane threats to the region. The report indicates that LA 1 is subject to flooding during times of severe weather, therefore hurricane evacuation is critical. For example, Hurricane Betsy had a 12-ft storm surge. There is no elevation in Lafourche or Terrebonne Parishes above 15 feet. It is predicted that a category 3, 4 or 5 storm could push water 70 miles inland from the barrier islands. Because many of the workers in the Study Area drive to the Port and park for extended periods of time, the daily commute is not proportional to the number of workers. Subsequently, during an inclement weather evacuation, the volume of vehicles on LA 1 can be expected to be significantly higher than daily peak hour traffic. In the event of a category 3, 4 or 5 storm, thousands of people in south Lafourche Parish alone use this highway for evacuation. This includes thousands of offshore workers and their heavy equipment that must evacuate along this

stretch of highway. In the event of a sudden shift in the direction of one of these storms (as seen in Hurricane Erin in 1995 or Hurricane Andrew in 1992), there is inadequate time to effectively evacuate all inhabitants of the region.

From 1893 to 1994, 39 hurricanes or tropical storms affected Lafourche Parish with the most severe being Betsy in 1965. The maximum winds reached 165 mph. Since 1972, the most severe storms impacting South Louisiana have been Juan and Andrew. Furthermore, with the acceleration of land loss, there is an ever-increasing threat that this road could be washed out and rendered impassable. Thousands of people would have no significant shelter from an oncoming hurricane. The report concludes by stating the "The capability of LA 1 to accommodate hurricane evacuation traffic is critical to the safety of the workers and inhabitants of the study area."

### **1.5.4 Roadway Maintenance**

South of Golden Meadow, roadway elevations along existing LA 1 range from 2' to 3' National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD). At these elevations, the roadway is subject to periodic tidal inundation and the additional resulting maintenance requirements, which include removing debris from the roadway due to high water conditions (twice yearly) and repairing/rebuilding roadway shoulders, washed out during major storm events (biyearly).

It is not uncommon for the water to reach the edge of the travel lane particularly during the summer months. Although this condition does not require additional maintenance, it does pose an additional threat should an errant vehicle leave the travel lane (LeBlanc 2000).

### 1.5.5 Social and Economic Demand

The need for improvements to LA 1 is also driven by social and economic factors in the Study Area. These factors include drilling operations, oil and gas production, foreign oil imports through the port, renewable resources and tourism.

#### *Drilling Operations*

The Study Area has undergone dynamic changes in recent years. Most of these changes have been influenced by the largest industry, oil & gas drilling. According to the Keithly report, offshore oil and gas development began in the 1930's and grew continuously into the 1950's. This was followed by an era of decreasing production through the 1980's as known oil reserves became depleted. However, in the 1990's new discoveries, new legislation and new technology brought about a revival in offshore activities and growth in need of onshore support. Between 1990 and 1996, oil production in the Gulf of Mexico increased by more than 30%, due largely to a 500% increase in deepwater drilling. Similarly, gas production increased 25% between 1985 and 1996.

#### *Future Oil and Gas Activities*

The LSU report contains forecasts and indications of future oil and gas activities in the Gulf of Mexico. This report cites other reports, which make the following forecasts and indications.

- ❑ Fields easily accessible from Port Fourchon, including the Mississippi Canyon, the Viasoca Knoll, and the Green Canyon will make up an increasing share of overall Gulf of Mexico production
- ❑ The number of deepwater lease sales increased 400% between 1992 and 1994 and increased another 300% by 1996
- ❑ Applications for permits to drill increased 300% between 1992 and 1996. During the same time period, the average number of rigs in drilling stage increased 600%.

The LSU report indicates that while past activities do not necessarily reflect future activities, the data does suggest that future deepwater activities will be significant, and that in the absence of a sharp price decline there is no reason to believe these activities will falter. "In fact", the report states, "given the increasing lease sales, etc., a strong argument can be made that activities will likely increase by a substantial amount."

In addition, the LA 1 Task Force report states that LA 1 supports the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port (LOOP). This facility, an offshore terminal for

unloading large crude oil tankers, is estimated to handle 13% of the nation's imported crude oil, and is handling a significant portion of the Gulf of Mexico deepwater oil production. Benefits of the facility include the fact that it reduces tanker traffic in harbors and is located away from ecologically sensitive areas.

### **Renewable Resources**

The LA 1 Task Force report discusses the impact of renewable resources on the state's economy. The report cites the state's "Coast 2050: Toward a Sustainable Coastal Louisiana" which is a plan for coastal restoration. The plan indicates LA 1 and Port Fourchon are important to wetland-based culture, fisheries, and the economy of the state and nation. The Task Force report indicates that LA 1 serves two of the nation's most productive estuaries, the Barataria and Terrebonne estuaries. They serve over half of the state's commercial landings, and 70% of its total value. Each day, 20% of the state's value of seafood travels over LA 1. Port Fourchon handles nearly 4,000 round trips per year by commercial fishing vessels, and Grand Isle is a major commercial fishing location.

### **Tourism**

The LA 1 Task Force report states the importance of tourism to the area served by LA 1. The Lafourche Tourism Commission estimates that the

number of tourists in Lafourche Parish has increased by 15% each year since 1988.

The report indicates that two of the largest generators of tourism revenue for this region are recreational hunting and fishing. It includes the following facts on the level of this activity in the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary (BTNE):

- 26.6% of all recreational boats in the state fish the BTNE
- 36% of the state's total fishing licenses are in the BTNE
- In 1991, \$157 million was spent by recreational hunters in the BTNE. This represents over 35% of the total spent by hunters statewide
- 10.5% of the population in the BTNE 16 years and older possess hunting licenses.

The Port Fourchon/Grand Isle area is considered one of the top fishing spots in the world. The number of visitors more than doubles Grand Isle's population each summer. A federal survey in 1991 estimated that recreational fishing activities generated in excess of \$129 million in revenue annually for the state of Louisiana.

Bird watching is also a major tourist activity. The region either is home to or is in the migration path for one-half of the bird species of North America.

As a result, the region offers excellent bird watching opportunities.

## **1.6 MODAL INTERRELATIONSHIPS**

LA 1 is a key element of the intermodal transportation system, connecting the Gulf Coast and related offshore facilities to the rest of the state and the nation. This intermodal system includes the National Highway System, ports (including Port Fourchon and the proposed Millennium Port), waterways and airports.

### **1.6.1 National Highway System**

The LA 1 Task Force report includes a discussion of the National Highway System and how LA 1 fits into that system.

The National Highway System was created with the signing of the National Highway System Designation Act in November, 1995. This legislation designated 160,955 miles of roads as the National Highway System (NHS). It included interstate highway and other roads that are critical for the economy, defense and mobility of the nation. These highways provide access to major ports, airports, rail stations, public transit facilities and other border crossings. It comprises only 4% of total highways in the nation; however, it carries nearly 50% of total highway traffic including the majority of commercial and tourism traffic. It is estimated to service more than 90% of the businesses and industries throughout the nation.

The Act was motivated by the realization that improved highways could improve the economy by facilitating better connectivity within the U.S. and better connectivity to the rest of the world. The need for connectivity to the rest of the world was emphasized by the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993. This agreement was signed to lower trade barriers, and included agreements on transportation between the United States, Mexico and Canada. At a subsequent 1994 summit attended by 34 Western Hemisphere nations, it was agreed to establish free trade by the year 2005.

This meant an increasing need for intermodal transportation terminals in the Delta Region, especially Louisiana. The Mississippi River and its tributaries are geographically located in an advantageous position for South American and hemispheric trade. It is a link between international markets and considered the heartland of the nation.

The NHS System includes 2,711 miles of highway in Louisiana. LA 1 is designated as a principal arterial included in that system from I-10 at Port Allen to LA 3090 at Port Fourchon. It is included as part of the NHS because of its intermodal link to the nation's energy supply. The proposed facility would complete the southernmost portion of this NHS route, connecting to LA 3235, an existing a four-lane divided highway west of Golden Meadow.



When completed, a four-lane divided highway facility will be available from LA 3090 north of Port Fourchon to north of Galliano, Louisiana.

### 1.6.2 Ports and Waterways in Region

Ports and waterways within the region make up a second element of the intermodal transportation system. The LA 1 Task Force report includes a description of these facilities. The report indicates there are currently 26 deep draft and shallow draft ports in the state. Together they are ranked number one in the world for shipping tonnage totals.

Below is a list of ports within the region:

- Grand Isle Port
- Port Fourchon
- Terrebonne Port
- Morgan City Harbor and Terminal

The report cites a University of New Orleans' report, which determined that ports in the state account for 21% of the gross state product and generate \$3.8 billion annually in income. The employment impact is estimated to be responsible for 229,871 jobs that represent one of eight jobs in the state, and 5.6% of all personal income. The total impact to Louisiana in 1994 was \$21.9 billion and was recently estimated at \$28 billion. The LA 1 Task Force report goes on to state that "considering that the majority of cargo transferred or handled at these ports is transferred by large trucks, improving the existing ... highway system is of critical importance."

The LA 1 Task Force Report also emphasizes the importance of waterways in the region surrounding LA 1. Below is a list of major waterways:

- Mississippi River
- Bayou Lafourche
- Gulf Intercoastal Waterway
- Houma Navigational Canal
- Atchafalaya River
- Barataria Bay Waterway

### 1.6.3 Airports

Airports comprise the third element of the intermodal transportation system in the region. The closest passenger service airport is New Orleans International, approximately 75 miles from Port Fourchon. There are also eight general aviation airports within approximately 100 miles of Port Fourchon. LA 1 serves as the connection between these airports and the Port Fourchon area.

### 1.6.4 Port Fourchon

The intermodal port most reliant on LA 1 is Port Fourchon. The LA 1 Task Force report includes the following pertinent information on the importance and growth of this facility:

- Port Fourchon is Louisiana's only port on the Gulf of Mexico
- Port Fourchon is strategically positioned to efficiently handle the tremendous increase of

new cargo that will result from the increase in trade activities

- ❑ Port Fourchon has become a major intermodal facility for supply boats and vessels servicing the production platforms and oil rigs in the Gulf. The majority of the supply boats, tugboats and mobile drilling rigs call upon Port Fourchon for maintenance and repairs due to its proximity to offshore facilities
- ❑ Port Fourchon's proximity to the deepwater (1,000 ft contour and greater) oil and gas discoveries in the Gulf make it the port of choice for an increasing number of businesses
- ❑ A U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's study projects almost 60% of all Louisiana offshore drilling over the next 30 years will be in the service area of Port Fourchon
- ❑ Port Fourchon tripled the amount of cargo it handled from 10 million tons in 1993 to more than 30 million tons in 1996
- ❑ Over 6,000 people currently depend upon the Port as an avenue to and from offshore facilities. LA 1 is the only surface transportation route for workers and supplies entering and exiting Port Fourchon.

The LA 1 Task Force report concludes by indicating that "this large scale development in the Gulf has overgrown a rural, two-lane arterial road

that passes through a number of cities and towns in Lafourche."

### 1.6.5 Millennium Port

In addition to the existing intermodal facilities previously described, another element of the region's intermodal transportation system is the proposed "Millennium Port." Currently, the Port of New Orleans is conducting a study to determine the best location for a 750-acre facility on the coast of Louisiana to compete with South Florida and South Texas. The port would facilitate the growing containerized trade between the U.S. and South America.

Port Fourchon is being considered for the Millennium Port site because of its proximity to the 40-foot depth contour in the Gulf of Mexico. Its short distance to South and Central America is ideal for perishable goods. Once at Port Fourchon, shipment time is at most three days to anywhere in the United States. If Louisiana is successful in its endeavors, it could mean 100,000 new jobs and \$44.3 billion in earnings for the state. The LA 1 Task Force report notes that "considerable investments in infrastructure would be needed at any potential location."

### 1.7 PROJECT INDEPENDENT UTILITY AND LOGICAL TERMINI

The length (approximately 135 miles) of the NHS segment of LA 1 from I-10 at Port Allen to LA 3090 at Port Fourchon precludes the development and

implementation of planned facility improvements in a single construction project. A practical approach is to undertake a series of projects broken into viable sections. Each of these sections is referred to as a Section of Independent Utility (SIU). A given SIU may be in place and useable/operational for several years before an adjacent section is completed and open to traffic.

The FHWA Memorandum "Guidance for Developing Logical Termini" (FHWA 1993) and FHWA regulations (23 CFR 711.111(f)) outline three general principles used to define an entire highway project or a SIU:

- Connect logical termini and be of sufficient length to address environmental matters on a broad scope
- Have independent utility or independent significance, i.e., be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made
- Not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

The LA 1 Improvements project satisfies these criteria.

The proposed project's northern terminus is LA 3235, a four-lane divided highway west of Golden Meadow. The southern terminus is

LA 3090 at its intersection with LA 1, north of Port Fourchon. This is also the southern terminus of the NHS route. As defined by FHWA, these logical termini are rational endpoints for the proposed project and the project is of sufficient length to evaluate environmental issues. Furthermore, the alternatives under consideration for the proposed project (see Section 2) would not restrict consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements.

The proposed facility would provide independent utility even if no additional transportation improvements in the region were made. The proposed facility would:

- Relieve everyday poor levels of service that currently exist between Golden Meadow and Leeville and along the entire route by the Design Year, 2030
- Improve safety through higher roadway standards
- Eliminate the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge, the critical link in the area's transportation system, which becomes compromised during periods of heavy bayou traffic and bridge maintenance or repair where the bridge becomes unusable and the existing highway ceases to function
- Improve hurricane evacuation for thousands of residents and offshore oil workers to areas within the Hurricane Protection Levee at

Golden Meadow by providing a highway above the 100-year base flood elevation

- ❑ Facilitate the efficient movement of goods and services in support of the growing tourism and offshore oil and natural gas industries in the Region.

The FHWA guidance further indicates that establishing logical termini for a SIU does not preclude staged construction. Construction may be staged or programmed for shorter sections or discrete construction elements within the SIU as funding permits.

### 1.8 SUMMARY

The LA 1 Corridor serves a wide variety of industries and stakeholders, all of them heavily reliant on the lifeline of the area - LA 1 between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon. This is a critical link in the transportation network. To maintain this area safely for its citizens and productively for its industries, deficiencies in its transportation system must be addressed.

- ❑ A two-lane highway is not sufficient to adequately provide for the anticipated traffic volumes. The section north of the Leeville Lift-Bridge is expected to provide LOS E (near capacity with low driver comfort) by the design year 2030. The section to the south of Leeville Lift-Bridge is expected to have LOS D by the design year. These levels of service describe a travel way that limits the driver's freedom to

maneuver, increases the driver's anxiety, and is volatile to the smallest of incidents. National standards established for highway design specify that rural arterials should be designed to LOS B, except in mountainous areas where LOS C is acceptable (AASHTO, 1994). The LOS D and LOS E forecast for LA 1 do not come close to meeting this standard.

- ❑ Since LA 1 is the only highway through the Study Area, it services both local and through traffic. This has resulted in a high percentage of trucks traveling through the communities of Leeville and southern Golden Meadow, reducing the quality of life in those communities.
- ❑ A reliable surface transportation route is needed. In the event that LA 1 would become impassible either due to inclement weather or an incident, travelers need a reliable route.
- ❑ The unpredictable delay associated with the Leeville Lift-Bridge causes irritation to drivers and economic losses due to delay, and will worsen as the level of service deteriorates in the future.
- ❑ Evacuation levels of service indicate a failing system. If LA 1, the only highway available for evacuation, fails to accommodate evacuation traffic, thousands of residents and offshore oil workers could be stranded in the Study Area.

- The economy of the Study Area is growing rapidly. Each of the industries located in the Study Area is dependent on a reliable highway network.
  
- LA 1 comprises the key link in the region's intermodal transportation system, which includes highways, ports, waterways and

airports. This intermodal system is vital to the region's ability to serve the growing flow of goods and services between the region, the rest of the nation, and the rest of the world.



## Section 2: ALTERNATIVES

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This section presents the alternatives considered for the LA 1 Improvements project. A discussion is provided of all reasonable alternatives considered and includes the examination of five broad transportation concepts or alternatives: the No-Action Alternative, a Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Alternative, a Mass Transit Alternative, an Upgrade the Existing Facilities Alternative, and the Build Alternative. Alternatives determined not to meet the project purpose and need (as documented in Section 1) were eliminated from further consideration, while other reasonable alternatives were identified and carried forward for detailed study.

### 2.1 THE STUDY PROCESS

The study process adopted for the completion of the environmental and location study for the LA 1 Improvements project is shown in Exhibit 2-1. Three primary phases of work are involved and include:

- The Scoping Process which led to consensus on important project and environmental issues and development of an environmental resource inventory within a 3-mile wide Study Area
- The Alternatives Study which led to the development of specific highway alignment alternatives and identification of a Preferred Alignment

- Environmental Documentation which consists of the preparation of the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and other supporting documents and the selection of a single Selected Alignment identified in the Final EIS and Record of Decision.

This study process satisfies various regulatory and coordination requirements for projects integrating the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Section 404 Permit process. This study also satisfies various regulatory and consulatory requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). The project approach allowed a thorough consideration of all alternatives developed with respect to potential impacts to waters of the United States, including wetlands, as required under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The required Section 404 b(1) alternatives analysis has been conducted during the alignment studies phase. This approach emphasized first avoidance, and then minimization efforts to insure that the identified Selected Alignment minimized wetland impacts to the greatest extent possible.

An Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) assessment has been conducted as required by the MSFCMA. The project falls within the region of the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) Fisheries Management Council and would

result in impact to EFH for various species of shrimp and red drum (commonly referred to as redfish) and other species managed under the Act.

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) was consulted throughout the study process regarding navigation issues and vertical and horizontal clearance requirements over navigable waterways.

## **2.2 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED**

Three of the broad transportation alternatives were considered but eliminated from further study because they do not meet the purpose and need for the project. Alternatives eliminated include the Transportation Systems Management Alternative, the Mass Transit Alternative, and Upgrading the Existing Facilities Alternative.

### **2.2.1 Transportation Systems Management**

A TSM Alternative would include limited construction activities designed to maximize the efficiency of the existing highway system. The TSM approach typically includes low cost improvements such as optimizing traffic signal timing, installing traffic signals, adding high occupancy vehicle lanes, minor realignments of horizontal curves, and widening shoulders. TSM measures are generally considered appropriate in urban areas with a population of over 200,000 persons (USDOT 1987). Lafourche Parish has a 2000 estimated population of approximately 90,000. Golden Meadow, the

largest Study Area community has a 2000 estimated population of approximately 2,200 (see Section 3).

While these measures would likely result in localized traffic safety and level of service improvements, the TSM Alternative would not satisfy the hurricane evacuation need identified in the project purpose and need (see Section 1). This concept was eliminated from further consideration.

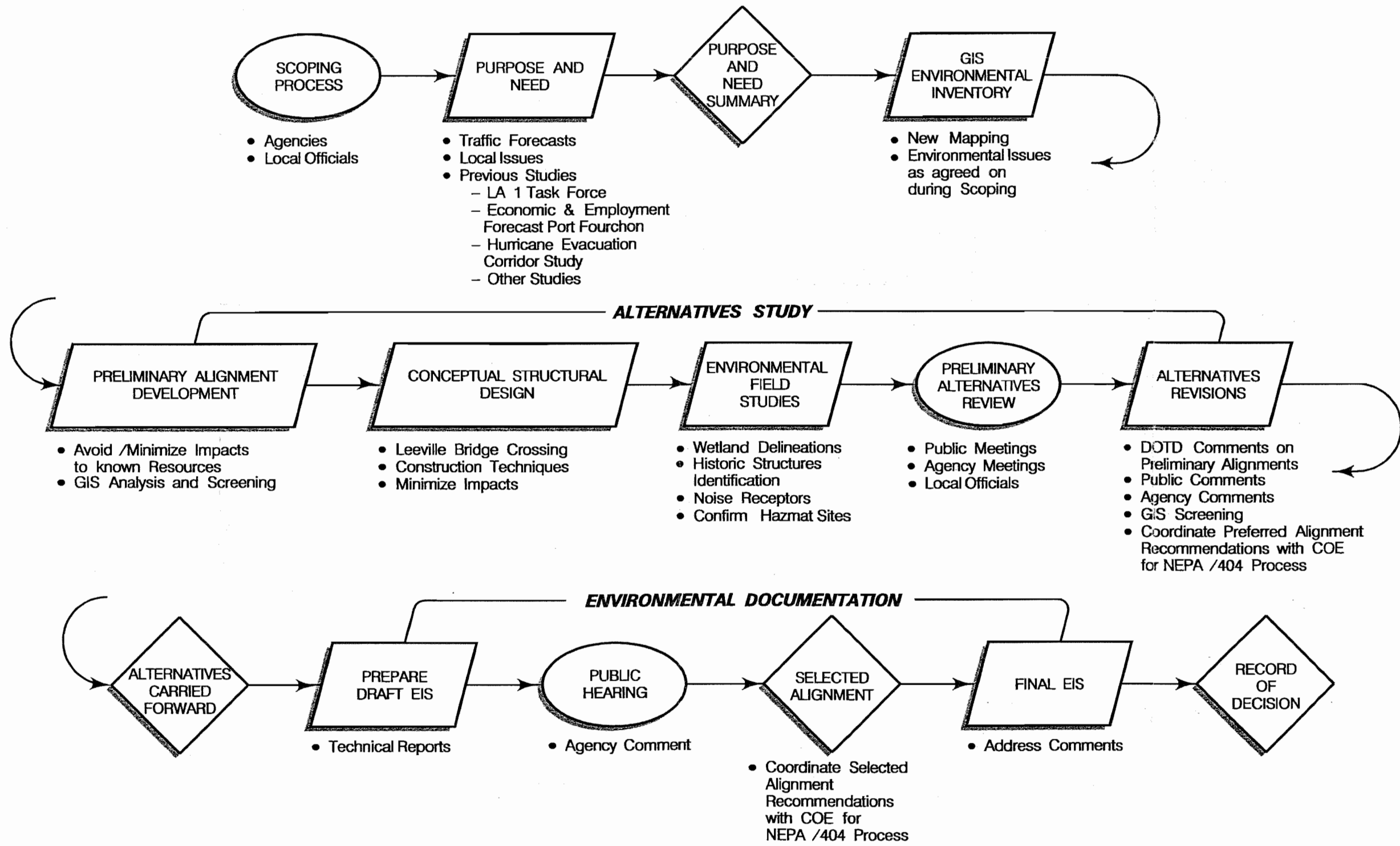
### **2.2.2 Mass Transit Alternative**

A Mass Transit Alternative, such as bus or rail service, is generally only relevant in urban areas with a population of over 200,000 (USDOT 1987), and where concentrated trip origins and/or destinations make mass transit a viable transportation alternative. Lafourche Parish has a 2000 estimated population of approximately 90,000. In addition, the project area's population is dispersed, with no single community approaching 200,000 inhabitants (see Section 3). Mass transit would not be a reasonable alternative to meet the project purpose and need and was eliminated from further consideration.

### **2.2.3 Upgrading the Existing Road Network**

The existing two-lane LA 1 is not sufficient to adequately provide for the anticipated traffic volumes.





**SYMBOLOLOGY:**

- Review Point and/or Public Meetings
- ▭ Work in Progress
- ◇ Decision and/or Concurrence Point

LA 1 Improvements Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon		
Exhibit 2-1		
<b>STUDY PROCESS</b>		
Baker		

The roadway north of the Leeville Lift-Bridge is currently operating at LOS D and is expected to provide LOS E by the design year 2030. The roadway south of the Leeville Lift-Bridge is expected to provide LOS D by the design year.

In rural settings, it is a common practice to improve an existing 2-lane route to 4-lane capacity by the addition of an at-grade median and 2 travel lanes. For a number of engineering and environmental reasons, this approach is not practical for existing LA 1.

### **Soil Conditions**

The Scatlake and Timbalier-Bellpass soil associations (USDA 1984) common throughout the existing LA 1 corridor will not support at-grade roadway construction without extensive excavation of existing material and the placement of fill to support the new roadway. This construction approach requires considerable wait-time following the placement of the fill before the roadway can be constructed on the fill section. Previous efforts in Louisiana using this construction approach through marsh have proven to be both not cost effective and time consuming.

### **Soil Subsidence**

The Coast 2050 Plan (LADNR 1998) documents a soil subsidence rate in the LA 1 corridor south of Golden Meadow between 2.1 feet and 3.5 feet per century. In areas of substantial soil subsidence, the placement of embankment as part of the roadway construction tends to exacerbate the rate

of soil subsidence. Depending on the specific soil groups, it may be difficult, or in some circumstances, impossible, to maintain a "design" vertical roadway profile with respect to the 100-year floodplain.

### **100-year Floodplain**

The Larose to Golden Meadow Hurricane Protection Levee (HPL) provides protection from hurricane storm surges up to 13 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD). Outside of the protection levee, existing LA 1 would have to be designed above the 100-year base flood elevation as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). An examination of Flood Insurance Rating Maps (FIRM) for the LA 1 corridor indicates base flood elevations outside the protection levee range between 10 and 13 feet NGVD. Existing elevations along LA 1 range between 2 and 3 feet NGVD. Consequently, the entire existing 2-lane roadway would have to be reconstructed to raise the roadway above the minimum requirements of the 100-year base flood elevation.

### **Right of Way Requirements within the Hurricane Protection Levee**

Exhibit 2-2 presents a view of LA 1 within the HPL as well as a typical roadway section required for a 4-lane roadway at this location. The existing roadway right-of-way width is approximately 80 feet. Within the HPL, the anticipated right-of-way width for a 4-lane roadway is 250 feet.

There are two churches, one cemetery, fourteen businesses and over 100 residences located along LA 1 between the northern terminus at LA 3235 and the Leon Theriot Floodgate. It is probable that all of these facilities would be impacted. Additionally, all of the utilities located within the existing right-of-way would have to be relocated.

### ***Right of Way Requirements South of the Hurricane Protection Levee***

Improvements to LA 1 south of the HPL would require reconstructing the roadway on embankment in order to maintain roadway elevations above the 100-year base flood elevation for the design life of the project.

Exhibits 2-3 and 2-4 provide typical views of LA 1 south of the HPL. The existing roadway right-of-way width is approximately 80 feet and much of the right-of-way is composed of jurisdictional wetlands and exposed sandy areas. A 350-foot right-of-way width would be required to accommodate the fill section necessary to maintain the roadway elevation and future soil subsidence. A number of businesses, the Smith Memorial Shrine, the Griffith and Cheramie cemeteries and one prehistoric archaeological site eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places would be impacted. Approximately 25 acres of wetlands would be impacted for each mile of roadway constructed (based on field observation and NWI mapping assessment). Additionally, all of the utilities

located within the existing right-of-way would have to be relocated.

Based on the potential community, residential and business impacts; community disruption during construction; and inability to avoid and minimize adjacent environmental resources, reconstruction of LA 1 was not considered a feasible alternative for the proposed project and was eliminated from further consideration.

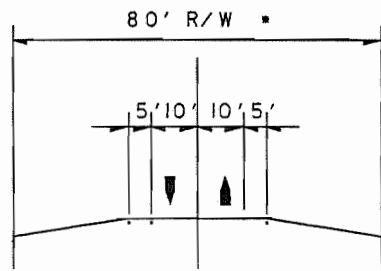
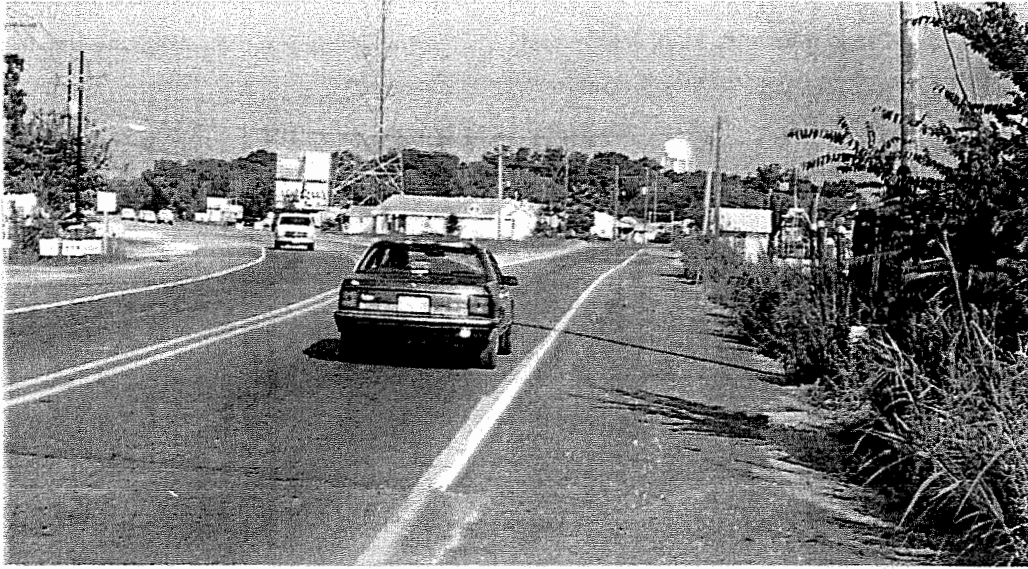
## **2.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Of the five transportation alternatives considered for this project, the No-Action and Build Alternatives have been retained for further study.

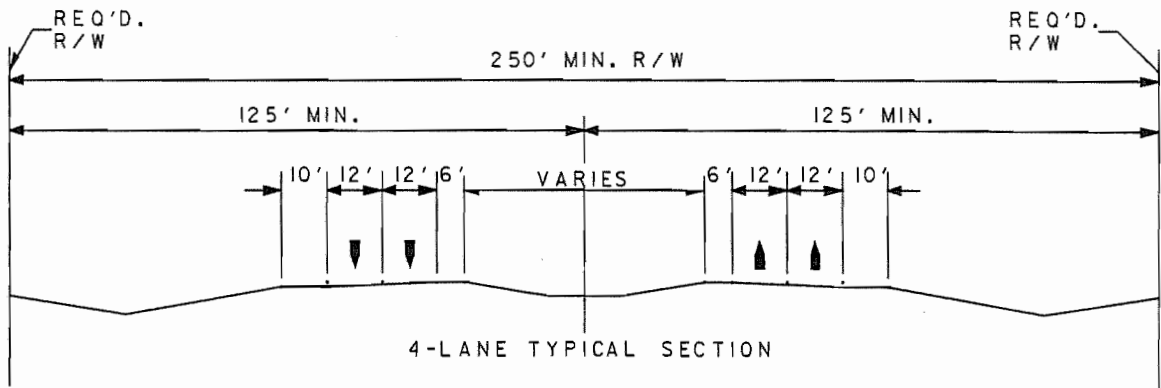
### **2.3.1 The No-Action Alternative**

The alternatives developed were compared to the decision to take no action. The No-Action alternative would not involve the construction of the LA 1 Improvements project, but would involve normal maintenance activities and planned safety improvements to LA 1.

Under the No-Action alternative, LA 1 would remain a two-lane facility from Golden Meadow to LA 3090 north of Port Fourchon. As a result, the level of service, hurricane evacuation and safety issues identified in Section 1 would remain. Existing and projected future traffic volumes would result in a poor level of service along this entire route.



EXISTING TYPICAL SECTION



4-LANE TYPICAL SECTION

• VARIES IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon

Exhibit 2-2

**LA 1 WITHIN THE HURRICANE  
PROTECTION LEVEL**

Baker



The Port and many industries would continue to transport materials on the existing local highways where truck traffic would mix with local traffic and travel through local communities.

Selection of the No-Action alternative would avoid a major state and federal expenditure and would avoid major impacts to the social, economic, natural and cultural environments. The No-Action alternative will be maintained as an alternative to new highway construction until a final decision has been determined and documented through the completion of the EIS process.

### **2.3.2 Build Alternatives**

Development of the Build Alternatives involved the evaluation of full range of alternatives at the alternatives phases of study. Section 2.5 documents the alignment development and evaluation processes and describes and discusses the reasonable alternatives developed.

## **2.4 SCOPING PROCESS**

The Scoping Process consisted of a series of meetings held in December 1999 and January 2000 to identify environmental, socioeconomic, or engineering issues that should be considered during the alternatives evaluation process. Groups participating in this process included state and federal resource agencies and local elected officials.

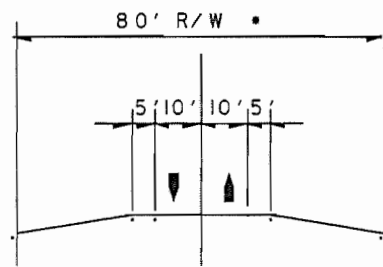
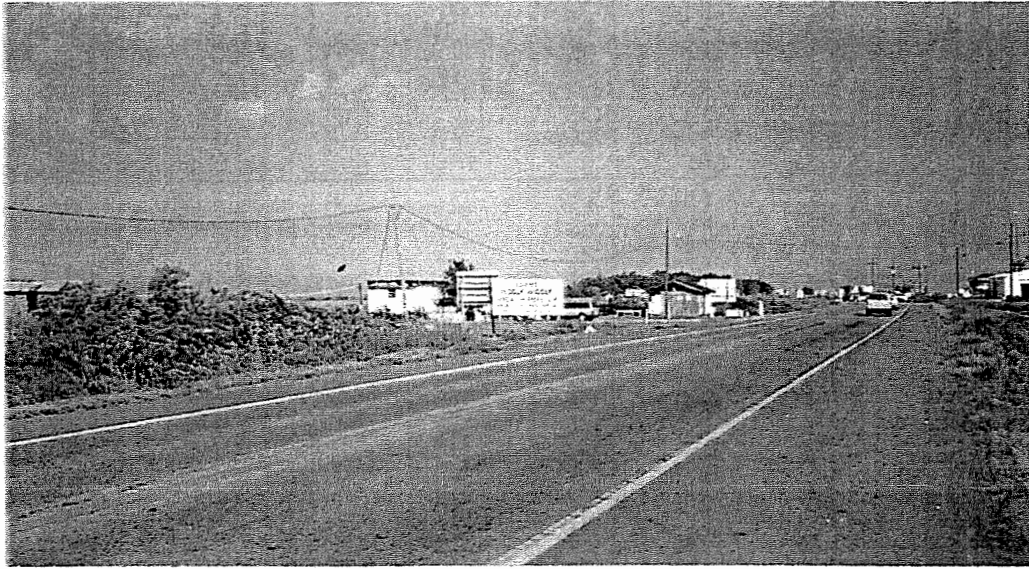
### **2.4.1 Agency Involvement**

Several state and federal resource agencies met on December 14, 1999 to discuss the proposed LA 1 Improvements project. Issues of concern and how each issue would be addressed during the Alternatives Study phase were discussed and recorded. Issues identified and discussed included wetlands, vegetative communities, wildlife communities including essential fish habitat and wading bird colonies, protected species, surface water resources, cultural resources, Indian lands, hazardous waste, highway surface water runoff, and planned restoration activities. In addition to the December 14, 1999 meeting, individual contact was made on January 26, 2000 with the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, Division of Archaeology.

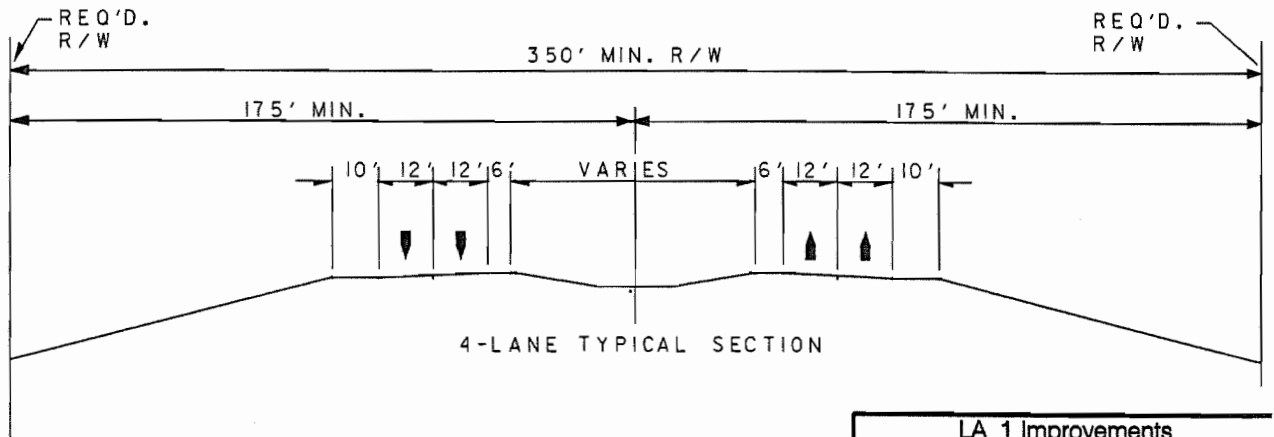
### **2.4.2 Local Official Involvement**

A group of local elected officials met on January 24, 2000 in Galliano, Louisiana. Potential project benefits and concerns were discussed by the group. Potential project benefits identified at this meeting included:

- Serve as an economic catalyst for the region
- Increase accessibility to Port Fourchon
- Alleviate roadway inundation and weather related road problems
- Improve intermodal exchange between landside and offshore modes of transportation
- Improve safety through diversion of truck traffic from local roads.



EXISTING TYPICAL SECTION



4-LANE TYPICAL SECTION

• VARIES IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS

LA 1 Improvements Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon	
Exhibit 2-3	
<b>LA 1 SOUTH OF THE HURRICANE PROTECTION LEVEL</b>	
Baker	

The only potential project concern identified during the meeting was that Leeville should be connected to the new highway and not bypassed.

In addition to the January 24, 2000 meeting, individual contact was made on March 30, 2000 with the Mayor of the Town of Golden Meadow.

### 2.4.3 Environmental Inventory

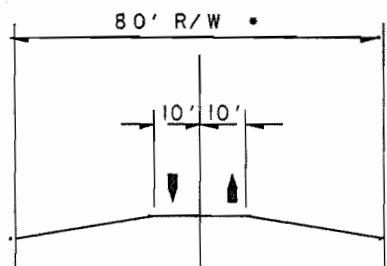
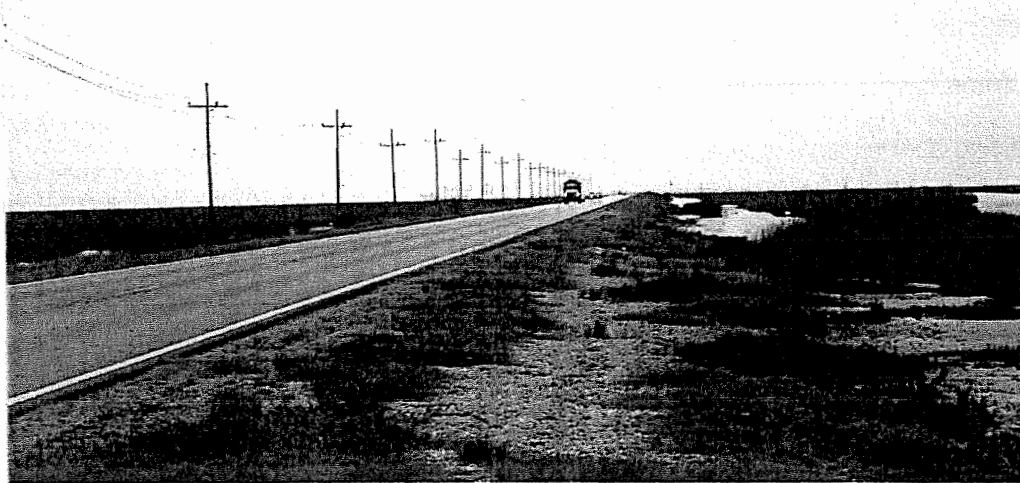
Environmental information within the Study Area was collected and entered into the project Geographic Information System (GIS) for subsequent alternatives review and screening. Data obtained from various agencies and entered into the GIS included:

- Project Mapping – based on 1999 DOTD black & white aerial photography.
- Wetlands - Obtained National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps to identify potential wetland areas.
- Protected Species - Obtained digital information from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Natural Heritage Program to determine the location of any federal and state listed species. None were identified within the Study Area.
- Waterbird Nesting Colonies – Obtained information on known colonial waterbird nesting colonies from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. A 1998 LOOP Environmental Monitoring Program
- Vegetation and Wildlife study conducted by the Louisiana State University for the Louisiana Transportation Research Center was reviewed.
- Cultural Resources - Obtained information on known archaeological sites and historic structures from the Louisiana Division of Archaeology and Division of Historic Preservation.
- Floodplains – Obtained Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) to identify flood boundaries.
- Hazardous Waste – Performed a comprehensive review of federal and state databases to identify sites.
- Oyster Leases – Identified oyster lease areas from information maintained by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.
- Identified Mitigation Areas – Coordinated with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources to identify any existing or proposed mitigation areas. None were identified within the Study Area.
- Oil & Gas Wells – Obtained digital oil and gas well information from the Louisiana Geographic Information Center.

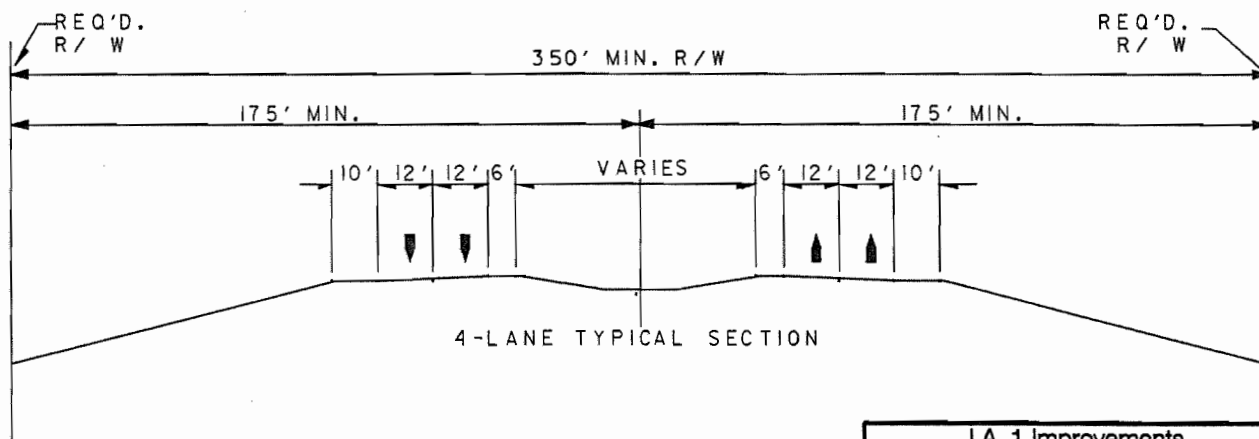
### 2.5 ALTERNATIVES STUDY

The Alternatives Study consisted of a focused effort within the Study Area and included:

- Developing preliminary alignments and conducting environmental field studies



EXISTING TYPICAL SECTION



4-LANE TYPICAL SECTION

• VARIES IN CERTAIN LOCATIONS

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon

Exhibit 2-4

**LA 1 SOUTH OF LEEVILLE**

Baker





- Presenting alignment comparisons to the resource agencies and the public for review and comment
- Revising the alignments based on public, local official and agency comments
- Identifying a Preferred Alignment for public, local official, and agency review.

Ongoing outreach efforts during the Alternatives Study continued to address issues of importance to the public, local officials and state and federal agencies. During the Alternatives Study, engineering studies, and environmental field efforts provided the necessary information to identify a Preferred Alignment, as described and presented in the Draft EIS for this project that was scrutinized by the public, local officials, agency representatives, and Native American tribes prior to a final decision on the Selected Alignment. A summary of public outreach is presented in Section 7.

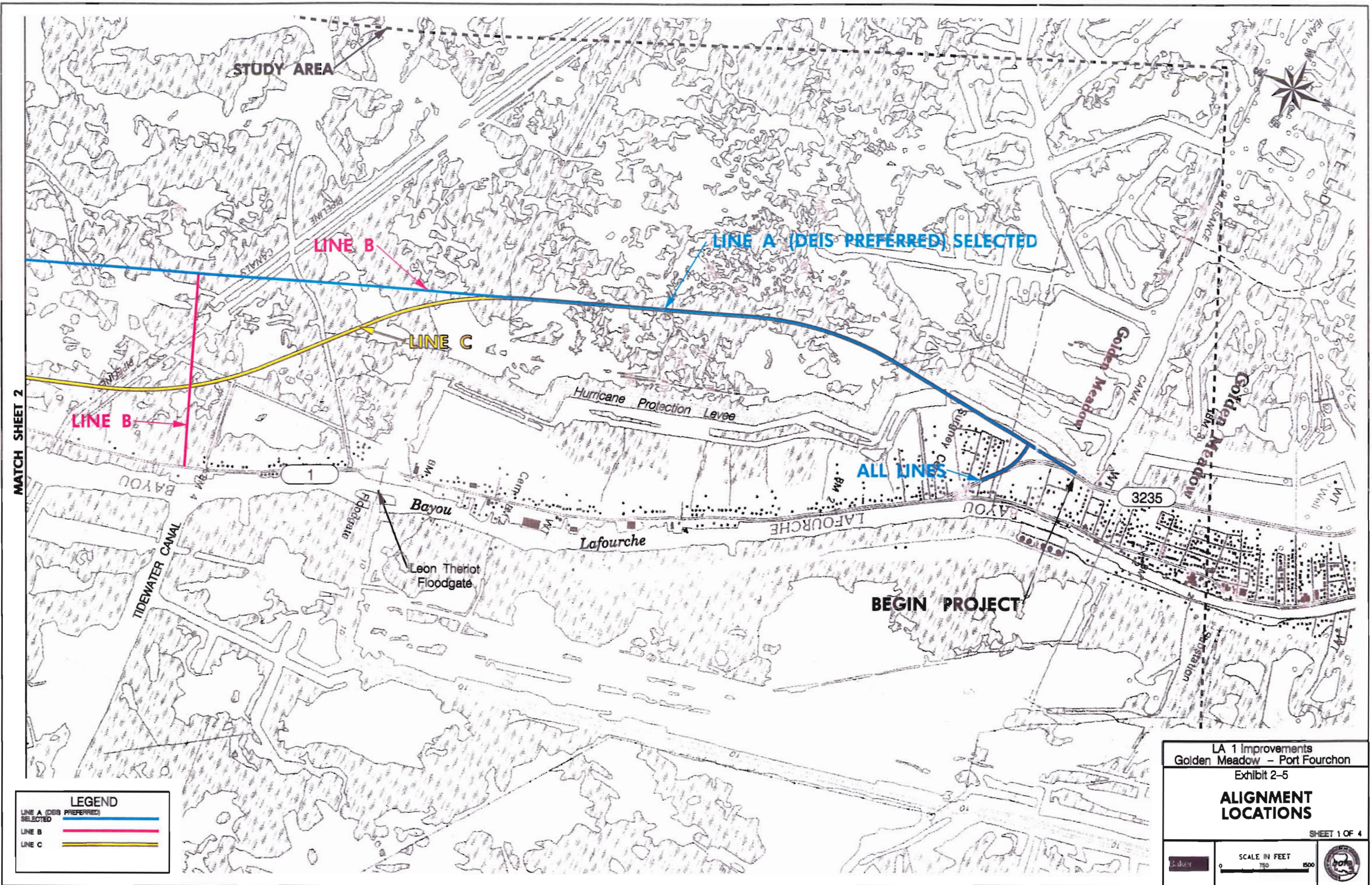
### 2.5.1 Alignment Development

Three distinct highway alignments were developed within the Study Area and are presented in Exhibit 2-5. The three alignments are identified as Line A, Line B, and Line C. Within some reaches of the project, two, or all three alignments may be in the same location due to environmental or engineering constraints. A major consideration in the location of the three alignments was the crossing of Bayou Lafourche, Southwestern

Louisiana Canal, and other navigable canals within the Study Area.

All three alignments tie into existing 4-lane LA 3235 west of Golden Meadow. The new 4-lane elevated roadway proceeds southward and transitions onto a bridge structure that crosses over the Larose to Golden Meadow Hurricane Protection Levee. DOTD guidelines require that a 16.5-foot vertical clearance be provided over the protection levee. The roadway will remain on structure throughout its entire route at an elevation that exceeds the minimum requirements of the 100-year base flood elevation to provide an improved hurricane evacuation route for thousands of residents and offshore oil workers. For the purposes of this study, a minimum lower chord elevation of 13 feet NGVD was used for the mainline portions of the preliminary alignments. This minimum elevation exceeds the 100-year base flood elevation as defined by FEMA. Final elevations will be established during final design.

A brief description of the environmental and engineering issues for each Line is provided below. Typical roadway and bridge sections are included as Exhibit 2-6. Schematic interchange details for the interchanges north and south of Leeville are included as Exhibit 2-7.



**LEGEND**

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED ———

LINE B ———

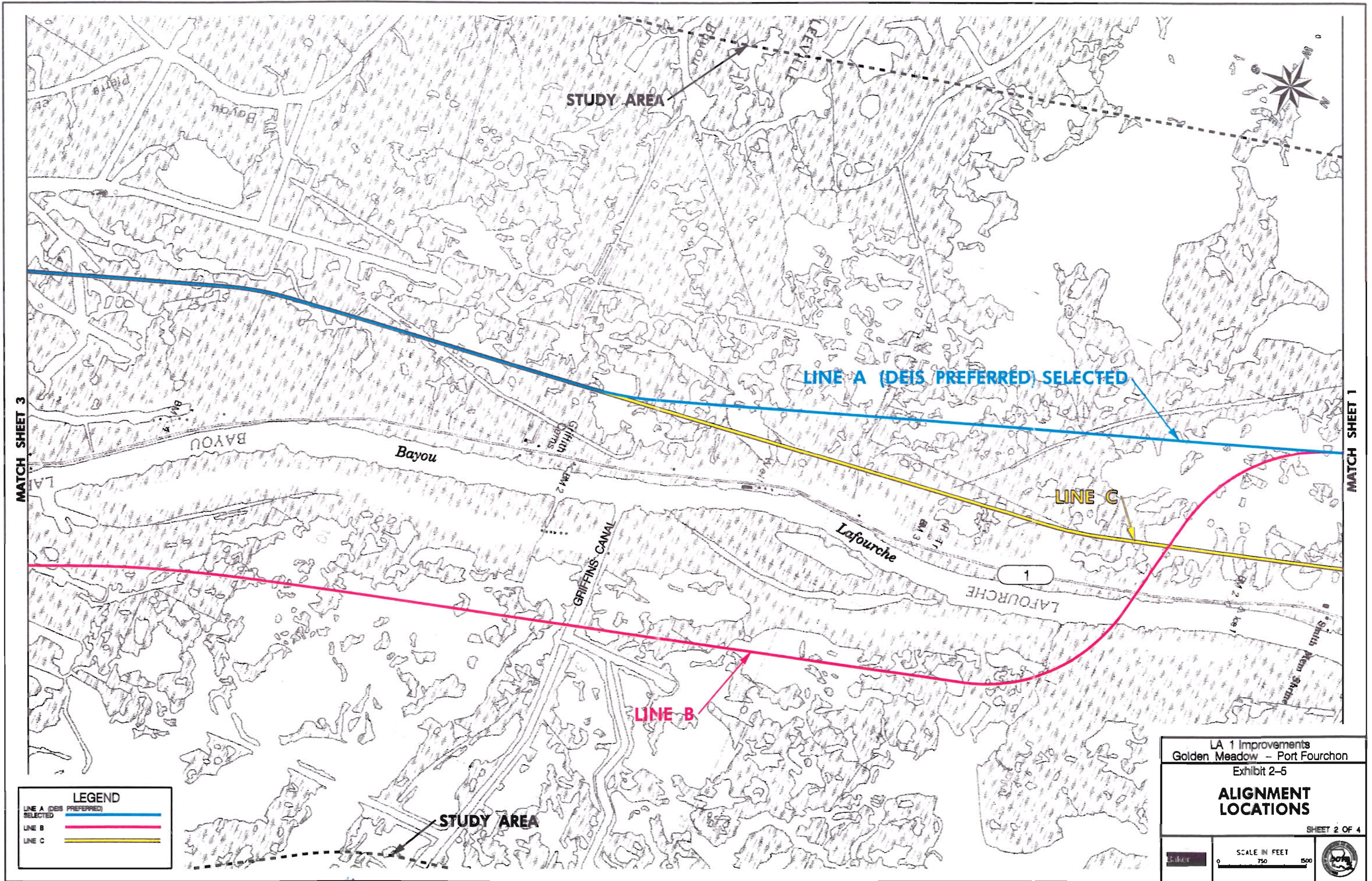
LINE C ———

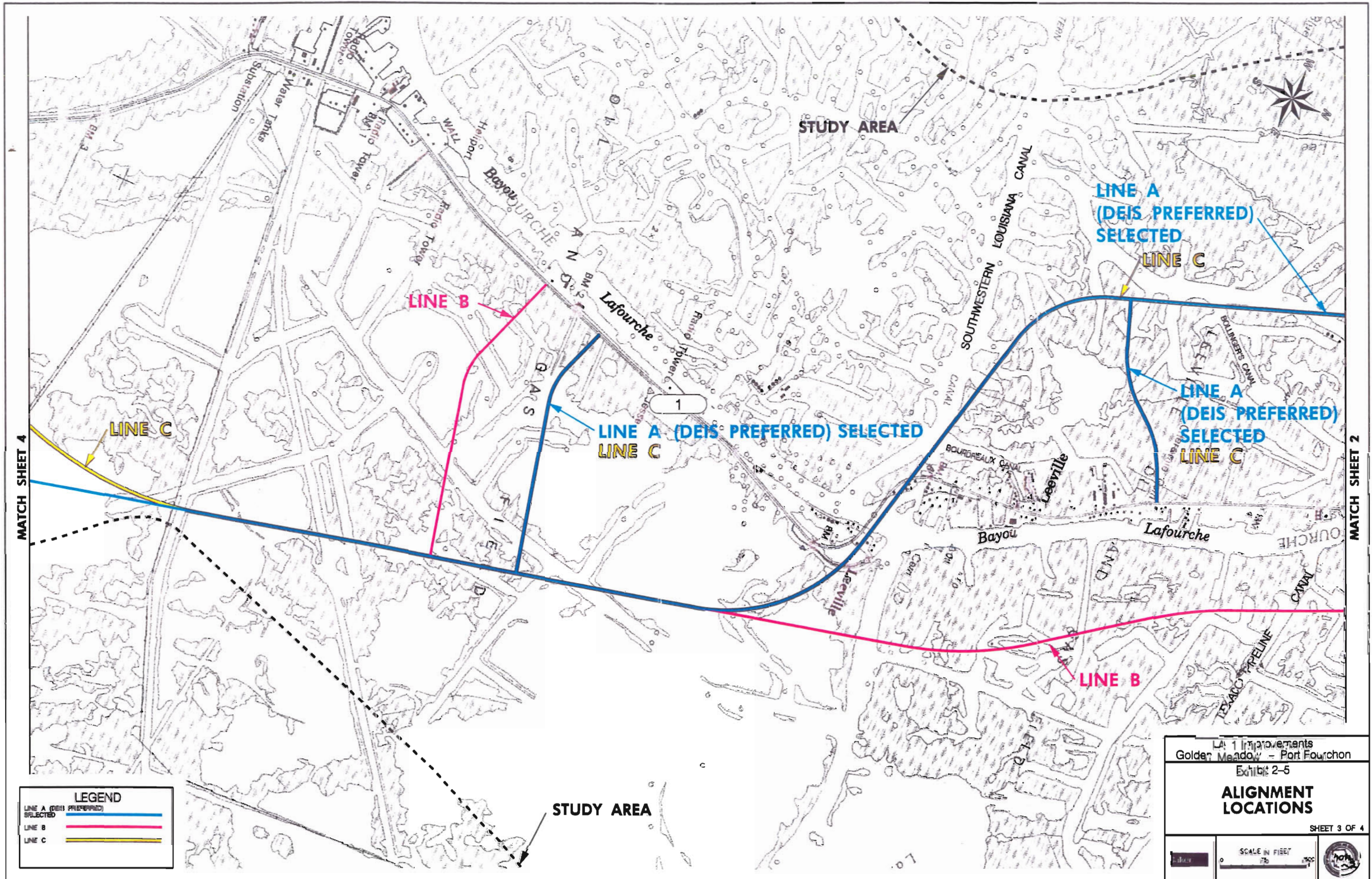
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
Exhibit 2-5

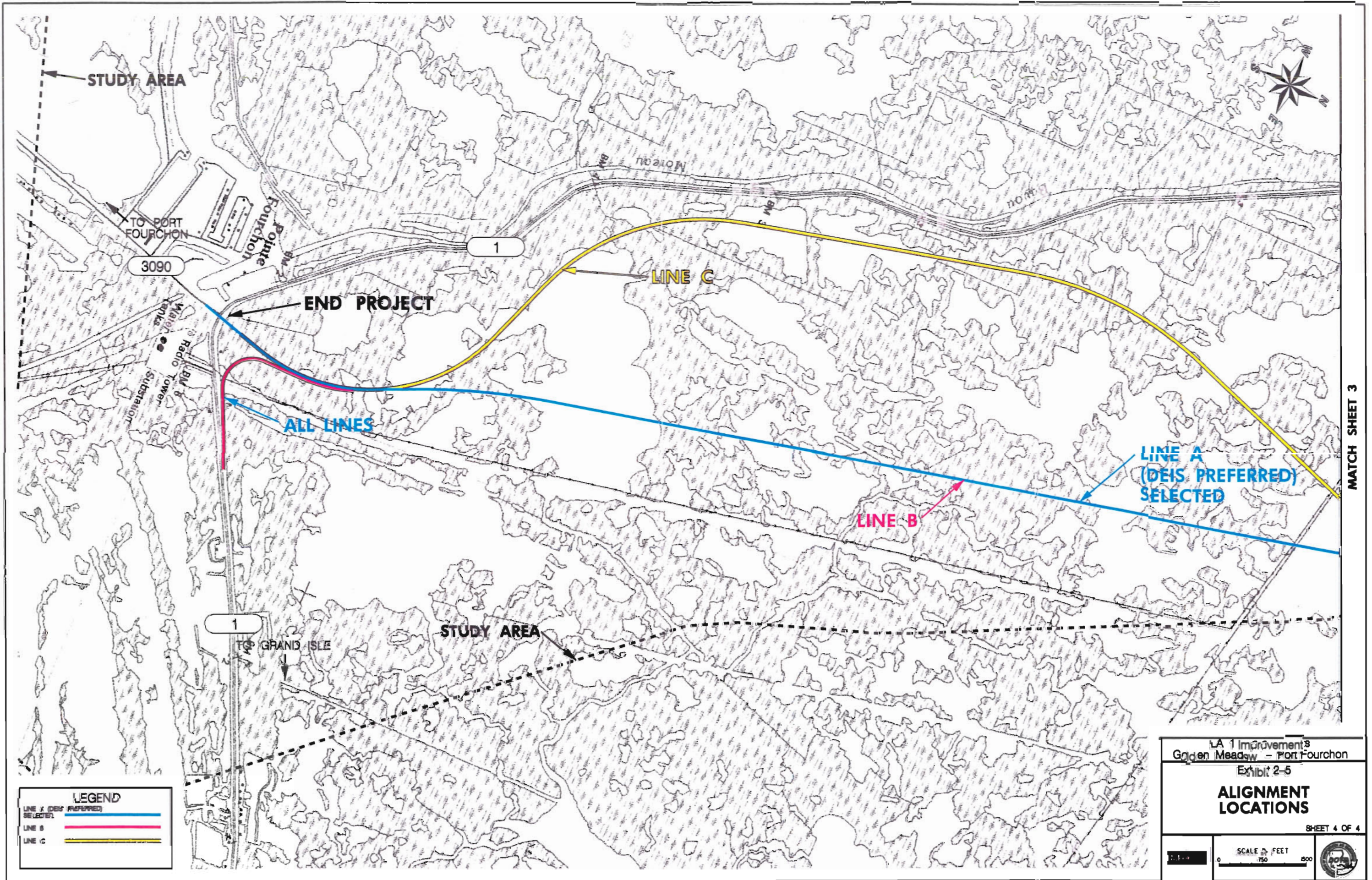
**ALIGNMENT LOCATIONS**

SHEET 1 OF 4

SCALE IN FEET  
0 750 1500







STUDY AREA

TO PORT FOURCHON

3090

Pointe Fourchon

END PROJECT

ALL LINES

LINE C


LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED


LINE B


STUDY AREA

TO GRAND ISLE

**LEGEND**

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED 

LINE B 

LINE C 

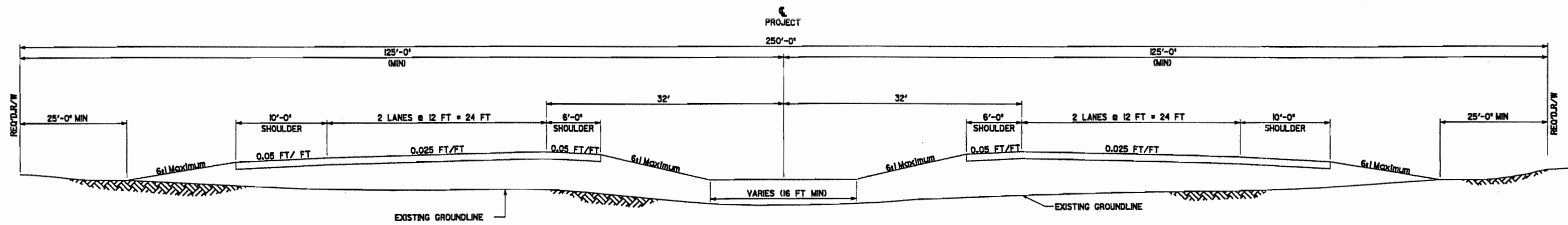
LA 1 Improvement's  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
Exhibit 2-5  
**ALIGNMENT LOCATIONS**

SCALE IN FEET  
0 750 500

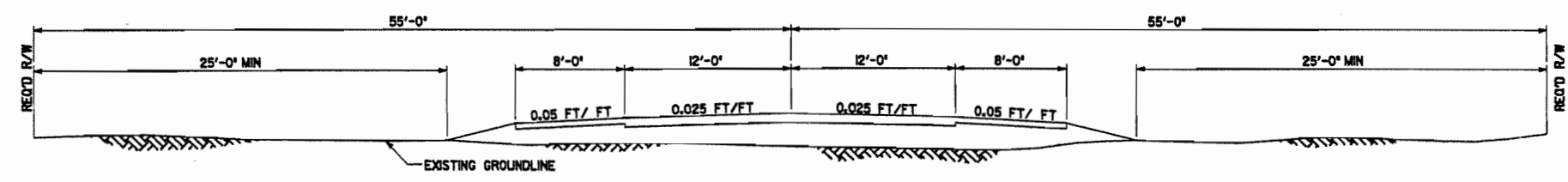


MATCH SHEET 3

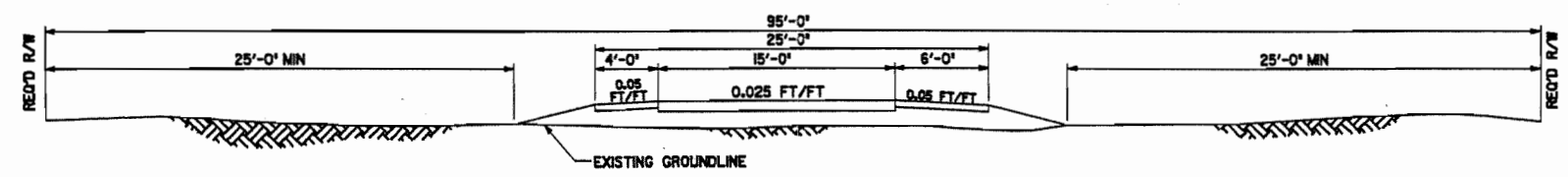
SHEET 4 OF 4



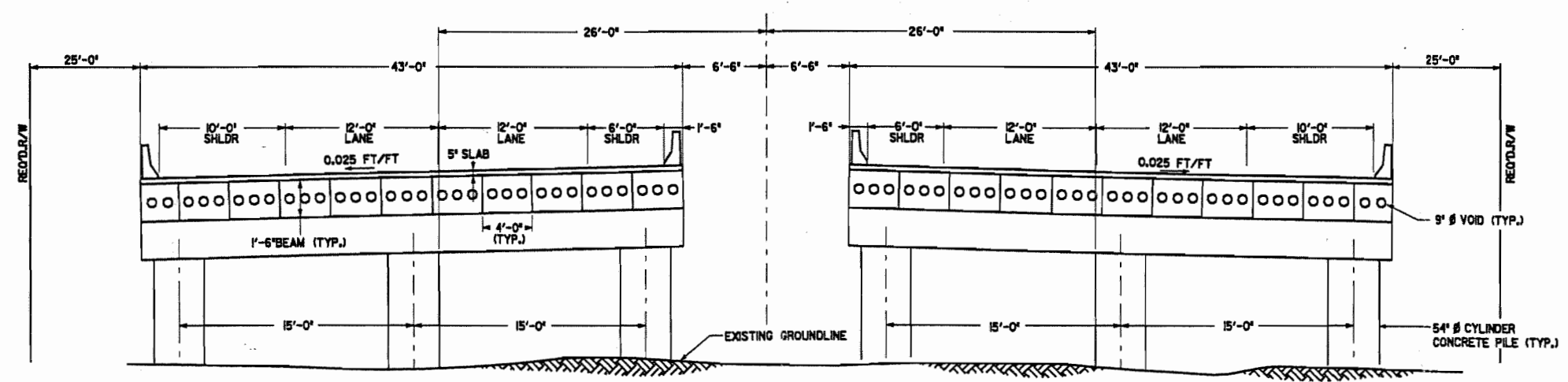
TYPICAL SECTION - 4 LANE AT-GRADE ROADWAY



TYPICAL SECTION - 2 LANE AT GRADE ROADWAY



TYPICAL RDWY - RAMP SECTION



TYPICAL SECTION - MAINLINE ELEVATED BRIDGE

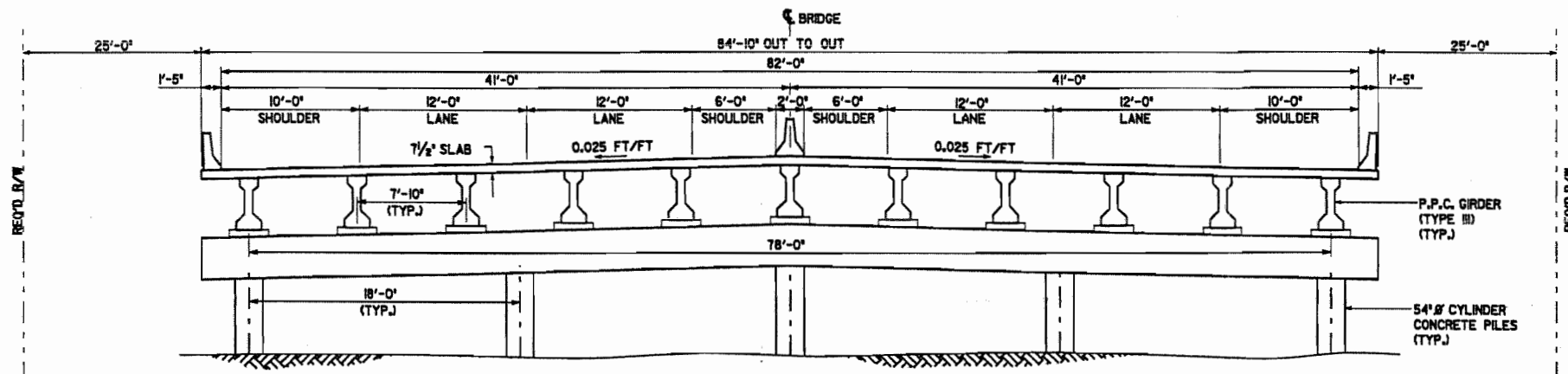
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon

Exhibit 2-6

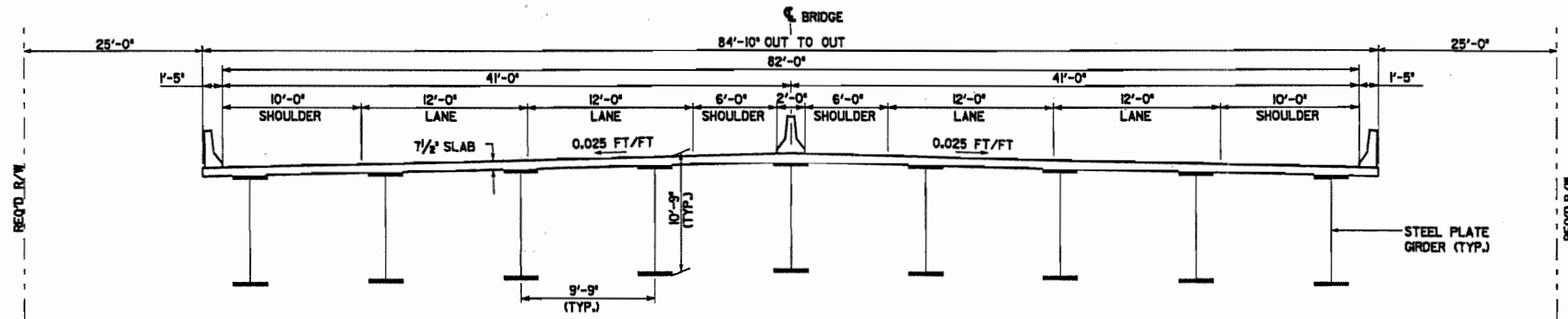
**TYPICAL SECTIONS**

SHEET 1 OF 2

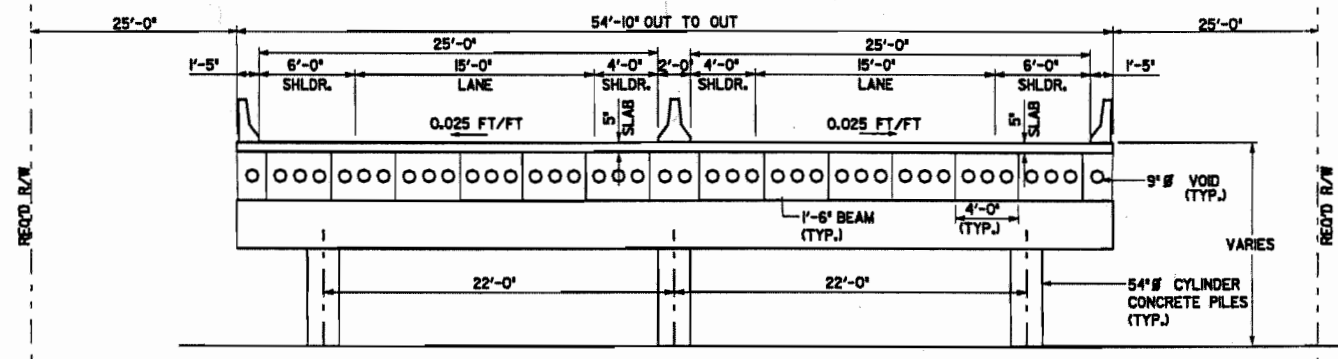
Baker	NOT TO SCALE	
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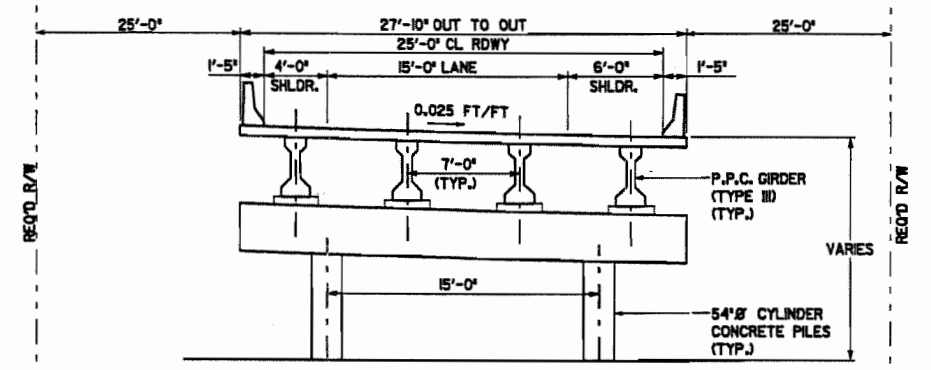
TYPICAL SECTION - OTHER SPANS  
BAYOU LAFOURCHE CROSSING



TYPICAL SECTION - CENTER SPANS  
BAYOU LAFOURCHE CROSSING



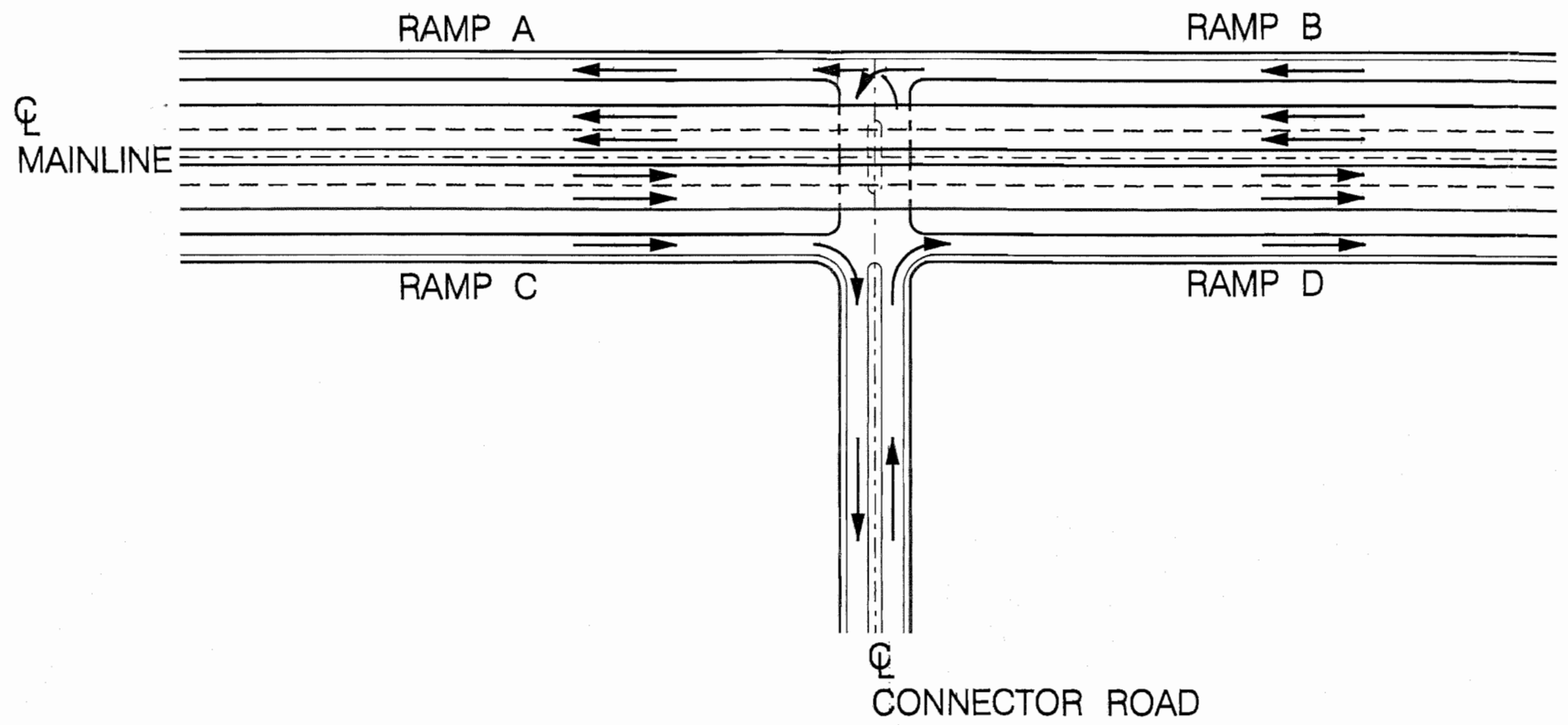
TYPICAL SECTION - CONNECTOR ROAD



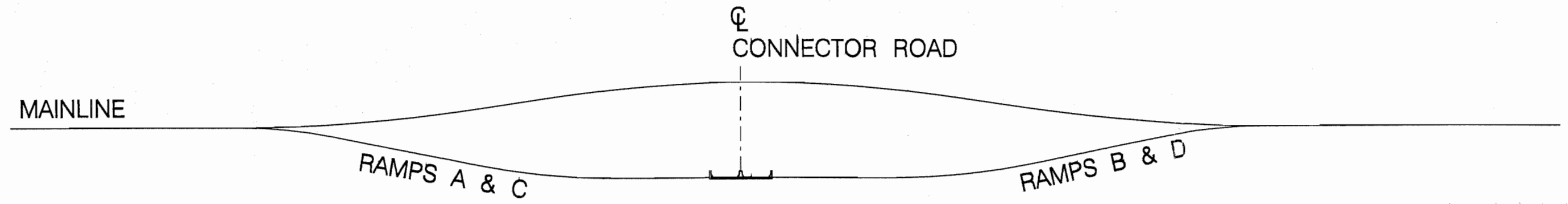
TYPICAL SECTION - RAMP TO CONNECTOR ROAD

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
Exhibit 2-6  
**TYPICAL SECTIONS**  
SHEET 2 OF 2

Baker NOT TO SCALE



PLAN



PROFILE

LA 1 Improvements Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon		
Exhibit 2-7 <b>TYPICAL INTERCHANGE</b>		
Baker	NOT TO SCALE	



**Line A**

After crossing the Hurricane Protection Levee, Line A traverses over open marsh in a direct line from Golden Meadow to Leeville. A connection to existing LA 1 would be provided near the northern terminus in Golden Meadow.

Navigation clearances are provided at three stream crossings. Line A crosses the Bollinger Canal. Based on consultations with the owner of the facility accessed by the canal, a 40-foot clearance above mean high water has been provided.

A fixed-span high-level bridge would be constructed over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville approximately 170 feet upstream of the existing lift span. Two navigation clearances are associated with the new Leeville Bridge. The west bank approach to the Leeville Bridge crosses over the Boudreaux Canal. The Boudreaux Canal provides maritime access to a number of marine service facilities. Discussions with local officials indicate that maritime traffic serviced by these facilities is limited to inland commercial and recreational boat traffic. According to local officials, these vessels have navigation clearance requirements of less than 50 feet. The plan and profile drawings for the Leeville bridge crossing of Bayou Lafourche are included as Exhibit 2-8 and Exhibit 2-9. The Boudreaux Canal navigation clearance provided in association with the Leeville bridge ranges from 41.6 feet to 63.9 feet above mean high water.

As part of the permitting for the Leeville Bridge crossing, the channel and final navigation clearance for the Boudreaux Canal will have to be determined, and adjustments may have to be made in the bridge profile and support pier locations in response to these determinations.

Preliminary coordination with the USCG indicates that the new fixed span crossing of Bayou Lafourche at Leeville should provide a 73-foot vertical clearance above mean high water. The proposed bridge profile is in conformance with this vertical clearance. The Bayou Lafourche navigation channel is 126-feet wide at this location. However, the USCG will consider the specific marine navigation requirements of the proposed bridge location in establishing the horizontal navigation clearance for the new structure. For the purposes of this study, a 300-foot wide horizontal clearance has been provided.

Continued coordination with the USCG is warranted to confirm the minimum acceptable horizontal navigation clearance. Also, because much of the proposed highway will be located over marsh and/or open water, the USCG will be provided the opportunity to review the entire route to verify that no other navigable waterways will be affected. If the USCG determines that other navigable waterways are affected, the vertical and horizontal navigation clearances will have to be

established during final design at each affected location.

In anticipation of the abandonment and demolition of the existing lift span structure, connections to the LA 1 Improvements project roadway are provided to existing LA 1 to facilitate Leeville traffic. A connection would be provided between Bollinger's Canal and Leeville. A third connection just south of Leeville would be provided. From Leeville, the roadway proceeds over open marsh directly to a connection with LA 3090. A fourth connection to LA 1 and LA 3090 would be provided at the southern terminus.

#### **Line B**

Line B considers an east bank route south of Golden Meadow. Line B departs from Line A south of the Hurricane Protection Levee. A connection to existing LA 1 would be provided near the Tidewater Canal.

Line B crosses Bayou Lafourche approximately 1.9 miles downstream of the Leon Theriot Floodgate and proceeds in a direct route to Leeville. A fixed-span high-level bridge would be constructed over Bayou Lafourche.

On the west bank of Bayou Lafourche, existing LA 1 forms a land barrier that restricts marine access between the bayou and the adjacent marsh. On the east bank of Bayou Lafourche, there is no such restriction to navigation.

Consequently, there are a number of waterway crossings, which will have to be evaluated during final design for impacts to navigation.

A review of U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Nautical Chart 11365, Barataria and Bayou Lafourche Waterways indicates that the Southwestern Louisiana Canal intersects Bayou Lafourche just upstream from the existing lift span bridge at Leeville. The Southwestern Louisiana Canal is maintained as a navigable 50-foot wide channel with 6-foot depth. For planning purposes at this early stage of coordination, a 73-foot vertical clearance has been provided across this waterway.

The USCG will be provided the opportunity to review the entire route to verify whether other navigable waterways will be affected. The vertical and horizontal navigation clearances will have to be established during final design at each affected location.

A third connection would be provided just south of Leeville. From Leeville, the roadway proceeds over open marsh directly to a connection with LA 3090. A fourth connection to LA 1 and LA 3090 would be provided at the southern terminus.



LEEVILLE

SOUTHWESTERN  
LOUISIANA CANAL

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED

TO  
POINTE FOURCHON

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon

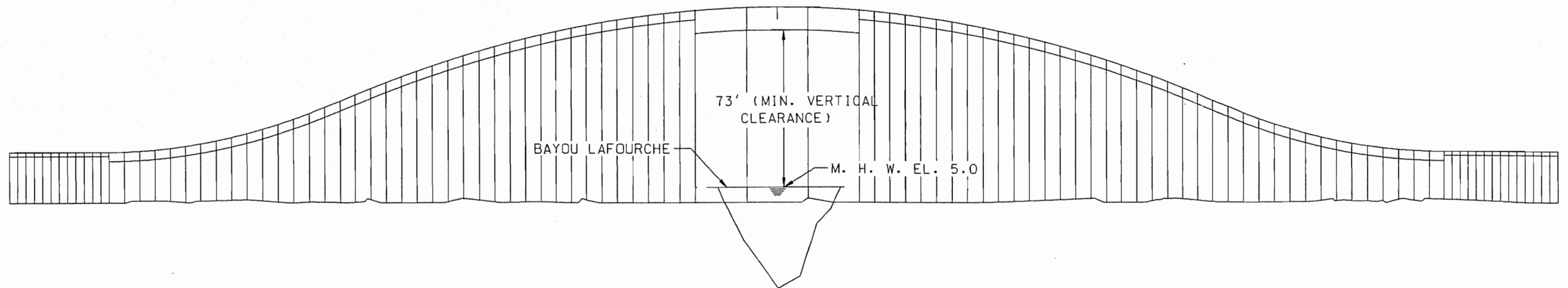
Exhibit 2-8

**LEEVILLE BRIDGE PLAN**

Baker

SCALE IN FEET  
0 100 200 300 400 500





LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon

Exhibit 2-9  
**LEEVILLE BRIDGE PROFILE**

Baker	SCALE IN FEET 0 100 200 300 400 500	
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**Line C**

As previously stated, it is not feasible to improve existing LA 1 to 4-lane capacity. Line C is presented to provide an opportunity for a comparative evaluation between Line A and a longer route that more closely follows existing LA 1.

**Navigation**

In accordance with 23 USC 144(h), (23 CFR Section 650.805), the DOTD and FHWA have made a preliminary determination that U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) bridge permits are only required for portions of the alignments spanning the Boudreaux Canal, the Bollinger Canal, Bayou Lafourche and the Southwestern Louisiana Canal. Bridge permits are not required for the remaining portions of the alignments because they traverse waters that are not used, or are not susceptible to use in their natural condition or by reasonable improvement, as a means to transport interstate or foreign commerce and although tidal induced, are used only by small pleasure craft or for access to oyster lease areas. A final joint determination of the locations requiring a bridge permit will be made with the USCG after issuance of the Record of Decision.

Line A and Line C would each require USCG permits for two new bridges over navigable waterways. A bridge over the Bollinger Canal would provide a 100-foot horizontal and a 40-foot

vertical navigation clearance above mean high water. The second bridge would span both the Boudreaux Canal and Bayou Lafourche. A 100-foot horizontal and a 41.6-foot minimum vertical navigation clearance above mean high water would be provided at the Boudreaux Canal. A 300-foot horizontal and a 73-foot vertical navigation clearance above mean high water would be provided at the Bayou Lafourche.

Line B would require USCG permits for two new bridges over navigable waterways. Bridges over Bayou Lafourche and the Southwest Louisiana Canal would each provide a 300-foot horizontal and a 73-foot vertical navigation clearance above mean high water.

The final vertical and horizontal navigation clearances will be established during final design.

**Construction**

The LA 1 Improvements project would be implemented in construction stages, as funding becomes available. All funding methods available to the DOTD, including bonds and tolls/user fees would be considered. Funding allocations will further determine the sequence and scheduling of the construction stages. Either a four-lane facility or 2 two-lane facilities (for example, northbound for hurricane evacuation, then southbound as funding permits) could be constructed.

Initially, the fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville, elevated roadway,

and the interchanges and connector roads immediately north and south of Leeville would be constructed and would provide independent utility and project benefit. The existing Leeville Lift-Bridge is the critical component of the area's transportation system linking Port Fourchon and Grand Isle to the mainland. Currently, this link is compromised during periods of heavy bayou traffic and bridge maintenance or repair where the bridge becomes unusable and the highway ceases to function. In addition, LA 1 immediately south of the existing lift-bridge experiences the highest frequency of periodic tidal inundation. For traffic safety considerations, should the fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville, elevated roadway, and the interchanges and connector roads immediately north and south of Leeville be constructed as a 4-lane facility, the elevated roadway would be delineated and maintained as a two-lane facility, consistent with existing LA 1, until such time that an adjacent construction stage is complete. The ramps and two-lane connector roads would not require additional traffic control measures beyond that necessary to restrict access to those ramps servicing uncompleted highway sections.

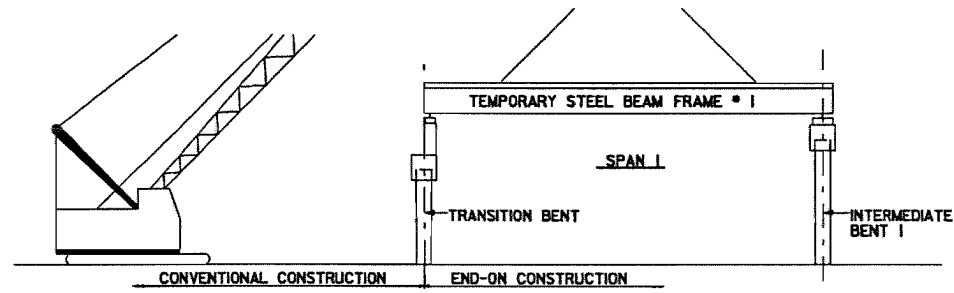
Project implementation would most likely continue with construction south of Leeville to LA 3090 at Pointe Fourchon followed by construction north of Leeville to LA 3235 west of Golden Meadow.

Except for the fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville, construction of the proposed highway would utilize "end on" construction methods as a means to minimize disturbance to the marsh vegetation. "End on" construction uses temporary, movable support structures extending from completed spans to support the construction of the adjacent span. The temporary support structures are then disassembled and reassembled on the newly completed span and construction of the new span continues. The sequence of construction is shown in Exhibit 2-10. Construction beginning at, and progressing from, the highway access from LA 3235, LA 1 and LA 3090 would facilitate delivery of materials via the local roadway network.

The fixed-span high-level bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville cannot be constructed using "end on" construction techniques due to the roadway grade and structure height. Conventional construction techniques would be used. An agency coordination meeting was held on May 1, 2002 to discuss generally constructibility and specifically the construction of the bridge over Bayou Lafourche at Leeville. Four construction methods were discussed, dredging construction canals, utilizing temporary construction barges as a mat across the marsh areas, constructing temporary low-level bridges using "end on" construction, and constructing temporary haul roads.

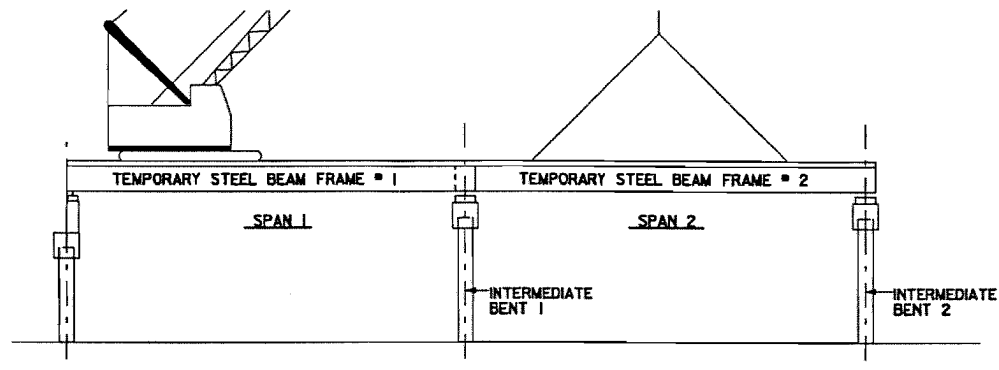
CONCRETE PILE SHALL BE DRIVEN FOR THE TRANSITION BENT AND INTERMEDIATE BENT 1. PRECAST PILE CAP SHALL BE INSTALLED ON TRANSITION BENT AND PRECAST PILE CAP AT BENT 1. THE BENTS SHALL BE GROUTED WITH NON-SHRINK GROUT. PRESTRESSED SLAB UNITS SHALL BE SET, GROUTED AND PERMANENTLY POST-TENSIONED ON ONE SIDE OF SPAN 1. A TEMPORARY STEEL BEAM FRAME SHALL BE SET ON THE OTHER SIDE OF SPAN 1 TO SUPPORT THE ADVANCING CRANE.

NOTE: TO PROVIDE FOR MATERIAL DELIVERY, THE CONTRACTOR WILL BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE HIS OWN ACCESS TO SPAN 1. THIS ACCESS MAY BE A TEMPORARY RAMP FOR HAULING MATERIALS ONTO THE COMPLETED BRIDGE OR A STATIONARY CRANE TO LIFT MATERIALS ONTO SPAN 1 FOR HAULING.

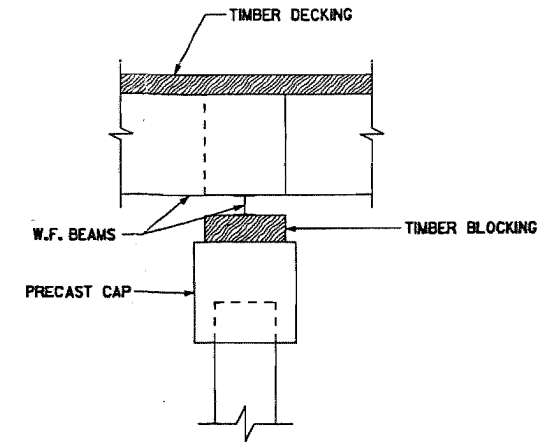


STAGE 1

THE CRANE SHALL ADVANCE TO SPAN 1. THE PILES SHALL BE DRIVEN AND THE PRECAST PILE CAP SHALL BE INSTALLED FOR INTERMEDIATE BENT 2. PRESTRESSED SLAB UNITS AND A SECOND TEMPORARY STEEL BEAM FRAME SHALL BE INSTALLED IN SPAN 2 AS DESCRIBED FOR STAGE 1.

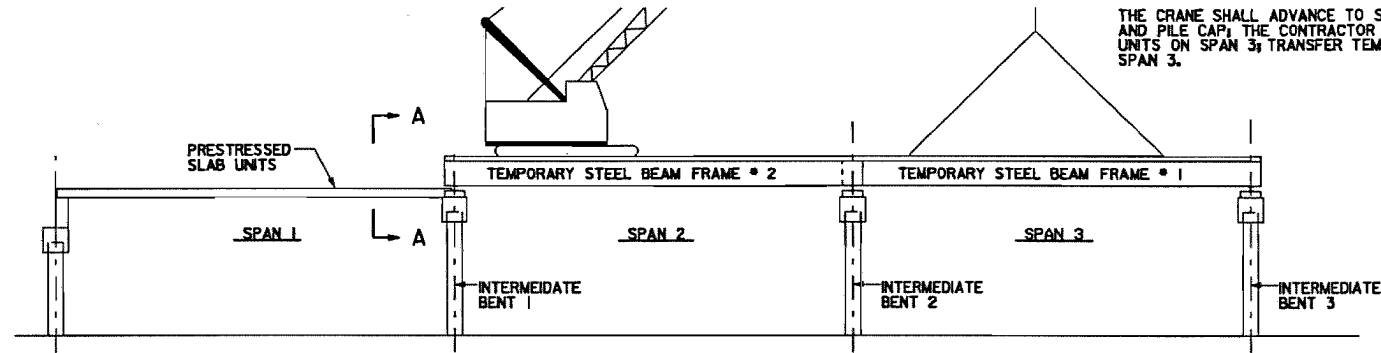


STAGE 2



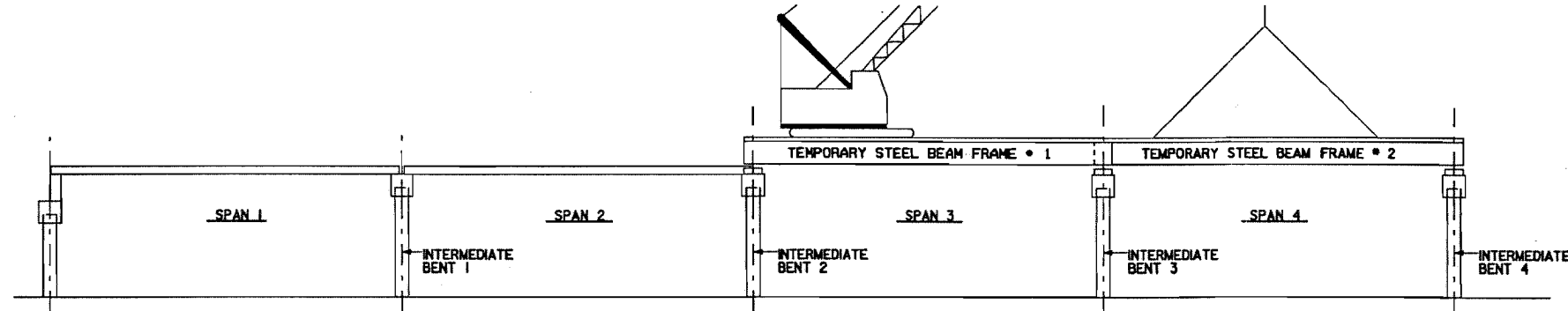
DETAIL A

THE CRANE SHALL ADVANCE TO SPAN 2; INSTALL INTERMEDIATE BENT 3 PILES AND PILE CAP; THE CONTRACTOR SHALL INSTALL FOUR PRESTRESSED SLAB UNITS ON SPAN 3; TRANSFER TEMPORARY STEEL BEAM FRAME FROM SPAN 1 TO SPAN 3.



STAGE 3

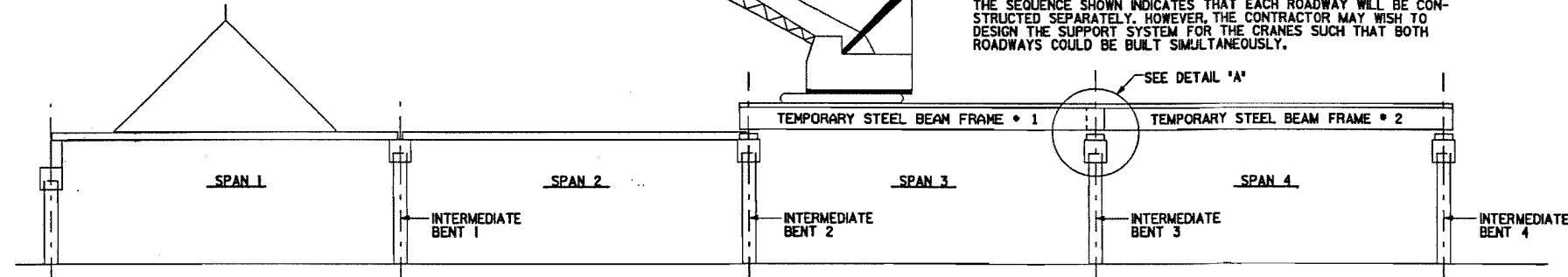
THE CRANE SHALL ADVANCE TO SPAN 3 AND THE STEPS OF THE PRECEDING STAGES REPEATED.



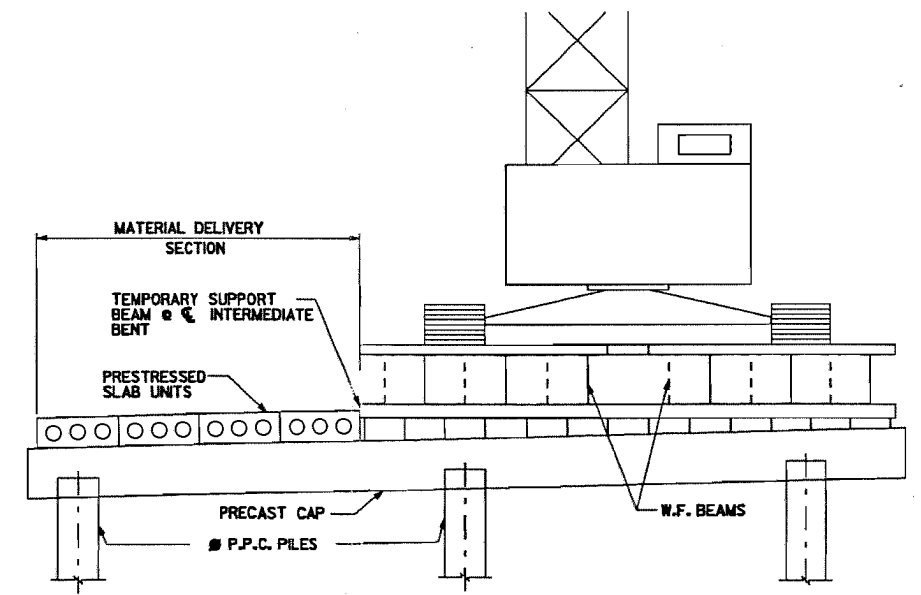
STAGE 4

AFTER ADVANCING THE TEMPORARY STEEL BEAM FRAME FROM SPAN 2 TO SPAN 4, THE REMAINING PRESTRESSED SLAB UNITS SHALL BE INSTALLED IN SPAN 1. THE FULL SPAN SHALL BE TRANSVERSELY POST-TENSIONED AND GROUTED IN PLACE.

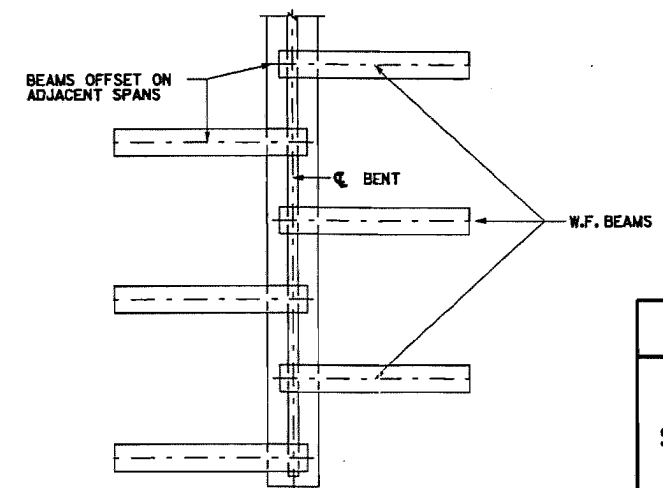
NOTE: THIS SEQUENCE IS TO BE REPEATED FOR THE REMAINING SPANS AFTER COMPLETING THE INSTALLATION OF ALL BENTS AND DECK UNITS, A CONCRETE OVERLAY SHALL BE PLACED ON THE DECK UNITS AND CONCRETE BARRIER INSTALLED. THE SEQUENCE SHOWN INDICATES THAT EACH ROADWAY WILL BE CONSTRUCTED SEPARATELY. HOWEVER, THE CONTRACTOR MAY WISH TO DESIGN THE SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR THE CRANES SUCH THAT BOTH ROADWAYS COULD BE BUILT SIMULTANEOUSLY.



STAGE 5



SECTION A-A



PLAN  
CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCE

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
Exhibit 2-10  
**SEQUENCE OF CONSTRUCTION**

Baker

NOT TO SCALE



The resource agencies agreed that all of the construction techniques could be used provided temporary construction impacts were minimized and appropriate mitigation was provided. It was also noted that haul roads were an acceptable construction technique because the materials used for the haul roads could be used, at the conclusion of construction, to create additional marsh habitat. The resource agencies indicated that dredging would be the least desirable construction method due to residual resource impacts. DOTD noted that the temporary bridge would be the most costly. Construction and construction impacts are further discussed in Section 4.

Barges would also be used in existing navigable channels for construction and for delivery of materials. New canals through the marsh vegetation would not be created. Dredging would be limited to those locations where the ramps and connector roads transition from being on structure to being on fill at their connections with LA 3235, LA 1 or LA 3090.

### ***Emergency Access***

Crossover structures would be located between the parallel bridge spans to provide emergency access, including sufficient radii to accommodate turning movements for large trucks. Such crossovers would support access to emergency vehicles in response to hazardous materials incidents.

Two crossovers would be provided, one between Golden Meadow and Leeville and the other between Leeville and Pointe Fourchon. The location of the crossovers will be determined during final design.

### ***Recreational Enhancements***

A pullover site will be incorporated into the proposed action near the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge for bird watching or other scenic viewing activities. The location and design features will be determined during final design.

### ***Highway Drainage and Runoff Containment***

The elevated roadway and bridge scuppers will be sized and spaced to efficiently drain water from the roadway. The scupper discharge pipes will include additional length so as not to preclude the attachment of a highway runoff collection system, should future research indicate the need for such a system. Current research does not support the need for a highway runoff collection system at this time (see Section 4).

### **2.5.2 Public, Local Officials, and Agency Involvement**

Public alignment preference and particular issues of concern were obtained through a public meeting held on May 23, 2000 in Larose, Louisiana. The alignments were displayed on 1999 aerial photography that enabled the public to more easily identify individual properties, landforms, and canals. In addition, a preliminary alignment



impacts matrix was displayed to provide the public with specific environmental and engineering information to compare each alignment. Comment forms were distributed that requested alignment preferences as well as additional environmental information that could be considered during alignment revisions.

Approximately 50 people attended the public meeting. The majority of comment forms and letters received identified selecting the shortest route and maintaining access to canals as the main areas of concern. Of the 6 written comments received, 5 favored the Line A alignment. Many individuals cited the shortest route as the basis for their decision.

A meeting was held with three representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) on May 10, 2000 to discuss the preliminary alignments, the resulting wetland impacts and subsequent field delineation methodology.

An agency coordination meeting held May 22, 2000 focused primarily on reviewing the preliminary alignments and their effect on the various environmental resources. It was agreed to eliminate a partial directional interchange on Line B at Leeville because other full interchanges nearby would adequately service Leeville. It was also noted that the preliminary alignment's "zone of impact" be revised to be more consistent with the end on construction methodology proposed. No

possible alignment adjustments to further minimize impacts were identified.

### 2.5.3 Alignment Revisions

Based on the comments received from the public, local officials, and the resource agencies, one alignment revision was identified:

- elimination of a partial directional interchange on Line B at Leeville due to the proximity of a nearby interchange that would service the travelling public

An additional alignment revision relocated the Line A and Line C interchanges and connector roads north and south of Leeville as close as feasible to the Bayou Lafourche bridge crossing in order to minimize the first stage construction and right-of-way costs. The periodic and unscheduled interruptions due to bayou traffic and bridge maintenance or repair make the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge the critical link in the area's transportation system because at these times the highway ceases to function. Its elimination and completion of the first construction stage, which includes construction of a new bridge crossing at Bayou Lafourche, is important to the area's transportation system.

No other alignment adjustments to improve service or constructability or to further minimize impacts to sensitive environmental areas were identified. These alignment adjustments were subject to public, local officials, resource agency and Native

American tribe review during the public hearing and comment period on the Draft EIS.

#### **2.5.4 The Preferred Alignment Identified in the Draft EIS**

As a result of the comprehensive involvement by the public, local officials, and resource agencies, sufficient information and public opinion existed to identify Line A as the Preferred Alignment in the Draft EIS prepared for the LA 1 Improvements project.

An agency coordination meeting held on March 14, 2001 focused on the "work in progress" preliminary Draft EIS, the revised preliminary alignments and the identification of a Preferred Alignment. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requested that research be conducted to identify any published studies that may document the shading effects on the health of smooth cord grass (*Spartina alternifolia*), the dominant coastal wetland plant in the Study Area. The NMFS also requested that two simplified shading analyses be performed. This information was necessary in identifying a Preferred Alignment. This Shading Analysis is discussed in Section 4.

A conference call with federal cooperating agencies was held on July 2, 2001 to discuss the preliminary alignments, including the revisions to the Line A and Line C interchanges and connector roads at Leeville; the findings and conclusions of the requested shading analyses; and designation

of a Preferred Alignment. Agencies participating included the COE, the NMFS, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA identified Line A as their preferred route. The COE and NMFS concurred with this Preferred Alignment preference. Minutes of this conference call are provided in the Appendix.

The Preferred Alignment would have the least involvement with wetlands and prehistoric archaeological high probability areas and would not have the greatest impact in any resource category.

The Preferred Alignment recommendation satisfies, to the fullest extent possible, the objectives of the merged NEPA/Section 404 process that had been adopted for this study. The project approach allowed a thorough consideration of all alternatives developed with respect to potential impacts to waters of the United States, including wetlands and functioned as the Alternatives Analysis. Wetland impacts were minimized. The Preferred Alignment would have the least amount of direct wetland impacts.

#### **2.5.5 Environmental Documentation and Public Hearing**

A public hearing was held in December 2001 to obtain input on the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS was also distributed to state and federal agencies, Native American tribes, and other organizations for review and comment (see Section 6). Comments

received on the Draft EIS are discussed in Section 7.

The Selected Alignment is presented in Exhibit 2-5 and is compared to the alignments presented in the Draft EIS with respect to potential impacts and estimated construction costs in Table S-1. The Selected Alignment is identical to the Preferred Alignment identified in the Draft EIS.

The Selected Alignment would have the least involvement with wetlands and prehistoric archaeological high probability areas and would not have the greatest impact in any resource category.

The Selected Alignment recommendation satisfies, to the fullest extent possible, the objectives of the merged NEPA/Section 404 process that has been

adopted for this study. The project approach allowed a thorough consideration of all alternatives developed with respect to potential impacts to waters of the United States, including wetlands, and functioned as the Alternatives Analysis. Wetland impacts were minimized. The Selected Alignment would have the least amount of direct wetland impacts.

The Selected Alignment will be subject to public, local official, state and federal resource agency, and Native American tribal review during the comment period for the Final EIS. Any comments received will be evaluated and addressed in the Record of Decision.

## Section 3: AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

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This section provides a general description of the social, economic, and physical environments in the LA 1 Improvements Study Area. Specific impact assessments and potential mitigation measures are presented in Section 4: Environmental Consequences.

### 3.1 SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

The Study Area is located in the coastal marshes of south Louisiana's Lafourche Parish. The Study Area parallels Bayou Lafourche and includes the communities of Pointe Fourchon, Leeville, and Golden Meadow. This portion of Louisiana is characterized by extensive coastal marshes with residential and commercial development primarily limited to communities and scattered development adjacent to Louisiana State highways LA 1, LA 3090, and LA 3235. Community populations range from a few permanent residents in Pointe Fourchon and Leeville to approximately 2,200 persons in Golden Meadow.

Community information was obtained for Larose, Cut Off, Galliano, and Grand Isle, in addition to the Study Area communities of Golden Meadow, Leeville, and Pointe Fourchon. The communities outside of the Study Area are included in these discussions to better characterize the affected social environment of this region.

#### 3.1.1 Demographics

Population data and growth rates for area communities are presented in Table 3-1. Between 1990 and 2000, population levels of area communities experienced positive changes, with Galliano and Larose populations increasing substantially.

Minority populations comprise a very small portion of the Study Area population and are much lower than those observed in the parish and statewide (see Table 3-2). However, the percentage of Native American populations in most area communities is higher than those observed in Lafourche Parish and statewide. During the late prehistoric and early historic period, the Federally recognized Chitimacha Tribe lived in the Bayou Lafourche region. In 1706, the French forced them to relocate to the west, generally to the Charenton, Louisiana area along Bayou Teche, where much of the tribe continues to reside. Currently, the Native American population is mainly comprised of individuals of United Houma Nation descent, not a Federally recognized tribe. These Native Americans originally migrated to the area from Mississippi and Alabama, settling near Baton Rouge and moving southward via Bayou Lafourche to escape conflicts with other tribes and the encroachment of white settlers.

**Table 3-1  
POPULATION DATA**

State, Parish or Community	Total Population		
	1990	2000	1990-2000 Change
Louisiana	4,219,973	4,468,976	6%
Lafourche Parish	85,860	89,974	5%
Grand Isle	1,455	1,541	6%
Golden Meadow	2,049	2,193	7%
Galliano	4,294	7,356	71%
Cut Off	5,325	5,635	6%
Larose	5,772	7,306	27%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – 1990 & 2000, Summary of General Characteristics - Population of Places – Estimates of the Population of Louisiana Parishes and Municipalities, Louisiana Census Bureau.

**Table 3-2  
2000 RACIAL CHARACTERISTICS**

State, Parish or Community	Total Pop.	White		Black		Nat. American		Other	
		Pop.	%	Pop.	%	Pop.	%	Pop.	%
Louisiana	4,468,976	2,856,161	64	1,451,944	32	25,477	<1	135,394	3
Lafourche Parish	89,974	74,544	83	11,349	13	2,066	2	2,015	2
Grand Isle	1,541	1,480	96	3	<1	35	2	23	1
Golden Meadow	2,193	2,029	92	11	<1	106	5	47	2
Galliano	7,356	6,792	92	51	<1	330	4	183	3
Cut Off	5,635	5,151	91	63	1	213	4	208	4
Larose	7,306	6,252	85	413	6	282	4	359	5

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce – Bureau of the Census – 2000, Summary of General Characteristics – Population of Places.

The majority of the Houma population resides in nearby Terrebonne Parish, but many settled in Lafourche Parish because of its isolated geographic location, fertile land, and abundance of fish and wildlife.

### 3.1.2 Community Characteristics

Communities within the Study Area include Golden Meadow, Leeville, and Pointe Fourchon. Golden Meadow is located in the northern portion of the Study Area and is the largest and most well defined of these communities. Golden Meadow lies primarily west of and adjacent to Bayou Lafourche and LA 1 with businesses, schools, churches and residential development located along a narrow network of municipal streets (see Exhibit 3-1). The primary businesses in this community are dedicated to oil and gas service, marine services, and the seafood industry.

Leeville and Pointe Fourchon lie at the center and southern portions of the Study Area, respectively. These communities exist as small clusters of residences and oil, marine, and seafood businesses located along LA 1. No community services or facilities exist in these areas.

The closest major medical facility for area residents is located north of the Study Area at the Lady of the Sea General Hospital in Cut Off. This facility provides emergency as well as routine and specialized care. Smaller physician and dental care offices are located in Golden Meadow,

Galliano, and Grand Isle. Nursing home facilities are found in Cut Off and Larose.

Primary and secondary schools are located in Golden Meadow, with the area high school located to the north in Galliano. No post-secondary education facilities exist within the Study Area. The Louisiana Technical College in Houma and Nicholls State University in Thibodaux provide the closest post-secondary educational opportunities.

The percentage of persons without a high school degree in Lafourche Parish exceeds the statewide average by 9 percent (see Table 3-3). Within the Study Area in the community of Golden Meadow, this percentage exceeds the statewide average by 21 percent. Lafourche Parish and Golden Meadow were also well below the statewide averages for post-secondary education categories.

Study Area law enforcement is primarily provided by the Cut Off annex of the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's department. A local police department provides law enforcement in Golden Meadow.

Fire protection in the Study Area is provided by municipal fire stations in Grand Isle and Galliano. Other communities within the Study Area are protected through the efforts of volunteer departments in Golden Meadow, Larose, and Cut Off.

General housing characteristics for the Study Area are presented in Table 3-4.

**Table 3-3**  
**2000 STUDY AREA EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**  
**PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER**

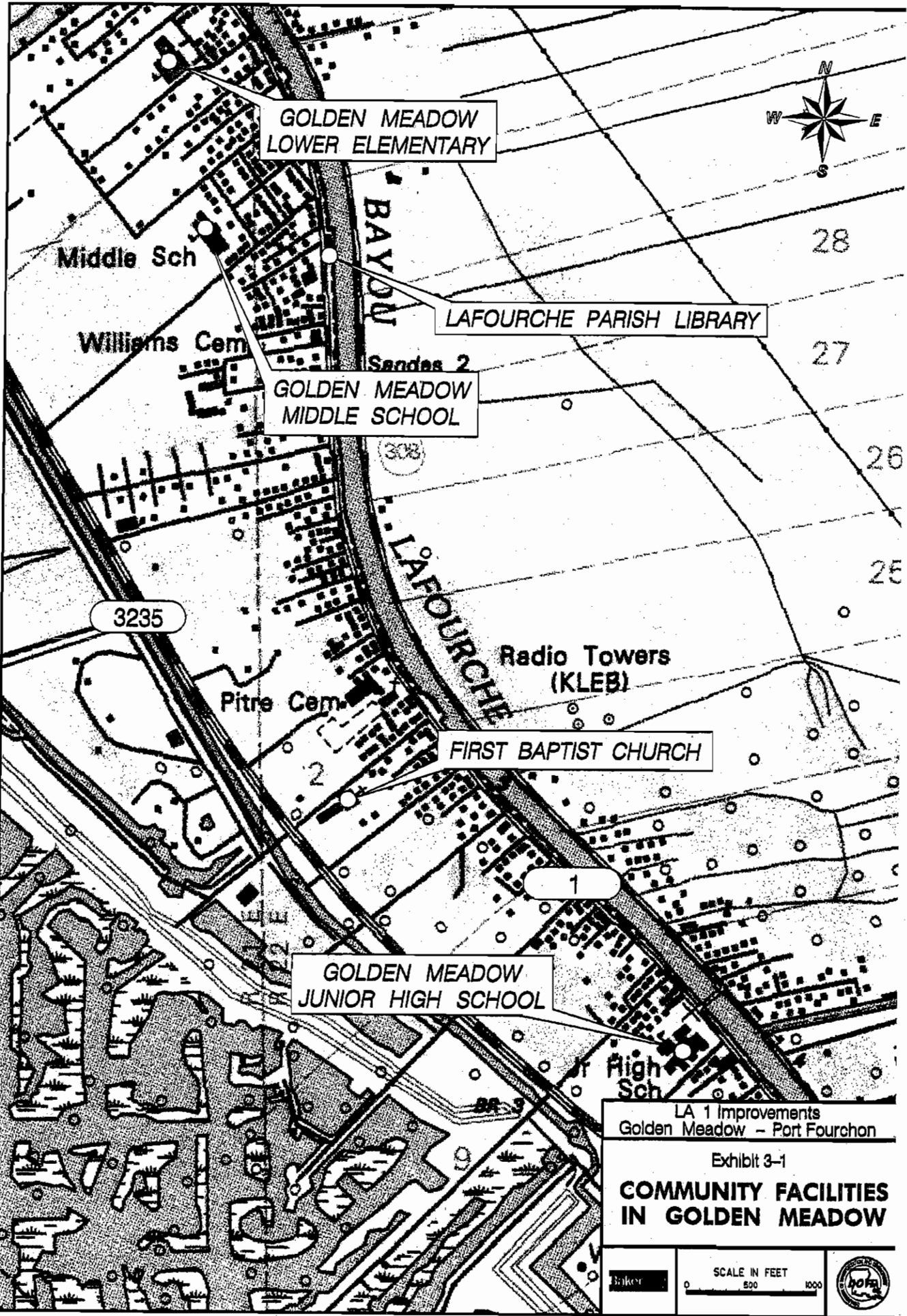
State, Parish or Community	Non-High School Graduate		High School Graduate (includes equivalency)		Some College/ Associate Degree		Bachelors Degree or Higher	
	Pop.	%	Pop.	%	Pop.	%	Pop.	%
Louisiana	699,052	25	899,354	32	657,284	24	519,778	19
Lafourche Parish	18,818	34	21,236	38	8,929	16	6,908	12
Grand Isle	333	32	400	38	177	17	139	13
Golden Meadow	624	46	446	33	184	13	110	8
Galliano	1,813	39	1,925	41	652	14	300	6
Cut Off	1,100	31	1,566	44	579	16	331	9
Larose	1,828	39	1,790	38	632	14	399	9

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of the Census - 2000, Summary of General Characteristics - Population of Places - Estimates of the Population of Louisiana Parishes and Municipalities, Louisiana Census Bureau.

**Table 3-4**  
**2000 STUDY AREA HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

State, Parish or Community	Total Housing Units	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied		Vacant		Median Value Owner Occupied Unit
		Units	%	Units	%	Units	%	
Louisiana	1,847,181	1,125,135	61	530,918	29	191,128	10	\$85,000
Lafourche Parish	35,045	24,998	71	7,059	20	2,988	9	\$78,900
Grand Isle	1,875	498	27	124	7	1,253	66	\$69,500
Golden Meadow	934	637	68	184	20	113	12	\$57,600
Galliano	2,753	2,182	79	417	15	154	6	\$71,000
Cut Off	2,136	1,732	81	301	14	103	5	\$79,500
Larose	2,643	2,166	82	313	12	164	6	\$82,200

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of the Census - 2000, Summary of General Characteristics - Population of Places.





Grand Isle had the lowest percentage of owner-occupied housing units and the highest percentage of vacant housing units. Larose had the highest percentage of owner-occupied housing units, and one of the lowest percentages of vacant housing units. Golden Meadow had owner-occupied housing and vacant housing percentages on the same level with the state and parish housing percentages. Community median value for owner-occupied housing units ranged from \$57,600 in Golden Meadow to \$82,200 in Larose. All Study Area median home values were below the statewide value.

### 3.1.3 Recreational Resources

Tourism is abundant in the Study Area. The Barataria-Terrebonne Estuarine System is widely known for its hunting and fishing. Port Fourchon and Grand Isle attract tourists on an annual basis. Both areas are considered to be located in one of the top ten fishing spots in the world.

The seasonal community of Grand Isle is located north of the Caminada Bay Bridge along LA 1 lying east of the Study Area in Jefferson Parish. This area includes the 140 acre Grand Isle State Park located at the northeastern end and is Louisiana's only inhabited barrier island. Grand Isle is known for its beach resort and fishing village. The primary businesses for year-round residents are tourism and recreation, the seafood industry, and oilfield related professions.

## 3.2 ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

Historically and presently, commercial fishing and the oil and gas industry have both formed the economic base within the Study Area. Shrimping and oystering have been the most reliable sources of revenue. However, the Study Area has been more closely linked to the fluctuations of the oil and gas industry. Business enterprises related to ship and boat building and repair are concentrated along Bayou Lafourche.

Some of the area's largest employers are listed below:

- Grand Isle – Grand Isle Shipyard, Sureway Supermarket, Exxon Oil
- Port Fourchon – Noltly J Theriot, Inc., LOOP (Louisiana Offshore Oil Port), Inc., Bollinger Fourchon, LLC, Newpark Drilling
- Golden Meadow – L&M Botruc, Chevron U.S.A., Inc., Brian's Transportation Service, Inc., Petroleum Helicopters, Inc., State Bank and Trust, Inc., Belle Pass Towing Corporation, Bayou Resorts, LLC
- Galliano – Edison-Chouest Offshore
- Larose – Lafourche Telephone Company
- Cut-Off – Lady of the Sea General Hospital

**3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE**

Executive Order (EO) 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations" (February 1994), was issued to promote nondiscrimination in federal programs substantially affecting human health and the environment, to ensure that there will be no disproportionately high and adverse impacts to low-income and minority populations, and to provide low-income and minority communities access to public information, and the opportunity for public participation in proposed federal actions. The United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) final Order on Environmental Justice (April 1997) was used to comply with EO 12898. In addition, the 1997 Environmental Protection Agency's,

"Interim Final Guidance for Incorporating Environmental Justice Concerns in EPA's NEPA Compliance Analyses" and the Council on Environmental Quality's, "Environmental Justice Guidance Under the National Environmental Policy Act" (1997) provided additional direction in addressing these issues.

**3.3.1 Identification of Minority and Low-income Populations**

Information obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau was examined to determine the presence of minority or low-income populations within the Study Area. Five communities were examined to better characterize minority and low-income populations that may be affected by the proposed study (see Table 3-5).

**Table 3-5  
MINORITY, LOW-INCOME AND ELDERLY POPULATIONS**

State, Parish or Community	Total Pop.	Nat. American		Non-Black/ Other		% 65 and Older	Median Household Income	% in Poverty (Persons)
		Pop.	%	Pop.	%			
Louisiana	4,468,976	25,477	<1	135,394	3	12	\$32,566	20
Lafourche Parish	89,974	2,066	2	2,015	2	11	\$34,910	17
Grand Isle	1,541	35	2	23	1	13	\$33,548	13
Golden Meadow	2,193	106	5	47	2	16	\$28,690	19
Galliano	7,356	330	4	183	3	12	\$31,419	16
Cut Off	5,635	213	4	208	4	11	\$38,077	8
Larose	7,306	282	4	359	5	13	\$38,141	16

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce - Bureau of the Census - 2000, Summary of General Characteristics - Population of Places.

Communities with the highest minority populations were found to the north of the Study Area in the communities of Larose, Cut Off, and Galliano. Each of these communities exceeded the parish levels of Native Americans by a magnitude of two. Cut Off and Larose exceeded the parish and statewide percentages for non-Native American populations. Of these three communities, Golden Meadow had the greatest percentage of elderly populations and the highest percentage of poverty.

In the community of Golden Meadow, Native American populations were greater than the state and parish levels while populations were equal to the state and parish percentages for non-Native American minority groups. Golden Meadow exceeded the state and parish percentages of individuals over 65 years of age and below the state and parish percentages for median household income. Poverty levels were similar to that of the state and parish percentages.

Grand Isle had the lowest minority populations near the Study Area. The percentage of elderly populations was comparable to most communities in the Study Area and higher than the parish and state level.

### **3.4 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES**

The Study Area was reviewed for pedestrian walkway facilities, designated bikeways, scenic trails and proposed trails to identify any areas

where these facilities may be impacted by the project. Because the majority of the Study Area is covered with marshland and a narrow state highway, most of the bicycle and pedestrian activity is limited to the communities of Golden Meadow and Leeville. No exclusive bikeways or hiking trails exist or are planned within the Study Area.

### **3.5 LAND USE**

Land uses within the Study Area include a mixture of residential, commercial, and recreational development. Residential and commercial developments are associated with the communities along Bayou Lafourche to the north and within the Study Area. Formal land use planning has not been developed for this portion of Lafourche Parish nor are there any future land use plans available.

#### **3.5.1 Residential Land**

Dense residential areas are confined to the communities of Larose, Cut Off, Galliano, Golden Meadow and Grand Isle. Residential land use consists primarily of single family houses of brick or frame construction or elevated structures used for temporary housing. The remainder of the Study Area south of Golden Meadow consists of scattered residences both permanent and seasonal in nature along LA 1.

#### **3.5.2 Commercial / Industry Land**

Commercial land is located along LA 1 from Golden Meadow southward to Grand Isle. Dominant business enterprises support the

seafood and fisheries production, the ship building industry, and oil and gas production. Additionally, Port Fourchon, located at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche, is the dominant center for commercial industry south of the Study Area. It is a major service point for the offshore oil and gas industry and provides a land base for intermodal transfer of goods. Port Fourchon is Louisiana's only port on the Gulf of Mexico.

### 3.5.3 Recreational Land

The Study Area is located within the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary System. This area consists of saline marshland where hunting and fishing are the dominant forms of recreation in addition to bird watching. Additionally, sport fishing is a highly popular activity in the Port Fourchon and Grand Isle areas.

Two Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) are located near the Study Area. The Pointe-au-Chien WMA consists of 28,000 acres of marshland west of Galliano. The Wisner WMA contains 26,000 acres of saline marsh between Leeville and Grand Isle. This area is well known for its excellent rabbit, dove, and duck hunting.

### 3.6 FARMLANDS

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA 1981) to insure that Federal programs minimize unnecessary and irreversible conversion of farmland to nonagricultural uses. Farmland, as

defined by the FPPA, includes Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Land of Statewide or Local Importance.

The NRCS defines Prime Farmland as soils that have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics to economically produce high yields of agricultural crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming practices. Current land uses of areas having Farmland soils include cropland, pasture, and woodland. Urban or built-up land and water areas are not considered Prime Farmland. There are no soils classified by NRCS as Unique, Statewide Important or Local Important within Lafourche Parish.

The location of Farmland soil types was obtained from the published Soil Survey of Lafourche Parish, Louisiana (USDA 1984). This information was entered into the project Geographic Information System (GIS).

### 3.7 FLOODPLAINS

Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management; 23 CFR Part 650, Location and Hydraulic Design of Encroachments on Floodplains; and U.S. DOT 5650.2, Floodplain Management and Protection require the protection of floodplains and floodways. These regulations were designed to minimize highway encroachments within the 100-year floodplain and

to avoid land use development inconsistent with floodplain values.

To identify the limits of the 100-year floodplain, Flood Insurance Rate Maps were obtained for the Study Area and entered into the project GIS. The entire Study Area is within the 100-year floodplain (Zones A or V) associated with coastal flooding from the Gulf of Mexico. The entire Study Area is subject to coastal flooding caused by hurricanes and southeasters that can raise water levels substantially.

### **3.8 WATER QUALITY**

#### **3.8.1 Surface Water Resources**

The Study Area lies within the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuarine System and encompasses an area of approximately 6,300 square miles in the Mississippi Deltaic Plain and is bordered by the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers. Bayou Lafourche is the primary waterway within the Study Area. Larger bodies of surface water near the Study Area include Cattfish Lake, Little Lake, Timbalier Bay, Terrebonne Bay, and Barataria Bay. Several canals are interspersed throughout the estuary for navigation use. The Gulf of Mexico lies to the south of the Study Area. All lakes, bayous, and canals are tidally influenced.

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's (LADEQ) *Water Quality Management Plan* (WQMP 2000) was used to broadly assess existing surface water quality within the Study

Area. The Study Area lies within one subsegment of the Barataria Water Quality Management Basin (BWQMB) that extends along Bayou Lafourche from slightly north of Golden Meadow to the Gulf of Mexico.

#### ***Bayou Lafourche***

The headwaters of Bayou Lafourche begin at the Mississippi River northeast of Thibodaux, Louisiana and flow southeastward through the communities Larose, Cut Off, Galliano, Golden Meadow, Leeville, and into the Gulf of Mexico. Bayou Lafourche flows through the center of the Study Area paralleling LA 1 until reaching about 2 miles south of the community of Leeville.

The Louisiana Water Quality Standards define eight designated uses for surface water that include primary contact recreation, secondary contact recreation, fish and wildlife propagation, drinking water supply, shellfish propagation, agriculture, outstanding natural resource, and limited aquatic and wildlife use. Each water body is provided a numerical rank for each of the eight designated uses and then evaluated as fully supported, partially supported, not supporting, or threatened based on criteria provided in the WQMP. Support for each designated use was defined by its most severely impaired parameter when more than one parameter defines a designated use.

State water use designations for this segment of Bayou Lafourche fully support primary and secondary contact recreation. Shellfishing and areas suitable for the propagation of fish and wildlife are only partially supported. The overall degree of use support for Bayou Lafourche is considered as threatened.

Suspected causes of water quality impairment in this segment of Bayou Lafourche may include the presence of mercury, metals, and pathogens. Suspected sources of impairment may include municipal point sources, agriculture, pasture grazing, and natural sources.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) administers the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System. Information obtained from the LDWF indicated that no state listed Natural or Scenic Rivers occur within or near the Study Area. Furthermore, information obtained from the National Park Service indicate that no rivers designated as Wild and Scenic or rivers on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory occur within or near the Study Area.

### **3.8.2 Public Water Supplies**

Several federal laws help to protect groundwater quality. Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) of 1974 and amendments passed in 1986, included the establishment of the Wellhead Protection Program and the Sole Source Aquifer Demonstration Program. To fulfill

requirements of the SDWA as directed by the Environmental Protection Agency, the LADEQ Aquifer Evaluation and Protection Section provides protection of public water supply systems.

The LADEQ was contacted to identify the location of any Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPA) within the Study Area. No wellhead protection areas exist in the Study Area.

The Environmental Protection Agency was contacted to identify the location of principle or sole source aquifers (SSA) within the Study Area. A SSA is an aquifer that is needed to supply 50% or more of the drinking water for a given area and for which there are no reasonably available alternative sources should the aquifer become contaminated. No sole source aquifers are located within the Study Area.

Two surface water sources are used as public water supplies for area residents and businesses. The communities of Galliano, Golden Meadow, Leeville, and Port Fourchon obtain their water supply from the Lafourche Parish Water District Number One in Lockport, Louisiana. Water is pumped from Bayou Lafourche approximately 25 miles north of the Study Area.

The community of Grand Isle receives its water supply from the Jefferson Parish Water Department in Marrero, Louisiana. Water is obtained from the Mississippi River

approximately 50 miles north of Grand Isle and pumped to Lafitte, Louisiana. A recently constructed waterline crosses Barataria Bay from Lafitte to provide water to Grand Isle. Excess water received from the new waterline is sold to Port Fourchon.

### 3.9 WETLANDS

Louisiana accounts for up to 40% of the coastal salt marshes in the 48 contiguous United States and 80% of the nation's coastal wetlands loss. Marsh loss in Louisiana is of particular concern because the marshes are the most extensive in the nation and are believed to be largely responsible for the high productivity of estuarine-dependent species in the north-central Gulf of Mexico. Louisiana is losing wetlands at a rate of 25 – 35 square miles per year. The losses are due to a combination of human and natural factors, including subsidence, shoreline erosion, freshwater and sediment deprivation, saltwater intrusion, oil and gas canals, navigation channels and herbivory (LADNR 2001, GOMFMC 1998).

The Barataria and Terrebonne Basins are estimated to have lost between 24% and 35% of the wetlands that were observed during inventories conducted in 1932. Half of this loss was of brackish and saline marsh, and approximately one-third was fresh marsh. This loss was attributed primarily to high subsidence rates, as well as altered hydrology (i.e. navigation channels), nutria

herbivory, and wind-induced shoreline erosion. It is estimated that by the year 2050 between 17% and 19% of the total current marsh habitat within the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins will be lost, and as much as 32% of the saline marsh will be lost to open water habitat (LADNR 1998).

The loss of wetlands could have both economic and ecological impacts. Open water is far less productive than marsh habitat and this change could affect a fisheries resource that is estimated by the National Marine Fisheries Service to comprise approximately 20% of the nation's total fisheries harvest (LADNR 1998). Wildlife populations, such as waterfowl, could also be impacted by a reduction in coastal marsh, which is a critical habitat for approximately 70% of the waterfowl utilizing the Mississippi and Central flyways. Loss of vegetated wetlands could also increase storm surge damage due to a reduction of natural flood barriers.

Wetlands are defined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) as, "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstance do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" (40 CFR 230.3 and 33 CFR 328.3). Executive Order 11990 (EO 11990, May 1977) was enacted to stem the

loss of the Nation's wetlands. EO 11990 established a national policy to "avoid to the extent possible the long term and short term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands and to avoid direct or indirect support of new construction in wetlands wherever there is a practicable alternative." Wetland impacts are discussed in detail in Section 4.

### 3.9.1 Wetland Communities

Land along LA 1 south of Golden Meadow is characterized by wetlands typical of intertidal and subtidal estuarine habitats. Scrub-shrub and marsh habitats dominate the Study Area, with the exception of developed land along LA 1 in the communities of Golden Meadow and Leeville and at the Pointe Fourchon development. Scrub-shrub habitat exists on spoil banks created by the dredging of canals for both navigation and oil and gas exploration. Marshes present in the Study Area are primarily saline, gradually becoming more brackish to the north. Salinities in the Study Area can range from 4.8 parts per thousand (ppt) in the vicinity of Golden Meadow, to 17.5 ppt around Port Fourchon (BTNEP #20). These salinity levels influence plant species distribution and abundance within the Study Area. A survey of Louisiana coastal marshes found that diversity of plant species decreased as water salinity increased (Chabreck 1988).

Marsh vegetation in the Study Area is comprised of smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*), black needlerush (*Juncus roemerianus*) and salt grass (*Distichlis spicata*). In the far northern reaches of the Study Area near Golden Meadow, brackish marsh vegetation, marshhay cordgrass (*Spartina patens*) and three square (*Scirpus olney*), may also be present. Spoil banks in the vicinity of LA 1 commonly support species such as groundsel bush (*Baccharis angustifolia*), glasswort (*Salicornia* spp.), and saltwort (*Batis maritima*) in addition to marsh grasses.

### 3.10 FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMUNITIES

Over 700 species of birds, finfish, shellfish, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals spend all or part of their life cycle in the Barataria-Terrebonne estuary. The diversity and abundance of individual species is influenced by prevailing environmental conditions such as salinity regimes, water depth and tidal fluctuation, and vegetational communities (Chabreck 1988).

#### 3.10.1 Avian Community

The Study Area lies within the Mississippi Flyway, a major migratory route for hundreds of bird species. Fall migrants and spring returning migrants are often as common as the approximately 100 permanent resident species during these seasons. Of the wildlife present in the Barataria-Terrebonne basin, birds are the most



visible, with bird watching and hunting popular recreational activities.

Many wading birds, seabirds, and birds of prey are common coastal area residents. A substantial number of passerines and waterfowl are seasonal inhabitants. Common waders inhabiting the Study Area include great and snowy egrets (*Ardea alba* and *Egretta thula*), great blue herons (*Ardea herodias*), green herons (*Butorides virescens*), tricolored herons (*Egretta tricolor*), black and yellow-crowned night herons (*Nycticorax nycticorax* and *Nyctanassa violacea*), ibis (*Eudocimus albus* and *Pelagidis* spp.), roseate spoonbill (*Ajaia ajaja*), and anhingas (*Anhinga anhinga*). Black skimmers (*Rhynchops niger*), terns (*Sterna* spp.), gulls (*Larus* spp.), and brown and white pelicans (*Pelecanus* spp.) are a few of the seabirds abundant in the Study Area. Birds of prey indigenous to the Study Area include barred owls (*Strix varia*), great horned owls (*Bubo virginianus*), black and turkey vultures (*Coragyps atratus* and *Cathartes aura*), and the red-shouldered hawk (*Buteo lineatus*). Northern harriers or marsh hawks (*Circus cyaneus*) are migrants present primarily in the winter months (BTNEP #30). Waterfowl are most commonly observed during the winter months. Pied-billed grebes (*Podilymbus podiceps*), double-crested cormorants (*Phalacrocorax auritus*), coots (*Fulica americana*), teal, and other ducks (mottled, mallards, gadwalls, and widgeons (*Anas* spp.) are primarily winter residents, arriving in the late

summer to early fall and staying through March. The highest diversity of waterfowl occurs during December as winter residents concentrate in the coastal marshes. Passerines are often observed in the scrub-shrub saline marsh habitats in the late winter to early spring. Swallows, warblers, vireos, flycatchers, jays, thrushes, wrens, nuthatches, and finches are included in this order of birds. Some shore birds are year-round residents, while others are winter visitors. Shore birds may be found on mud flats or on the beaches at Port Fourchon. Shore birds that may be observed in the Study Area include but are not limited to the clapper and king rails (*Rallus longirostris* and *R. elegans*), killdeer (*Charadrius vociferus*), black-necked stilt (*Himantopus mexicanus*), avocet (*Recurvirostra americana*), plovers (*Charadrius* spp.), and sandpipers (*Calidris* spp.).

### 3.10.2 Mammals

The Barataria-Terrebonne basin contains three major groupings of mammals including small mammals (mice, rats and shrews), furbearers (nutria, muskrat, mink, otter, opossum, bobcat, fox, and raccoon), and game animals (deer, squirrel, fox, and rabbits).

Furbearers are an important economic commodity in the Barataria-Terrebonne region. Nutria pelts account for the majority of state fur revenues. While nutria concentrations are generally higher in

freshwater marshes, they are present in the Study Area.

Small mammals are found throughout the Study Area and are more common along edges of two or more habitats. Levees and spoil banks provide the necessary habitat for the small mammals to build their nests and dens.

Five game animals are present in the Barataria-Terrebonne basin and include the gray and fox squirrel, the cottontail and swamp rabbit, and the white-tailed deer. These game animals are found primarily north of the Study Area. The swamp rabbit is the most likely species to be located in the Study Area.

Two marine mammals potentially occur within the Study Area. The Atlantic Bottle-nosed dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) occurs in the waters along the coast of Louisiana and has been observed in the larger backwater bays of the Gulf (Lowery 1974) including the Barataria-Terrebonne basin (BTNEP #21). The west Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) occurs along the coast and coastal rivers of the southeastern United States. Manatee have been sporadically observed in coastal rivers throughout Louisiana from the Mississippi west to the Lake Charles area, and could use the Bayou Lafourche waterway and surrounding coastal habitat (Lester 2001).

### 3.10.3 Reptiles and Amphibians

Coastal marshes provide essential habitat for many reptile and amphibian species. The number of species in Louisiana coastal marshes is directly dependent on water salinity, a major source of stress (Chabreck 1988). Fresh water marshes support the greatest number of reptile and amphibian species, while salt marshes support the fewest. No amphibians are found in Louisiana salt marshes (Gosselink et al 1979), while reptiles inhabiting salt marshes include the diamond-backed terrapin (*Malaclemys terrapin*), american alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*), and the salt marsh snake (*Nerodia clarkii*).

The highest concentration and diversity of species is found along the natural ridges in the northern portion of the basin, which is located north of the Study Area.

### 3.10.4 Aquatic Community

The description of the aquatic community for the Study Area was taken from the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program's "Status, Trends, and Probable Causes of Change in Living Resources in the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuarine System" (1995). This community contains aquatic invertebrates, estuarine finfish, and estuarine/marine finfish.

#### **Aquatic Invertebrates**

Common aquatic invertebrates include four shrimp species, the brown shrimp (*Penaeus aztecus*) and

white shrimp (*P. setiferus*), commercial mainstays of the Louisiana seafood industry, the pink shrimp (*P. duorarum*) and the seabob shrimp (*Xiphopenaeus kroyeri*). In addition to their commercial importance, shrimp are a significant food source for many estuarine finfish. Other important invertebrates include the blue crab (*Callinectes sapidus*), the eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*), the stone crab (*Menippe adina*), and the clam (*Rangia cuneata*). Estuary and marsh areas are important habitats for all aquatic invertebrate species and provide areas for spawning, post-larval and juvenile development, and migrations.

### **Oysters**

The oyster industry is the oldest state-managed coastal fishery in Louisiana. Based on information provided by the LDWF, there are seven oyster leases located in and around Bayou Lafourche immediately adjacent to the Study Area. Oyster populations are dependent upon several environmental variables which include, but are not limited to, water currents, bottom substrates, and tidal flushing (BTNEP #15).

Four habitats are present in the Study Area where subtidal oysters may be found. The four zones are the dry zone, the wet zone, the wet-dry zone, and the high-salinity zone. In the dry zone, oysters may be found when salinities increase in the upper regions. Oysters may be found in the wet zone

where salinities are suppressed in the mid- to lower region of the estuary. The wet-dry zone contains oysters consistently because of favorable salinities (BTNEP #15).

### **FinFish**

Common finfish that permanently inhabit the estuarine community include four species of killifish, the Gulf killifish (*Fundulus grandis*), the Longnose killifish (*F. similes*), the Bayou killifish (*F. pulvereus*), and the Saltmarsh killifish (*F. jenkinsi*). Killifish are confined to shallow shoreline habitats and frequent marsh edges.

Several species of estuarine/marine finfish are the most abundant in the Barataria-Terrebonne system and include the Atlantic croaker (*Micropogonias undulates*), Bay anchovy (*Anchoa mitchilli*), Black drum (*Pogonias cromis*), Gulf menhaden (*Brevoortia patronus*), Sand seatrout (*Cynoscion arenarius*), Spotted seatrout (*C. nebulosus*), Southern flounder (*Paralichthys lethostigma*), Spot (*Leiostomus xanthurus*), and Striped mullet (*Mugil cephalus*). Abundance of these species vary greatly from season to season due to their migratory life cycle. Many of these fishes spawn offshore in the open Gulf waters and the larva and juveniles then enter and use the estuary as a nursery where they develop to subadults and adults.

### 3.11 ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

The Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary supports one of the most prolific and profitable fisheries in the nation. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1996 (MSFCMA, the reauthorized Magnuson Act of 1976), was passed with the intent of protecting fishery habitat and resources. This Act established regional councils to work with the Secretary of Commerce to describe and identify Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for aquatic species defined in federal Fisheries Management Plans (FMPs). The Act also requires the regional councils to identify potential adverse impacts to EFH and suggest actions that can be taken to enhance and conserve EFH. EFH has a general definition and separate definitions as they apply to estuarine and marine environments.

Fisheries management within Louisiana is the responsibility of the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) Fisheries Management Council (FMC). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is responsible for regulating activities within EFH in Louisiana.

Managed species that utilize EFH in the Study Area include Spanish mackerel, and Red drum. The EFH for these species include emergent wetlands (estuarine), submerged aquatic

vegetation, mud substrate, and the estuarine water column.

White and brown shrimp utilize estuaries during the post-larval and juvenile life stages. They require shallow vegetated habitat and non-vegetated mud substrate. Brown shrimp yields in Louisiana can be directly correlated with the acreage of saline marsh habitat available for the juvenile shrimp (Turner 1977). Estuarine marsh is considered critical for the survival of these shrimp, as the estuarine growth phase is the weakest link in the life cycle of these shrimp.

Red drum (redfish) hatch out in the GOM, however the fish mature in estuaries prior to returning on a seasonal basis to the GOM. As red drum mature, they depend more on crabs than fish as their primary food source; therefore, estuary habitats are essential for the supply of prey for the red drum.

Other species managed under the MSFCMA depend on habitats present in the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary for prey. Prey species include white, brown and pink shrimp, crabs, mollusks, and juvenile fish.

### 3.12 PROTECTED SPECIES

Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) ensures that activities authorized by federal agencies consider potential impacts to threatened or endangered species and their critical habitat. In

order to comply with the ESA, consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is required.

Based on correspondence from the FWS and the Natural Heritage Division of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) there are no rare, threatened or endangered species in the Study Area. As previously discussed, the entire study lies within an EFH for economically

important fish species and should receive protection consideration.

### 3.13 AIR QUALITY

The Clean Air Act of 1970 directed the Environmental Protection Agency to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for six specific pollutants considered harmful to public health and the environment. The NAAQS for these pollutants is shown in Table 3-6.

Pollutant	Primary <sup>a</sup>	Secondary
CO	1-hour Average <sup>b</sup> 35 ppm (40 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	None
	8-hour Average <sup>b</sup> 9 ppm (10 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	None
NO <sub>2</sub>	Annual Arithmetic Mean 0.053 ppm (100 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same
O <sub>3</sub>	Maximum Daily 1-hour Average <sup>c</sup> 0.12 ppm (235 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same
	Maximum Daily 8-hour Average <sup>c</sup> 0.08 ppm	Same
Pb	Maximum Quarterly Average 1.5 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same
PM <sub>10</sub>	Annual Arithmetic Mean <sup>d</sup> 50 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same
	24-hour Average <sup>b</sup> 150 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same
PM <sub>2.5</sub>	Annual Arithmetic Mean <sup>d</sup> 15 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same
	24-hour Average <sup>b</sup> 65 ug/m <sup>3</sup>	Same
SO <sub>2</sub>	24-hour Average <sup>b</sup> 0.14 ppm (365 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same
	Annual Arithmetic Mean 0.03 ppm (80 ug/m <sup>3</sup> )	Same

Source: United States Environmental Protection Agency.

<sup>a</sup>Parentetical value is an approximately equivalent concentration.

<sup>b</sup>Not to be exceeded more than once per year.

<sup>c</sup>The standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with maximum hourly average concentrations above 0.12 ppm or maximum 8-hour concentrations above 0.08 does not exceed 1.

<sup>d</sup>The annual standard is attained when the expected annual arithmetic mean concentration is less than or equal to 50 ug/m<sup>3</sup> for PM<sub>10</sub> and 15 ug/m<sup>3</sup> for PM<sub>2.5</sub>.

ug/m<sup>3</sup> = micrograms per cubic meter of air ; ppm = parts per million.

The State of Louisiana adopted the standards set forth in the NAAQS.

Air monitoring is conducted for these pollutants at various locations throughout Louisiana. The project is in an area designated as being in attainment for Carbon Monoxide (CO), Particulate Matter (PM), and Nitrogen Oxides (NO<sub>2</sub>). Lafourche Parish was designated by the EPA as an Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) attainment area with limited maintenance plan requirements, effective February 25, 2002. Attainment areas are those areas identified by the EPA as being in compliance with the NAAQS. Correspondence is provided in the Appendix.

### 3.14 NOISE

Noise is often defined as unwanted sound. It is emitted from many sources including highway vehicles, airplanes, factories, railroad cars and power plants. Highway vehicle noise is composed of engine exhaust, drive train, tire-roadway interaction and vehicle aerodynamics.

Sound is a very subjective concept. Degrees of sound disturbance depend on several factors; the amount and nature of the intruding noise, the relationship between the background noise and intruding noise and the type of activity occurring where the noise is heard.

Time of day also enters into an individual's noise judgment. For example, a car horn is much more

annoying at 2 a.m. than at 2 p.m., even though the car horn has the same decibel level at both times. This is because nighttime background levels are typically lower than daytime levels. Consequently, the person notices the greater difference at night.

Activity interference can also occur depending on what the person is doing. For certain sound levels, normal conversation may be possible but sleep may be difficult. Work that involves a high degree of concentration may be affected by noise while manual labor may not be interrupted to the same degree by the same sound.

#### 3.14.1 Noise Sensitive Areas

Land use determines the sensitivity of an area to noise. The study identified potentially affected existing activities, developed lands, and undeveloped lands for which development is planned, designed, and programmed. Development will be deemed to be planned, designed, and programmed if a noise-sensitive land use, such as a residence, school, church, hospital, or library, has been issued a building permit from the local agency with proper jurisdiction at the time of the highway traffic noise analysis.

Residential areas are typically the most sensitive to noise. Land uses that are less sensitive to noise include open land, wooded areas, commercial properties, and agricultural areas. The Study Area is predominantly coastal/tidal marsh. The

remainder is composed of varying amounts of residential, commercial, and recreation uses.

### 3.14.2 Measured Noise Levels

The determination of existing noise levels were made utilizing field measurements of actual noise levels in accordance with the DOTD Highway Traffic Noise Policy. The DOTD policy is approved and sanctioned by the Federal Highway Administration. A log was kept noting the time of day, meteorological conditions, calibration results and any unusual ambient sound sources experienced during each measurement.

Five short-term ambient noise measurements, 15 minutes in length, were taken at peak times using a Metrosonics dB-312 sound level meter. This instrument is an ANSI Type 1 Sound Level Meter and was used in strict accordance with the manufacturer's operations manual. The meter was calibrated before and after each measurement.

The noise measurement locations are shown in Section 4: Environmental Consequences (see Exhibit 4-2) together with the computer modeled sites that they represent. These sites are also representative of exterior sound levels at their respective locations. The measured sound levels are also presented and discussed in Section 4: Environmental Consequences, for ease in comparison with the predicted future noise levels with and without the proposed highway. Simultaneous traffic counts were recorded for

nearby roadways, as applicable. Vehicle classification counts were also taken during the measurement periods.

### 3.15 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted for the Study Area to identify the location of potential hazardous materials sites in accordance with the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard E-1527. Federal databases at the Environmental Protection Agency and state databases at the LADEQ were reviewed to determine the location of any hazardous materials sites within the Study Area.

An EPA and state database search was also performed by Vista Solutions, Inc. to identify potential hazardous materials sites within the Study Area.

Several Federal databases were searched to identify hazardous waste facilities. The Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) was searched to determine the presence of abandoned or uncontrolled hazardous waste sites. These sites are more commonly known as Superfund sites, which includes facilities placed on the National Priorities List (NPL). There are no Superfund sites located within the Study Area.

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Information System (RCRIS) is a national management and inventory system of Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) hazardous waste handlers. RCRA, a comprehensive regulatory program, ensures proper management of hazardous waste from its generation to disposal. Handlers are characterized as falling into five categories that include transporters, small quantity generators, large quantity generators, or treatment, storage, and disposal facilities. The database search identified one registered RCRA generator of hazardous waste.

The Emergency Response and Notification System (ERNS) was searched to identify any facilities that have reported spills of oil or hazardous substances. The database search identified two ERNS sites within the Study Area.

State databases searched included the Louisiana Site Remediation Information System (LASRIS).

The LASRIS list is the state equivalent of the CERCLIS list and also maintains a database for registered underground storage tanks (USTs), and leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs). Field reconnaissance identified four UST sites in the Study Area. There are no LUST sites in the Study Area.

The Louisiana State Fire Marshal enforces the adopted codes, laws, and standards of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) regarding the storage, handling, and use of combustible and flammable liquids as found in above ground storage tanks (ASTs). Two AST sites were identified in the Study Area.

None of the federal or state databases searched located any potential hazardous materials sites along the alternative alignments. Potential hazardous materials sites within the Study Area are described in Table 3-7 and are shown on Exhibit 3-2.

**Table 3-7**  
**POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES WITHIN THE STUDY AREA**

Site Number	Site Name	General Location	Site Type
1	Texaco, Inc.	Golden Meadow	ERNS
2	Kajun Sportsman	Pointe Fourchon -LA 3090	AST
3	Texaco, Inc.	Leeville	UST
4	Exxon	Leeville	UST
5	Bobby Lynn's Texaco	Leeville	UST
6	Loop, Inc.	Pointe Fourchon	RCRIS, AST
7	Chevron, USA	Leeville	ERNS, RCRA
8	Griffins Marina	Leeville	UST

Source: Vista Solutions, Inc.



### 3.16 COASTAL BARRIERS

The Coastal Barriers Resources Act (CBRA 1982) prohibits the expenditure of Federal funds for new and expanded facilities within designated coastal barrier units. Exceptions for certain facilities necessary for the exploration, extraction and transportation of energy resources and for maintenance, replacement, reconstruction or repair of publicly owned or publicly operated roads, structures, or facilities that are essential links in a larger system or network require consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).

Coastal Barrier Resources System maps for Lafourche Parish were obtained and entered in the project GIS.

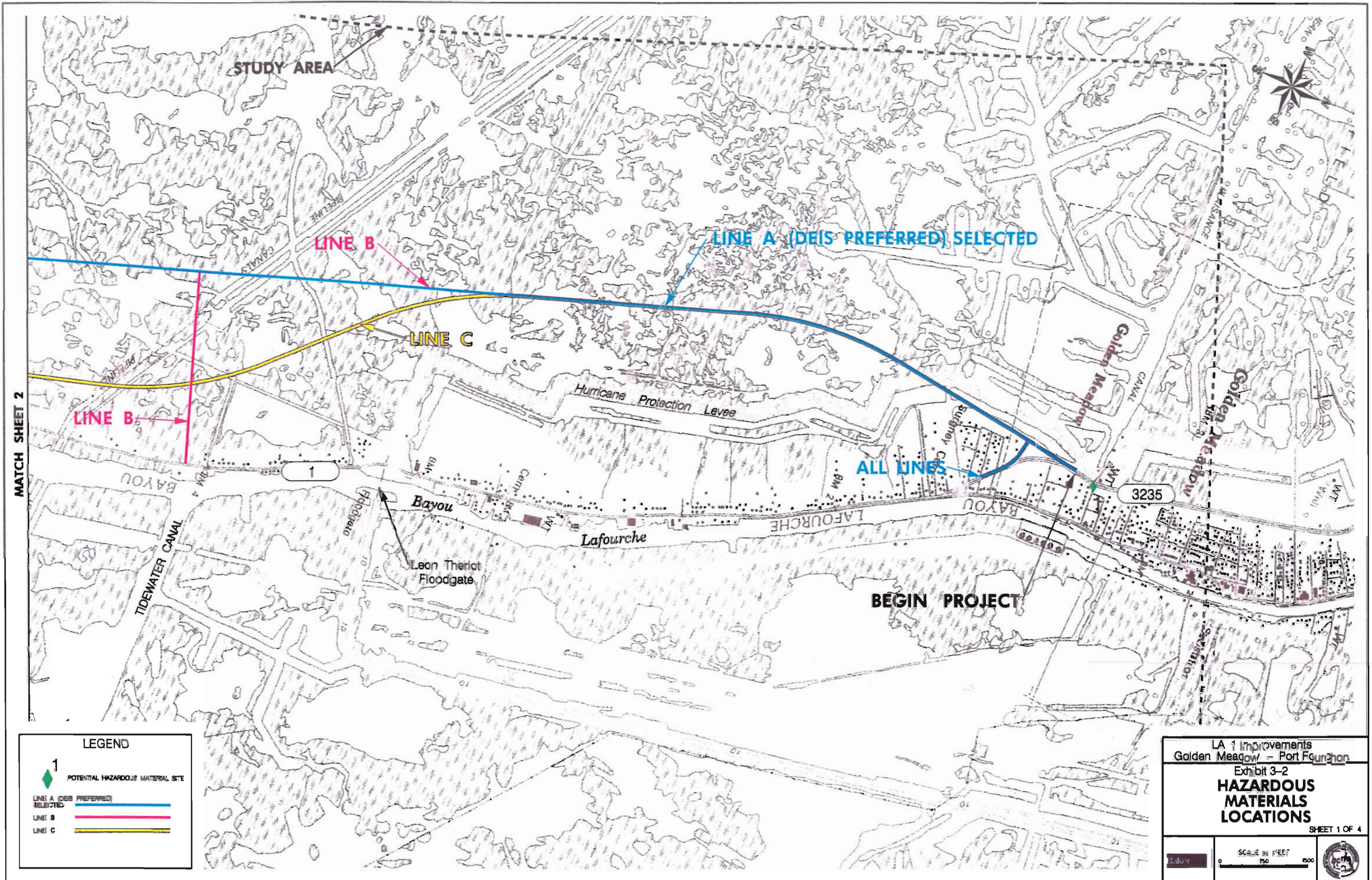
### 3.17 COASTAL ZONES

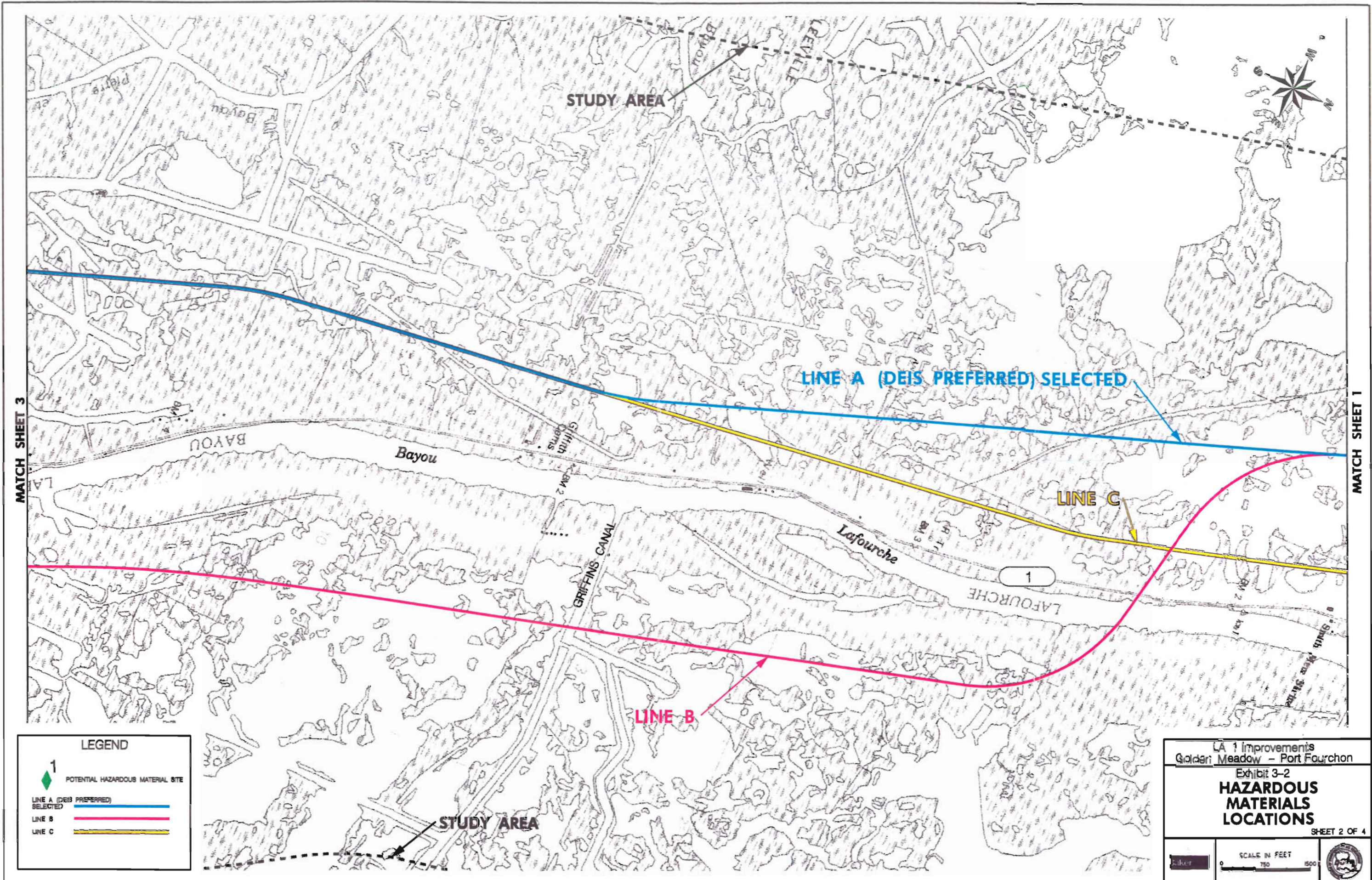
The Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA 1972), as amended, established a voluntary national

program within the U.S. Department of Commerce to encourage States to develop and implement coastal zone management plans. State plans were required to define boundaries of the coastal zone, to identify uses of the area to be regulated by the State, the mechanism for controlling such uses, and broad guidelines for priorities of uses within the coastal zone.

The Louisiana State and Local Coastal Resources Management Act (LCRMA 1978) authorized the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Program and the development, at the parish level, of local coastal management programs (LCPs). The Lafourche Parish LCP has Federal and State approval.

Maps showing Lafourche Parish LCP Environmental Management Units were obtained and entered into the project GIS.





**LEGEND**

1 POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SITE

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED

LINE B

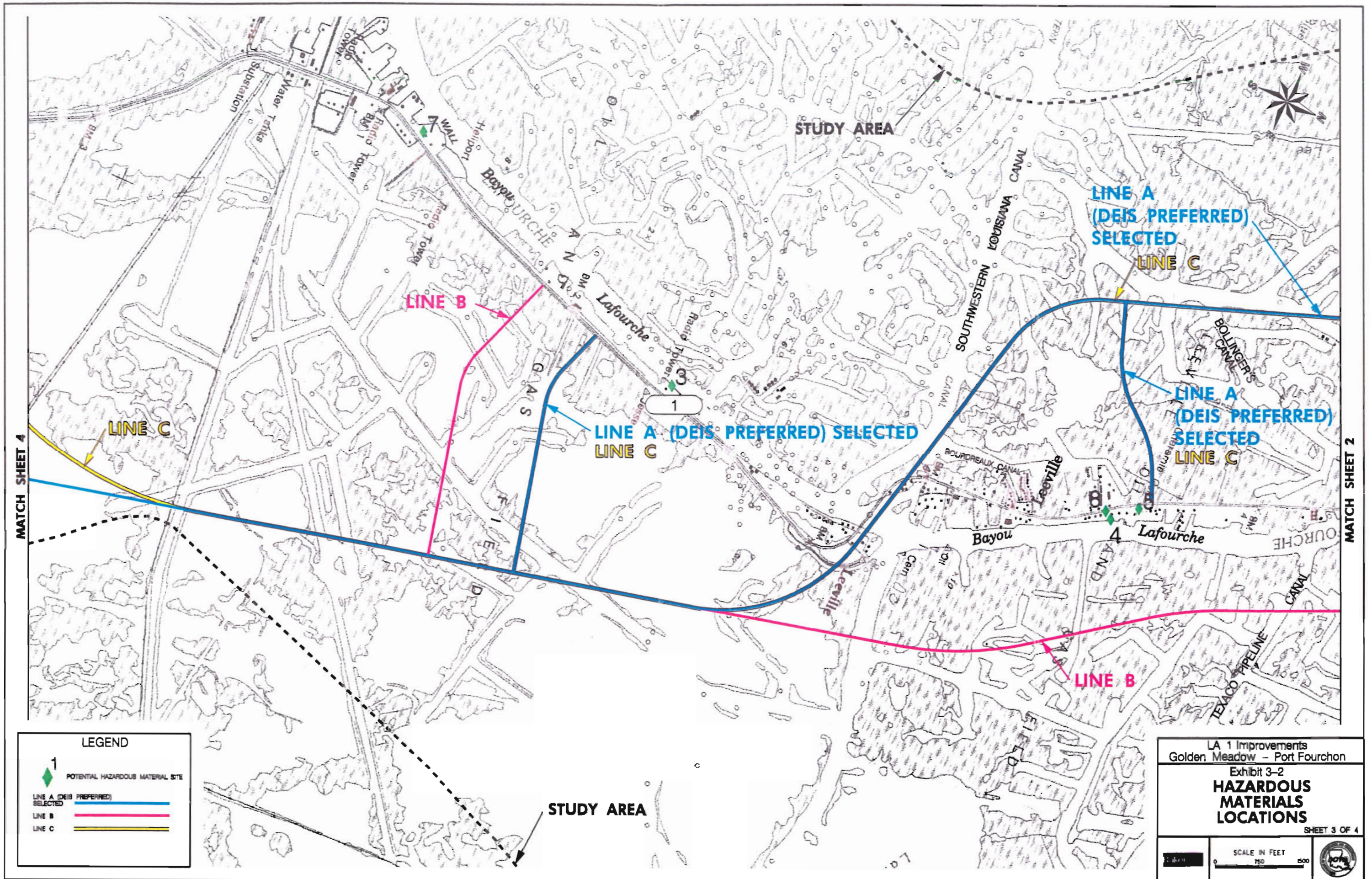
LINE C

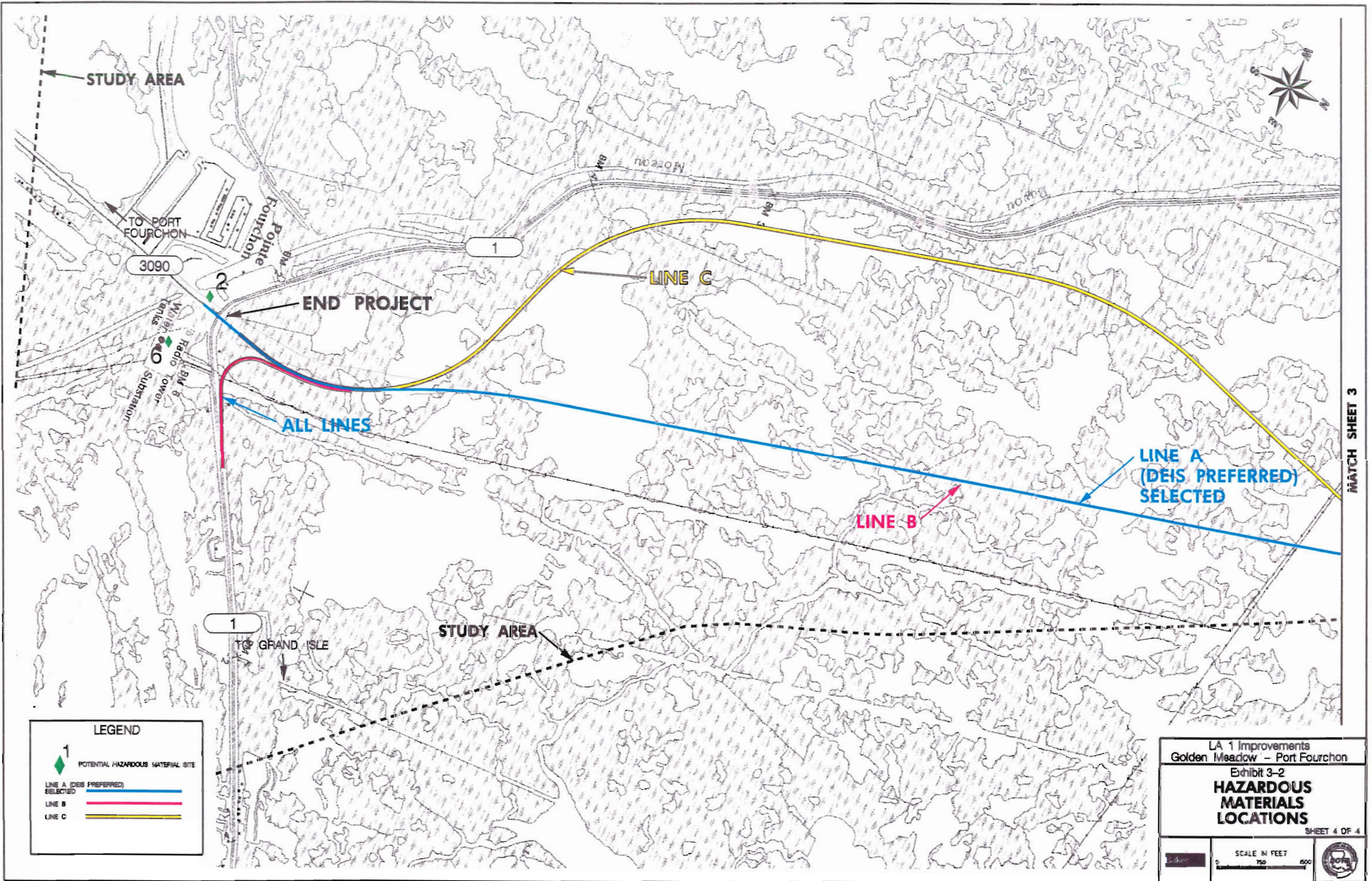
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon

Exhibit 3-2  
**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS LOCATIONS**

SHEET 2 OF 4

SCALE IN FEET  
0 750 1500





## Section 4: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section identifies and discusses the beneficial and adverse social, economic, and environmental effects that may result from the construction of the LA 1 Improvements project.

### 4.1 SOCIAL IMPACTS

The LA 1 Improvements project passes through a predominantly coastal marsh and open water landscape with development limited to Pointe Fourchon, Leeville, and Golden Meadow with scattered development along area highways.

Social impacts in rural areas such as the Study Area may not necessarily be dictated by the physical location of the proposed highway with respect to a particular community, but rather by the presence of the proposed highway through the local area, regardless of the particular alignment location. For this reason, all alignments are expected to have similar social impacts. Social

impacts associated with the No-Action alternative would be minimal and are described where appropriate.

#### 4.1.1 Land Use / Land Cover Changes

The LA 1 Improvements project will have direct impacts to existing land uses. The construction of the highway will result in the direct conversion of land currently in coastal marsh and open water, to a transportation use. Developed areas (residential, business, commercial) at Golden Meadow and Leeville will also be affected.

#### *Land Use / Land Cover Conversion*

Land taken by the proposed highway would be converted from its present use to highway use as shown in Table 4-1. Impacts to developed land and upland include the area under the elevated roadway and the fill necessary to transition from the elevated roadway to existing roadways.

Alignment	Land Use / Land Cover				
	Developed (ac)	Upland (ac)	Estuarine Wetlands (ac)	Open Water (ac)	Total (ac)
No-Action	0	0	0	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	2.1	0.6	5.3	3.9	11.9
Line B	2.1	0.6	6.8	7.5	17.0
Line C	2.1	0.6	5.4	3.9	12.0

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Impacts to wetlands and open water areas include the area of support piles and the fill necessary to transition from the elevated roadway to existing roadways.

### **Secondary Development**

The development of any of the proposed highway alignments could facilitate residential, commercial, and/or tourism/recreational development that would affect the Study Area communities. The amount and degree of this secondary development is difficult to predict due to the number of factors influencing such development. All alignments could facilitate similar secondary development.

The region is characterized by extensive coastal marshes and open water areas with residential and commercial development primarily limited to communities and scattered development adjacent to local highways. Potentially developable upland is limited, and is located largely within the Hurricane Protection Levee (HPL) at Golden Meadow, small isolated locations along LA 1, and on Grand Isle. Construction of the proposed highway would enable better access to the Study Area and Grand Isle, and could increase development pressure for commercial, residential, tourism and recreational purposes.

Researchers (Hartgen and Kim 1998) have found that the actual extent and type of commercial development at interchange locations is influenced by many variables including the size of and distance to nearby communities, and the existing

local services offered. In general, more development would be expected at interchanges near larger communities and would likely decrease as the interchange location moves further from the population centers. The population size and distance variables are not absolute and exceptions to these general trends can and often do occur. Due to the many variables involved, precise predictions of type and extent of development are not possible.

In Golden Meadow, all alignments have a proposed interchange with LA 3235, which intersects with LA 1. Secondary development of highway related businesses such as gas stations, restaurants, hotels/motels would likely be limited in this immediate area due to the availability of similar existing services currently located in Golden Meadow and the surrounding communities. Furthermore, the majority of the existing development is within the HPL and any secondary development that may occur in wetlands would not be afforded the protection of the HPL from hurricanes and other storm events. Any secondary development would be expected to occur within the HPL where the majority of the Study Area's developable upland exists.

In Leeville, the abandonment and demolition of the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge would create a physical north-south travel barrier necessitating the use of the proposed highway to cross the Southwestern Louisiana Canal and Bayou Lafourche. Line A

(Selected) and Line C would have a proposed interchange just north of Leeville. Line B would have a proposed interchange approximately 6.5 miles north of Leeville. All alignments would have a proposed interchange approximately 1 mile south of Leeville. Secondary interchange development in Leeville could occur, but may be limited due to the lack of public utilities and a hurricane protection levee system, which leaves the area vulnerable to inundation from hurricanes and other storm events. Travel-related services are readily available in nearby Golden Meadow, Galliano, and Pointe Fourchon. The existing service station at Leeville would continue to serve the local inhabitants and recreational users of the Bayou Lafourche boat ramp and large-scale expansion or movement of this service is not anticipated. Secondary development at Leeville would create development pressure in wetland areas due to the limited developable upland available. Secondary development pressure within known archaeological sites would not be anticipated due to the height of the roadway and distance of the connector roads from those sites.

Secondary development due to the proposed highway would be expected at the Pointe Fourchon interchange and at Grand Isle. A recently constructed waterline crossing Barataria Bay from Lafitte, Louisiana to the eastern end of Grand Isle ended years of seasonal water shortages and forced rationing that limited development and tourism/recreational potential. The U.S. Army

Corps of Engineers (COE) has indicated that the new waterline has led to an increase in permit applications for development at Grand Isle. An improved highway would enable tourists to reach the area in less time and on a more safe and efficient highway. Secondary development at Pointe Fourchon would create development pressure in wetland areas due to the limited developable upland available.

The No-Action alternative would not result in any development beyond what the current development trends would indicate.

#### ***Consistency with Land Use Plans***

Formal land use planning has not been developed for the Study Area. However, elected officials from all communities have actively participated in the project development process and have provided information on proposed land uses in their respective communities.

#### **4.1.2 Community Changes**

The LA 1 Improvements project could result in some changes to neighborhoods, community access and travel patterns, and community services. These changes would be most evident in communities adjacent to the alignment alternatives. Due to their close proximity, all highway alignments would have similar community impacts.

#### ***Neighborhoods***

No distinct neighborhoods would be crossed by the alignments. Residential development is limited



primarily to Leeville and Golden Meadow within the Study Area. Line A (Selected) and Line C would cross near the southern boundary of Leeville and would impact two residences. Line B would not impact the Leeville community. In Golden Meadow, all alignments intersect with LA 3235 at the southern town boundary. All alignments pass west of the residential development in this area. All alignments would impact one business in this area.

The No-Action alternative would not impact neighborhoods.

### ***Community Access and Travel Patterns***

Access within and between communities would not appreciably change as a result of this project. Maintenance of access to individual property parcels in Golden Meadow would be considered and addressed during the final design of the highway.

All communities within the Study Area would have access to the proposed highway at one of three locations, LA 1/LA 3090, LA 1 in Leeville, and LA 3235 in Golden Meadow.

The No-Action alternative would not address issues identified in previous studies and presented in Section 1 such as:

- Congestion and delays associated with repairs to and maintenance of the Leeville Lift-Bridge
- Everyday poor levels of service
- The need to facilitate hurricane evacuation.

Travel patterns in the Study Area may change as a result of the proposed highway. Residents would have a choice to travel on existing LA 1 between Golden Meadow and Leeville north of the Southwestern Louisiana Canal and between Leeville south of the Southwestern Louisiana Canal and Pointe Fourchon or use the new facility. The abandonment and demolition of the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge would necessitate use of the proposed highway to cross the Southwestern Louisiana Canal and Bayou Lafourche. Travel time between Golden Meadow, Leeville, and Pointe Fourchon would be reduced through use of the new facility.

### ***Changes in Local Traffic***

Changes in local traffic would result from all highway alignments. Residents living or traveling along existing LA 1 between Leeville and Golden Meadow would experience a decrease in the traffic volumes, particularly truck traffic, as through trips are diverted to the new highway facility. Most truck traffic currently traveling these routes within the Study Area would benefit from the increased transportation efficiency provided by a four-lane highway facility.

Leeville residents may experience longer travel times between destinations north and south of Bayou Lafourche due to the location of the new highway's interchanges with LA 1. However, travel delays associated with opening the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge for marine traffic would be eliminated.

Marine traffic along Bayou Lafourche would benefit from the elimination of the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge and the delays associated with bridge lifting operations.

### ***Community Services and Facilities***

No community services or facilities exist in Leeville or Pointe Fourchon and residents travel to Golden Meadow or points further north for medical and other professional services. These residents would experience improved access to these and other community services from all alignments of the proposed highway. In addition, access to churches, schools, public facilities and parks would be improved by the proposed highway.

Adequate fire and police services are important for the protection of citizens and property in all communities. Construction of the LA 1 Improvements project would benefit the Study Area by reducing emergency response times between communities and by removing through and truck traffic from the local roadway network.

With the exception of the Leeville Lift-Bridge, LA 1 is expected to remain in service after completion of the proposed highway. Louisiana State legislation limits the amount of roadway that can be included in the State highway system. Therefore, before the new highway is authorized for construction, operational and maintenance responsibilities for the equivalent length of LA 1 must shift from the State to local entities, most likely Lafourche Parish, so

that the amount of roadway included in the State highway system remains unchanged.

The No-Action alternative would not result in improved community service accessibility and would not improve emergency response times between communities.

### ***Community Mitigation***

Mitigation of short-term negative construction impacts on local communities would include the provision of appropriate construction detours, informative signing, and maintenance of access to residences and businesses where practicable.

#### **4.1.3 Safety**

The construction of the LA 1 Improvements project would have a positive impact on both highway and overall public safety, including bicycle and pedestrian safety, within the Study Area. All alignments would have a similar affect.

#### ***Highway Safety***

Section 1 discusses the general highway safety characteristics within the Study Area. The proposed highway would be a fully controlled access highway facility predominantly in a rural area. In Louisiana, the accident rate on this highway would be much lower than that of a rural two-lane highway such as LA 1. Safety improvements would primarily be related to the diversion of trucks from local roads to the new highway. Diversion of truck traffic to the proposed highway could reduce the need to pass, thereby

reducing the potential number of head-on collisions on existing LA 1. Additionally, safety would be improved by diverting drivers unfamiliar with the area to the new highway. Most accidents have occurred during the times of the year when unfamiliar drivers are more prevalent (see Section 1.5, Table 1-6).

**Pedestrians and Bicyclists**

Limited pedestrian and bicycle activity exist within the Study Area primarily due to safety concerns along LA 1 from Golden Meadow south to Pointe Fourchon. The high volume of trucks and the existing narrow shoulders of the highway that transition abruptly to marsh and open water limit pedestrian and bicycle use. However, pedestrian and bicycle use could increase along LA 1 as through traffic and truck traffic is diverted to the proposed highway. No exclusive bikeways or hiking trails exist or are planned within the Study Area that would be affected by any of the alignments.

**4.1.4 Relocations**

All alignments will displace residents and businesses. Structures were initially identified on 1999 aerial photographic mapping, field verified, and entered into the project GIS for impact assessment. An effort to minimize residential and business impacts was made during the Alignment Study. Further steps to minimize displacements will be considered during the final design of the highway.

Table 4-2 compares the relocations for all alignments.

**Community Facilities**

No community facilities would be impacted by the preliminary alignments.

**Table 4-2  
RELOCATION SUMMARY**

Alignment	Structure/Facility Type				Total
	House	Mobile Home	Business	Community Facility	
No-Action	0	0	0	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	1	1	1	0	3
Line B	0	0	1	0	1
Line C	1	1	1	0	3

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc

### Replacement Housing

An assessment was made of the available housing to determine its comparability with the relocatees' needs. Available housing within the Study Area was obtained from Century 21 Acadia Realty in Thibodaux. The results are summarized in Table 4-3.

The DOTD conducts the acquisition and relocation process in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Policies Act of 1970.

Area	Price Range	Number
Golden	8,500-65,000	6
Meadow to Larose Area	65,000-145,000	5

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Relocation assistance will be made available to all residential and business relocatees without discrimination as to race, color, national origin, age, sex or religion. In all cases, decent, safe and sanitary housing will be made available for all relocatees. Current data collected indicate that adequate replacement housing units are comparable to the relocatee's housing needs and in a variety of price ranges. Currently, no available housing is available in the Leeville area. The DOTD is committed to assist with locating replacement housing within the occupant's financial means and within the general area of the project and when necessary providing housing of last resort. Real estate availability will be

reassessed once final design of the highway has been completed.

### 4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations*, directs all federal agencies to determine whether a proposed action would have a disproportionately high and adverse impact on minority and low-income populations. The Council on Environmental Quality (1997) suggests consideration of whether the environmental effects of the proposed project on minority or low-income populations appreciably exceed those on the general population or other appropriate comparison population when making disproportionate impact determinations.

The objective of the Environmental Justice policy is to insure that minority and low-income populations are fully and equitably considered during the project development process.

The total number of residential and business relocations for each alignment is presented in Table 4-2. Line A (Selected) and Line C result in 2 residential (1 house, 1 mobile home) and 1 business relocation. Line B would result in 1 business relocation. Coordination with the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc. and the United Houma Nation determined that no Native American residents would be impacted by any of the alignments. No other minority groups were identified during the study.

All displaced residents will be provided with relocation assistance by DOTD and every reasonable effort will be made to relocate affected residents within their immediate community.

The No-Action alternative would not specifically benefit, harm, or disproportionately impact any social group.

### 4.3 ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Economic impacts related to the development of the LA 1 Improvements project include a temporary increase in construction employment, a reduction in travel costs, and additional local and regional income generation from sources such as transportation related taxes. Economic impacts would be similar for all alignments.

#### 4.3.1 Employment Opportunities

Construction of the proposed highway would positively impact the local economies of the Study Area communities. New employment opportunities would be generated by the construction activities, in addition to the services required to support the operation. A recent national FHWA study on employment impacts of highway investment (*Highway Infrastructure Investment and Job Generation: A Look at the Positive Employment Impacts of Highway Investment*, USDOT, FHWA, 1997) found that every \$1 billion in Federal-aid highway investment supported approximately 42,100 total full-time equivalent jobs. Jobs were further classified as:

- Direct or on-site highway construction jobs specifically involved with the highway improvement project such as construction laborers, engineers, and construction managers
- Indirect or supply industry jobs at firms that supply equipment, materials, and administrative support
- Induced jobs created when construction-based employees spend their wages on various goods and services throughout the area.

An estimate of the number of jobs potentially created by the proposed highway project is shown in Table 4-4. Due to the similarity in estimated construction costs of all alignments, individual employment projections were not made for each alignment. Overall, nearly 18,000 indirect and induced jobs would be generated by construction of the proposed highway over an estimated 6 to 10 year period.

South Lafourche Parish and Grand Isle residents and other LA 1 users would benefit from the proposed highway through an improved level of service and increased accessibility to Port Fourchon and destinations north of Golden Meadow.

**Table 4-4  
ESTIMATED EMPLOYMENT IMPACTS OF HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION**

Job Category (person-years)	Jobs per \$1 billion of Construction Costs	No-Action Alternative	Build Alternatives
Average Construction Cost		\$0.00	\$525,000,000
Direct, On-site Highway Construction Jobs	7,900	0	4,150
Indirect or Construction Supply Industry Jobs	19,700	0	10,350
Induced or General Economy Jobs	14,500	0	7,600
<b>Total Jobs</b>	<b>42,100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22,100</b>

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc., FHWA, 1997.

\*Does not include right-of-way costs

It is possible that some highway-related businesses along LA 1 such as Bobby Lynn's Texaco and an Exxon and Texaco service station could suffer due to a reduction in traffic on this route. This would depend on the type of business, the traffic changes that occur, and the proximity to the proposed interchanges and other traffic generators. Marketing initiatives by affected businesses, such as signs on the highway, may offset the loss of through traffic impacts.

All preliminary alignments would impact one business, F. A. Dubis Construction L.L.C., located in Golden Meadow. The business could reestablish its operations in the general area and no substantial negative economic impacts would be expected. Any business relocations involved would be compensated for their property and would receive relocation assistance.

The No-Action alternative could have a negative economic impact on the Study Area. The No-Action alternative would not result in new construction employment and would increase travel

and vehicle operating costs through a decreasing level of service on area roadways.

#### 4.3.2 Secondary Economic Impacts

Secondary economic impacts would be tied to potential secondary development as discussed earlier in this Section. The economic impacts of that development are summarized below.

- Improved highway access could increase development pressure within the Study Area for residential, commercial and tourism/recreational purposes
- Improved truck access to Port Fourchon, which could promote Port expansion
- Increased development pressure for tourism and recreational purposes on Grand Isle due primarily to the completion of a new Jefferson Parish Water Department waterline across Barataria Bay from Lafitte, Louisiana. Improved highway access could further increase development pressure above current levels.

#### 4.4 VISUAL

Visual changes that are attributable to the proposed highway would take two forms: views of the proposed highway from various points within the Study Area and views from the proposed highway of the surrounding landscape. All preliminary alignments would have similar visual impacts. The No-Action alternative would not alter existing visual resources.

##### 4.4.1 Views of the Proposed Highway

The proposed highway would alter both the urban and rural setting as it moves from Golden Meadow to Pointe Fourchon. In the Golden Meadow area, the highway will pass near several residential areas, before crossing the Hurricane Protection Levee. Residents not displaced by the highway facility, but in close proximity to it, would be visually impacted. The Hurricane Protection Levee would serve to shield the highway as it moves southward beyond the Leon Theriot Floodgate. Residences and businesses just south of the hurricane protection levee would see the highway in the distance.

The area further south to Leeville is primarily uninhabited. Few residents would have a direct view of the proposed highway.

At Leeville, the highway and the high-level fixed span bridge crossing Bayou Lafourche will pass near several residential and commercial areas. Residents not displaced by the highway facility, but

in close proximity to it, would have the greatest visual impacts.

South of Leeville, the proposed highway would traverse terrain that is rural in nature, primarily uninhabited, with the majority of the land in marsh or open water. Due to the scattered residential development in this area, few residents would have a direct view of the proposed highway.

##### 4.4.2 Views from the Proposed Highway

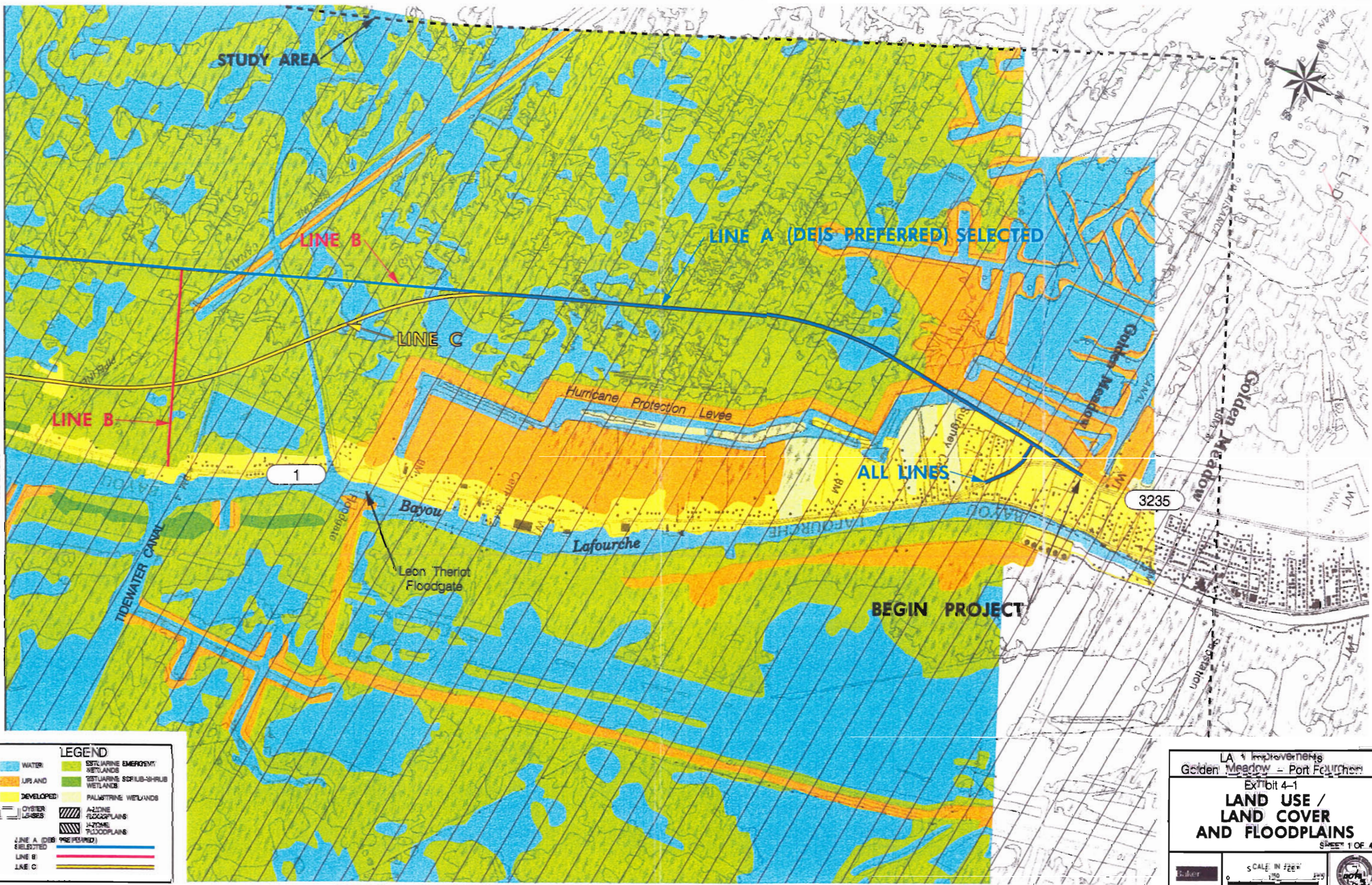
The views of the surrounding landscape from the proposed highway could be considered a beneficial impact as travelers pass through a predominantly rural vista marked by fishing and petroleum activities and adjacent marsh and open water. Numerous opportunities would exist, particularly at the high-level bridges, for motorist views across expansive coastal marsh areas, active fishing vessels, offshore oil production facilities, Port Fourchon and views of distant rural communities.

#### 4.5 OYSTER LEASES

Oyster lease area locations were obtained from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and entered into the project GIS to determine the affects of each alignment.

Seven oyster lease areas are within the Study Area and are shown on Exhibit 4-1. Two oyster lease areas located south of Leeville and east of Bayou Lafourche would be impacted by the project.

MATCH SHEET 2



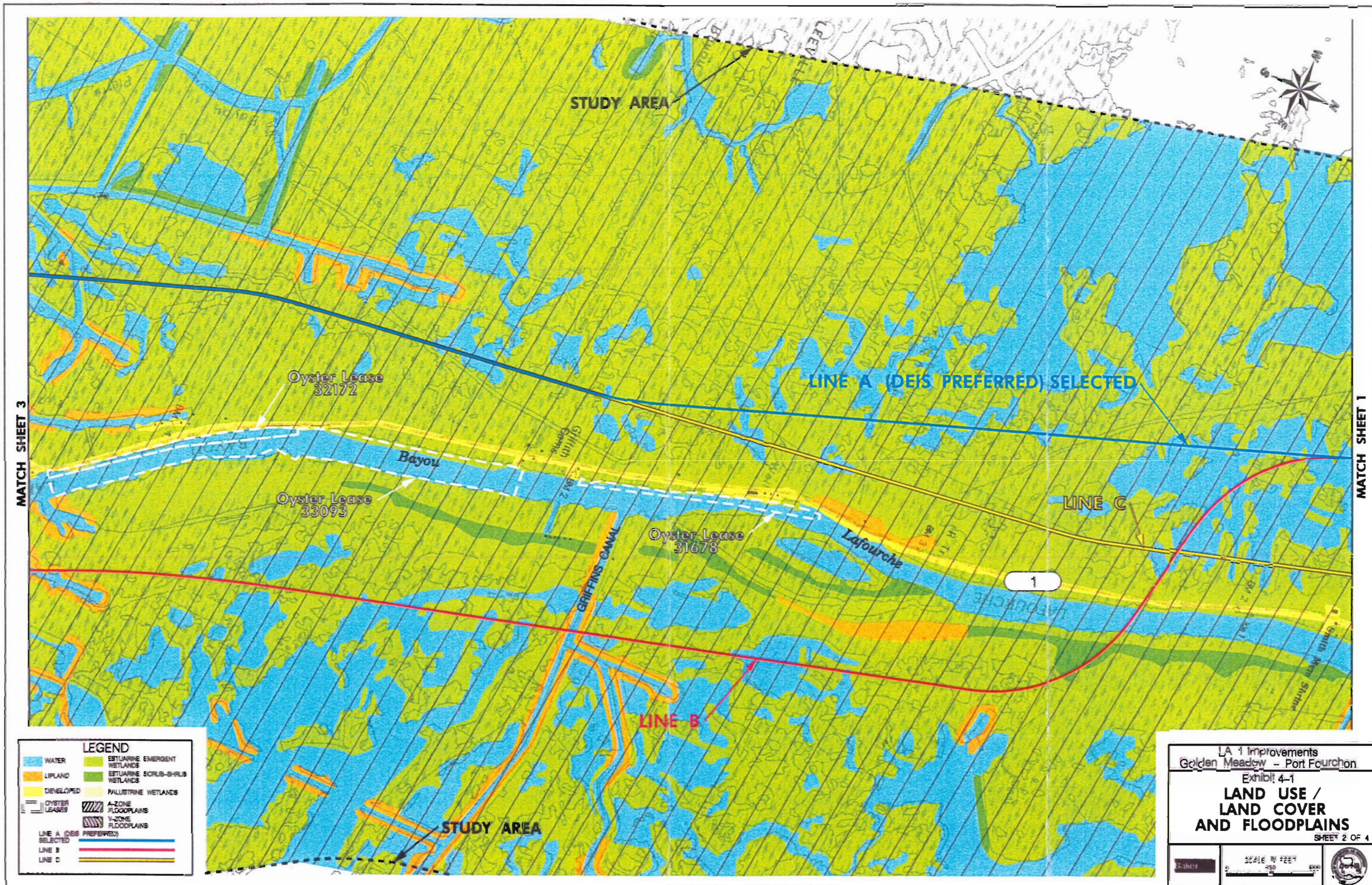
**LEGEND**

WATER	ESTUARINE EMERGENT WETLANDS
UPLAND	ESTUARINE SCRUB-SHRUB WETLANDS
DEVELOPED	PALAUSTRINE WETLANDS
OYSTER LEASES	A-ZONE FLOODPLAINS
LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED	H-ZONE FLOODPLAINS
LINE B	
LINE C	

LA 1 IMPROVEMENTS  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
Exhibit 4-1  
**LAND USE /  
LAND COVER  
AND FLOODPLAINS**  
SHEET 1 OF 4

SCALE IN FEET  
0 100 200





STUDY AREA

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED

Oyster Lease 32172

Oyster Lease 33093

Oyster Lease 31678

Bayou

Lafourche

LINE C

LINE B

STUDY AREA

GRIFFINS CANAL

MATCH SHEET 3

MATCH SHEET 1

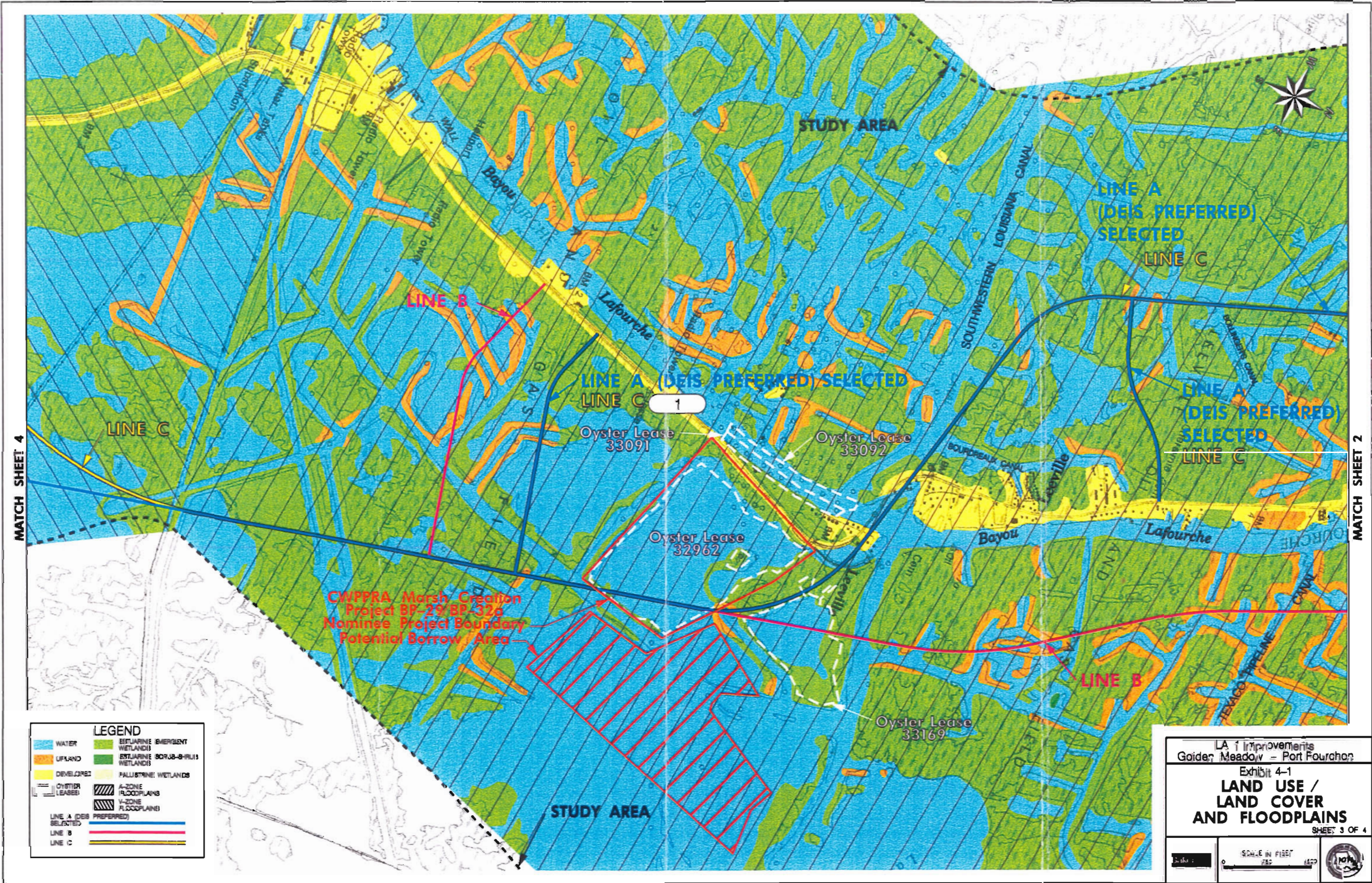
1

LEGEND	
	WATER
	LIPLAND
	DEVELOPED
	OYSTER LEASERS
	LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED
	LINE B
	LINE C
	ESTUARINE EMERGENT WETLANDS
	ESTUARINE SCRUB-SHRUB WETLANDS
	PALUSTRINE WETLANDS
	A-ZONE FLOODPLAINS
	V-ZONE FLOODPLAINS

LA 1 Improvements  
 Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
 Exhibit 4-1  
**LAND USE /  
 LAND COVER  
 AND FLOODPLAINS**

SHEET 2 OF 4

SCALE IN FEET

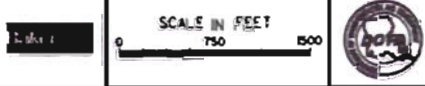




MATCH SHEET 3

LEGEND	
	WATER
	ESTUARINE EMERGENT WETLANDS
	UPLAND
	ESTUARINE SCRUB-SHRUB WETLANDS
	DEVELOPED
	PALLUSTRIAN WETLANDS
	OYSTER LEASERS
	A-ZONE FLOODPLAINS
	V-ZONE FLOODPLAINS
	LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED
	LINE B
	LINE C

LA 1 improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
Exhibit 4-1  
**LAND USE /  
LAND COVER  
AND FLOODPLAINS**  
SHEET 4 OF 4



The preliminary alignments would not preclude access to the oyster lease areas because the elevated highway would be between 25 feet and 50 feet above the water at this location. Impacts to oyster lease areas include the area of support piles and the fill necessary to transition from the elevated roadway to existing roadways. These impacts are presented in Table 4-5. All alignments would have similar impacts.

Construction related impacts could alter water quality by increasing turbidity, and increase sedimentation. These impacts are temporary in nature and can be mitigated during construction by using turbidity screens.

The No-Action alternative would not impact oyster lease areas.

Alignment	Lease Number	Total Lease Area (ac)	Area Impacted (ac)	Percent Impacted (%)
No-Action	-	0	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	32962	121.0	0.1	< 0.1%
	33169	43.0	< 0.01	< 0.01%
	Total	164.0	0.1	< 0.1%
Line B	32962	121.0	< 0.1	< 0.1%
	33169	43.0	< 0.1	< 0.1%
	Total	164.0	0.1	< 0.1%
Line C	32962	121.0	0.1	< 0.1%
	33169	43.0	< 0.01	< 0.01%
	Total	164.0	0.1	< 0.1%

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

#### 4.6 WATER QUALITY

Potential water quality impacts were assessed for surface water, groundwater, and public water supplies.

DOTD will comply with all requirements of the Clean Water Act, as amended, for the construction of this proposed highway, and will obtain the following permits: a Section 401 Water Quality Certification, a Section 402 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit,

and a Louisiana Water Discharge Permit System (LWDPS) permit issued by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LADEQ); and a Section 404 permit issued by the COE for the placement of dredged and fill material in waters of the United States. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be prepared in conjunction with the NPDES permitting process prior to construction. This plan will include all specifications and best management practices

(BMPs) necessary for control of erosion and sedimentation due to construction related activities.

The No-Action alternative would not impact surface or ground water resources, or public water supplies.

#### **4.6.1 Surface Water Resources**

Surface water resources crossed by all preliminary alignments include Bayou Lafourche and marshland and open waters of the Barataria-Terrebonne basin.

No state listed Natural or Scenic Rivers, Wild and Scenic Rivers, or rivers on the Nationwide Rivers Inventory would be impacted by any of the preliminary alignments.

##### ***Stormwater Runoff***

The primary mechanism for removal of highway pollutants from the road surface is through stormwater runoff. Construction of the proposed highway would increase the impervious surface in the watershed and would generate additional runoff to receiving waters.

The affects of highway runoff are variable and dependent on the length of time since the last storm event, the quantity of stormwater runoff delivered, the flow volume, the duration of the storm event, and traffic volume (Barrett et al. 1993). Highway runoff may adversely affect the water quality through short-term loadings associated with storm events and through chronic effects as a

result of long-term accumulation and exposure. The interaction of these variables is complex, and the actual toxic effect from a pollutant is difficult to predict, particularly with the tidal influence on pollutant dispersion.

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify studies that may document the affects of highway runoff on expansive, tidally induced marine environments. University libraries, conference proceedings, other research and the Internet were searched for relevant literature. No studies were identified that addressed this issue. Several studies have been conducted that investigated the affects of highway runoff, but these focused on the effects of urban highways with high average daily traffic volumes on freshwater systems. These studies are not applicable to the LA 1 Improvements project because the proposed highway is a rural, low volume facility in a tidally influenced marine environment.

Research indicates that runoff from rural highways would generate few substantial impacts with average daily traffic (ADT) of less than 30,000 vehicles (Maestri et al. 1988). The Design Year (2030) ADT for the portion of the project between Golden Meadow and Leeville is 21,300, and between Leeville and Pointe Fourchon is 11,930. Based on these predicted ADTs of less than 30,000 for the proposed highway, no substantial impacts to water quality would be expected due to highway runoff.

A review of national traffic data published by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics (1998) indicates that an average rural highway (interstate and arterial) is comprised of 13.7% trucks, which would result in 4,110 trucks for an average rural highway with 30,000 ADT. Although the project's 17% percent truck traffic is higher than that for the average rural highway, the resultant truck volumes of 3,621 between Golden Meadow and Leeville and 2,028 between Leeville and Pointe Fourchon are less than the truck volumes that would be expected from an average 30,000 ADT rural highway. Consequently, no substantial impacts to water quality would be expected due to the project's predicted truck volume.

### ***Hazardous or Toxic Spills***

The potential for single event pollution discharges into the receiving waters would be created with the construction of the project. Development of the proposed facility will, however, result in a smoother, safer flow of traffic than is currently available.

Overland bulk cargo transported in the Study Area most likely would consist of fuel and other petroleum products. A rapid response to hazardous or toxic spills and the deployment of the correct containment devices can often contain spilled materials and limit short-term negative effects on water quality. All alignments would improve response times to hazardous or toxic spills. The new facility would relieve congestion

and delays associated with repairs to and maintenance of the Leeville Lift-Bridge and would relieve everyday poor levels of service associated with existing LA 1, both factors that could delay emergency response vehicles.

The Lafourche Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness administers the Parish's hazardous spill contingency plan. The initial response in a spill situation is the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office or State Police. Their main responsibility is to control the site. Local fire departments assess the situation, identify and attempt to contain the substance. The Hazardous Material Hotline is used to notify the Emergency Response Commission through the Transportation and Environmental Safety section of the State Police. Depending on the nature of the material and location of the spill, other agencies such as the LADEQ may need to be notified. The local fire departments maintain a supply of absorbents. Port Fourchon is also well equipped to handle spill situations and has personnel, absorbents and containment booms readily available. U.S. Coast Guard personnel stationed in Morgan City can assist with the cleanup and containment efforts. Further assistance comes from the State Emergency Management Agency, which has a network of contractors available to clean up after a spill.

A number of private tenants located at Port Fourchon specialize in spill containment and clean

up services. Environmental Safety and Health, Inc. provides a full range of services targeted to spill response. Utilizing state of the art technology, their spill containment capabilities include the capacity to map spills and to predict possible spill courses, taking into consideration such factors as current, wind, tide and weather. Their personnel have appropriate certifications by the U.S. Coast Guard. Other environmental service firms with operations at Port Fourchon include Enviro Ventures, Inc. and Newpark Environmental Services, both with incident response capabilities.

**4.6.2 Public Water Supplies**

The preliminary alignments would not cross any primary water sources that contribute recharge to a public water supply system, nor would they impact any wellhead protection areas or sole source aquifers (see Section 3.8).

**4.7 FLOODPLAINS**

A floodplain evaluation was conducted in accordance with Executive Order 11988, "Floodplain Management", 23 CFR 650, Subpart A, "Location and Hydraulic Design of Encroachments on Floodplains", and U.S. DOT 5650.2, "Floodplain Management and Protection". The entire Study Area is located within the 100-year floodplain (Zones A or V), as identified on Flood Insurance Rate Maps, and is shown on Exhibit 4-1.

**4.7.1 Floodplain Impacts**

Table 4-6 presents the length of Preliminary Alignment within the 100-year floodplain by flood zone.

<b>Alignment</b>	<b>A-Zone Length (mile)</b>	<b>V-Zone Length (mile)</b>	<b>Total Length (mile)</b>
No-Action	0	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	12.13	4.21	16.34
Line B	11.99	4.21	16.20
Line C	12.24	4.67	16.92

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

The entire Study Area is within the 100-year floodplain. Due to its length, Line C would have the greatest encroachment on floodplains, while Line B would have the least.

The No-Action alternative would not encroach on floodplains.

The preliminary alignments would have a negligible effect on existing hydraulics because the lower chord elevation for the mainline portions of the preliminary alignments would be above the 100-year flood elevation, thereby eliminating the deck and support beams from the flooded cross section. The effects of abutments, piers and interchange embankments to transition from existing LA 1 to the elevated roadway are minimal. Unlike most riverine flood events, velocities in the Gulf of Mexico during storm surge events are low. The

enormous widths of the floodplain and low velocities combine to create a situation where these small blockages would not create backwater or adverse hydraulic conditions.

Detailed hydraulic studies will be performed during the final design phase of the project to determine any changes in flood elevations due to construction. DOTD and FHWA will review these studies to confirm that adequate measures have been taken to insure that floodplain encroachment does not increase the risk of flooding to adjacent properties.

#### **4.7.2 Secondary Floodplain Impacts**

The entire Study Area lies within the 100-year floodplain. Potential secondary development within the floodplain would be consistent with the secondary development discussed in Section 4.1.

#### **4.7.3 Floodplain Finding**

The entire Study Area lies within the 100-year floodplain. Consequently, there is no practicable alternative to the proposed construction of the Selected Alignment outside of these areas. The Selected Alignment includes all practicable measures to minimize floodplain impacts. A detailed floodplain evaluation will be conducted during the final design phase of the project in accordance with Executive Order 11988 and 23 CFR 650, Subpart A.

## **4.8 WETLANDS**

Wetland systems were initially identified using color infrared photography and were entered into the project GIS as part of the Alternatives Study. Following initial development of the preliminary alignments, wetlands were field verified using the methods outlined in the *COE Wetlands Delineation Manual* (COE Manual, January 1987). Wetland identification and delineation was based on the presence of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils and evidence of wetland hydrology. An attempt was made to contact all landowners prior to conducting fieldwork. When property owners could not be reached or permission denied, wetland boundaries were based on photointerpretation.

Prior to commencing fieldwork, the COE was consulted regarding the wetland delineation efforts. A meeting was held on May 10, 2000 with the COE to discuss the number and location of wetlands to be investigated as well as the methods to be employed.

#### **4.8.1 Wetland Impacts**

All wetlands identified within the preliminary alignments were evaluated in accordance with Executive Order 11990, "*Protection of Wetlands*". Wetland types and boundaries were identified and placed into the GIS to determine encroachment for each alignment. Due to the extensive wetland habitat present in the Study Area, a practicable alignment that avoids all wetlands is not possible. An upgrade to LA 1 was considered and dismissed



due to extensive impacts to wetlands and sandy areas along LA 1. However, throughout the development of all alignments, wetland impacts were minimized.

Continuing coordination between the COE and DOTD will assure that all regulatory concerns are adequately addressed. The Section 404 permit application will be prepared and submitted to the COE for review after the Record of Decision has been signed.

#### **Direct Wetland Impacts**

Direct wetland impacts are presented in Table 4-7 and are shown on Exhibit 4-1. All alignments would impact wetland resources. The direct impacts result from vegetation losses due to support piles and placement of fill to transition from the elevated roadway to existing roadways.

<b>Alignment</b>	<b>Estuarine Emergent (ac)</b>	<b>Estuarine Scrub Shrub (ac)</b>	<b>Total (ac)</b>
No-Action	0	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	3.6	1.7	5.3
Line B	5.7	1.1	6.8
Line C	3.7	1.7	5.4

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Direct project impacts represent less than 0.01% of the 3.2 million acres of wetlands and open water within the Barataria-Terrebonne basin. Temporary construction impacts are discussed in Section 4.23.

The No-Action alternative would not impact area wetlands.

#### **4.8.2 Secondary Wetland Impacts**

##### **Shading Effects**

In addition to direct wetland losses due to support piles or fill, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify studies that may document the shading effect of an elevated highway on the health of smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alternifolia*), the dominant coastal wetland plant in the Study Area. University libraries, conference proceedings, other research and the Internet were searched for relevant literature. No studies were identified documenting the shading effect on the health of smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alternifolia*).

For each alignment, the length of north-south or east-west oriented roadway through area wetlands was determined. The results are presented in Table 4-8. Line A (Selected) has the least mainline length through emergent marsh, while Line C has the most. Line A (Selected) has both the least east-west oriented mainline and least east-west oriented connector road lengths through emergent marsh.

Overall, Line A (Selected) and its associated connector roads have the least length through emergent marsh while Line C had the most.

**Table 4-8  
ALIGNMENT ORIENTATION THROUGH AREA WETLANDS**

Alignment	Estuarine Emergent (mile)	Estuarine Scrub - Shrub (mile)	Total (mile)
No-Action	0	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected			
- NS Mainline	5.45	0.30	5.75
- EW Mainline	0.24	0.02	0.26
- EW Connector Roads	0.13	0.25	0.38
- Total	5.82	0.57	6.39
Line B			
- NS Mainline	5.37	0.61	5.98
- EW Mainline	0.38	0.00	0.38
- EW Connector Roads	0.23	0.03	0.26
- Total	5.98	0.64	6.62
Line C			
- NS Mainline	5.51	0.27	5.78
- EW Mainline	0.39	0.02	0.41
- EW Connector Roads	0.13	0.25	0.38
- Total	6.03	0.54	6.57

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Furthermore, Line A (Selected) has the least north-south and least east-west oriented length through wetlands (emergent marsh and scrub-shrub combined), while Line B and Line C have the greatest, respectively. Overall, Line A (Selected) and its associated connector roads have the least length through wetlands while Line B had the most.

An analysis was also performed to determine the length and duration of shadow for varying sun positions on a north-south oriented typical section. The shadow cast from the highway varies with the time of day and corresponding position of the sun. The longest shadows are cast near sunrise and sunset, but are of the shortest duration.

The area that is shaded decreases until the sun is oriented above and perpendicular to the highway, and then begins to increase until sunset (see Table 4-9).

**Table 4-9  
LENGTH OF SHADOW AND DURATION**

Duration (hours)	Transverse Length (feet)	Transverse Length (%)
1	88.33	33.51
2	32.33	12.27
3	18.67	7.08
4	13.67	5.19
5	11.83	4.49
6	9.75	3.70
7	34.17	12.96
8	13.50	5.12
9	41.33	15.68
Total	263.58	100.00

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

The highway does not preclude sunlight from reaching the underlying vegetation. Of the approximately 260 feet of shadow cast during a 12 hour day, nearly 50% of the length is shaded for 2 hours or less, while approximately 25% of the length is shaded for 8 or 9 hours. The analysis did not consider the complexities of water reflectivity or diffused/indirect sunlight.

A comprehensive literature review did not identify any studies quantifying the amount of sunlight needed to maintain smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alternifolia*) health.

#### **Secondary Development**

Potentially developable upland is limited, and is located largely within the Hurricane Protection Levee at Golden Meadow and on Grand Isle. Construction of the proposed highway would enable better access to the Study Area and Grand Isle, and could increase pressure to develop wetland areas for commercial, residential, tourism and recreational purposes. The amount and degree of secondary development is difficult to predict due to the number of factors influencing such development (see Section 4.1). Any development in and subsequent impacts to wetlands would require a Department of the Army (DA) permit, would require the full review of appropriate state and federal agencies, and would require an Alternatives Analysis documenting avoidance and minimization efforts and a mitigation plan if appropriate.

#### **4.8.3 Wetlands Finding**

Based on the anticipated construction staging and project implementation (see Section 2), it is determined that there is no practicable alternative to the proposed construction of the Selected Alignment in wetlands. The Selected Alignment includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to wetlands as specified in Executive Order 11990. Should the anticipated construction staging and project implementation change, the connector road locations north and south of Leeville would be reevaluated.

#### **4.8.4 Wetland Mitigation Requirements**

The DOTD and the FHWA are committed to minimizing wetland impacts resulting from the proposed highway. "End on" construction techniques will be utilized to the fullest extent possible to minimize direct impacts.

An agency coordination meeting was held on January 15, 2002 with the COE, the NMFS, the FWS and other state and federal resource agencies to develop an Emergent Marsh Vegetation Monitoring Plan to determine secondary wetland impacts due to the shading effect of the elevated highway on wetland vegetation, including smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alternifolia*), the dominant coastal wetland plant in the Study Area. The NMFS suggested that the required mitigation acreage be determined by adding the direct wetland impacts to the amount of marsh that would be shaded for 4 hours or greater, which would

allow up-front mitigation. The COE agreed to this approach. The FHWA and DOTD also agreed that this would be the most effective approach and would allow mitigation to be in place prior to construction and prior to the vegetated wetland impacts.

Secondary wetland impacts due to shading the wetland vegetation for 4 hours or greater is shown

in Table 4-10. The shaded width for the north-south mainline represents 4 or more hours of shade. The east-west mainline and east-west connector roads are fully shaded and the shaded width is the respective out-to-out width of the elevated structure. Line A (Selected) has the least secondary wetland impacts due to shading while Line B has the most.

Alignment	Total Length Through Wetlands (mile)	Shaded Width (feet)	Total (ac)
No-Action	0	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected			
- NS Mainline	5.75	124.25	86.6
- EW Mainline	0.26	99.0	3.1
- EW Connector Roads	0.38	54.83	2.5
- Total	6.39		92.2
Line B			
- NS Mainline	5.98	124.25	90.1
- EW Mainline	0.38	99.0	4.6
- EW Connector Roads	0.26	54.83	1.7
- Total	6.62		96.4
Line C			
- NS Mainline	5.78	124.25	87.1
- EW Mainline	0.41	99.0	4.9
- EW Connector Roads	0.38	54.83	2.5
- Total	6.57		94.5

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

In total, direct and secondary project impacts represent less than 0.01% of the 3.2 million acres of wetlands and open water within the Barataria-Terrebonne basin.

A potential wetland replacement site has been identified in an open water area adjacent to and

west of LA 3090, approximately 3,000 feet south of LA 1. Possible DOTD participation in the EPA/LADNR "Marsh Creation South of Levee" Project (BA-29/BA-32a, CWPPRA Priority Project List 9) was also noted by the resource agencies at a May 1, 2002 agency coordination meeting to discuss construction. DOTD will coordinate with

the COE, the NMFS and the appropriate state and federal resource agencies regarding the final selection of a wetland replacement site.

All unavoidable wetland impacts will be mitigated by the DOTD and the FHWA. Wetland area lost due to construction of the proposed highway would be replaced through mitigation activities. Coordination with the COE is on going. Mitigation ratios and requirements for the direct and secondary wetland impacts will be determined in conjunction with the Section 404 permit process and will be finalized after issuance of the Record of Decision for the project.

#### **4.9 WATERBIRD NESTING COLONIES**

Colonial waterbird nesting colonies were obtained from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. A 1998 LOOP Environmental Monitoring Program Vegetation and Wildlife study conducted by the Louisiana State University for the Louisiana Transportation Research Center was also reviewed.

No known colonial waterbird nesting colonies are located within 1,500 feet of the preliminary alignments. The FWS indicated that construction activities within 1,500 feet of a rookery should be restricted to the non-nesting period from September 1 through April 15, depending on the species present (Refer to June 24, 1999 U.S. Fish and Wildlife letter).

A survey will be conducted during the nesting season prior to construction, to determine the presence of any undocumented waterbird nesting colonies within 1,500 feet of the construction activities.

The No-Action alternative would not impact any waterbird nesting colonies.

#### **4.10 ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT**

An Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment of the effects of the proposed action on EFH was conducted in accordance with 50 CFR 600, Subpart K, "Magnuson-Stevens Act Provision; Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)" and is incorporated into, and made part of, this Final EIS.

Coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has occurred throughout the project development process.

##### **4.10.1 Description of the Proposed Action**

The proposed action is the construction of a four-lane, divided, fully controlled access elevated highway facility on new alignment between Louisiana 3235 west of Golden Meadow, Louisiana and Louisiana 3090 at its intersection with Louisiana 1, north of Port Fourchon. The alternatives development for the proposed action and the identification of the Selected Alignment is discussed in detail in Section 2.

#### 4.10.2 Essential Fish Habitat Impacts

Coordination with the NMFS has identified EFH for post-larval and juvenile white shrimp, brown shrimp, red drum, and Spanish mackerel. Categories of EFH in the project vicinity include estuarine emergent wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), mud, sand, and shell substrates, and estuarine water column. Specific species habitat information presented herein was obtained from the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GOMFMC) Generic Amendment for Addressing Essential Fish Habitat Requirements including Environmental Assessments (GOMFMC 1998).

##### ***Brown Shrimp***

Brown shrimp are found within the estuaries to offshore depths of 360 feet throughout the Gulf of Mexico. Post-larvae and juveniles are common to highly abundant in all U.S. estuaries including Barataria and Terrebonne Bays, which adjoin the LA 1 Study Area. In estuaries, brown shrimp post-larvae and juveniles are associated with shallow vegetated habitats, but are also found over silty sand and non-vegetated mud bottoms. Densities are highest in marsh edge habitat, including smooth cordgrass, and submerged vegetation. As juvenile brown shrimp mature, they migrate from estuaries to coastal areas.

##### ***White Shrimp***

Juvenile white shrimp are common to highly abundant from Texas to Florida and are common to

abundant in the Barataria and Terrebonne Bays. Post-larval white shrimp utilize the muddy-sand bottoms of estuaries where they develop into juveniles. Densities are highest in marsh edge and submerged aquatic vegetation. As juvenile white shrimp mature, they migrate from estuaries to coastal areas where spawning occurs.

##### ***Red Drum***

Red drum commonly occur in virtually all of the Gulf of Mexico's estuaries where they are found over a variety of substrates including sand, mud and oyster reefs. Spawning occurs in deeper water near the mouths of bays and inlets and the larvae are transported into the estuaries where the fish mature before moving back into the Gulf. Red drum is common in Barataria and Terrebonne Bays. Optimum habitat is found in shallow water with 50-75% submerged aquatic vegetation fringed by emergent vegetation.

##### ***Spanish Mackerel***

Spanish mackerel are coastal migratory pelagic species commonly distributed from the estuaries to the marine waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Spanish mackerel will inhabit estuarine areas, especially higher salinity areas, during seasonal migrations, but are considered rare and infrequent in many Gulf estuaries. Spanish mackerel are listed as rare to common in Barataria and Terrebonne Bays, depending on the existing salinity levels.

##### ***Impacts***

A summary of EFH category impacts is presented

in Table 4-11. Development of any project alternatives would impact estuarine emergent wetland habitat. Line A (Selected) would impact the least emergent wetland habitat. "End on"

construction techniques will be utilized to the fullest extent possible to minimize impacts to wetland habitat.

**Table 4-11  
SUMMARY OF ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT IMPACTS**

Alignments	Essential Fish Habitat Categories			
	Estuarine Emergent Wetlands (ac)	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (ac)	Bottom Substrates (ac)	Estuarine Water Column (ac)
No-Action	0	0	0	None
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	3.6	Minimal	3.9	None
Line B	5.7	Minimal	7.5	None
Line C	3.7	Minimal	3.9	None

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Wetland area lost due to construction of the proposed highway would be replaced through mitigation activities. Discussions on mitigation requirements and development with the NMFS, COE, and other resource agencies is on-going and will continue to address this issue.

No areas of SAV have been identified that would be impacted by the alternatives. If during construction SAV is identified, appropriate mitigation measures will be developed in conjunction with the NMFS and other state and federal resource agencies. The proposed end-on construction technique would serve to minimize potential impacts to this resource.

Development of any project alternatives would impact bottom substrates. Line A (Selected) and Line C would impact the least bottom substrate

habitat. The proposed end-on construction technique would serve to minimize potential impacts to this resource.

No impact to the estuarine water column is anticipated from any project alternatives. The water column is used by many species to migrate from estuarine nursery areas to open water coastal areas. The construction of any alternatives will not inhibit tidal or other water movements and would not impede the migration or movement of any species.

Temporary construction impacts are discussed in Section 4.23.

The No-Action alternative would not result in any EFH impacts.

### 4.10.3 Secondary Essential Fish Habitat Impacts

#### **Stormwater Runoff**

Stormwater runoff is discussed in detail in Section 4.6.1. The effects of highway runoff are variable and dependent on the length of time since the last storm event, the quantity of stormwater runoff delivered, the flow volume, the duration of the storm event, and traffic volume (Barrett et al. 1993). Highway runoff may adversely affect the water quality through short-term loadings associated with storm events and through chronic effects as a result of long-term accumulation and exposure. The interaction of these variables is complex, and the actual toxic effect from a pollutant is difficult to predict, particularly with the tidal influence on pollutant dispersion.

Research indicates that runoff from rural highways would generate few substantial impacts with average daily traffic (ADT) of less than 30,000 vehicles (Maestri et al. 1988). Based on the predicted ADT of less than 30,000 for the proposed highway, no substantial impacts to water quality or EFH would be expected due to highway runoff (see Section 4.6.1).

#### **Shading Effects**

A comprehensive literature review and two simplified analyses were performed to assess the preliminary alignments shading effect on the health of smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alternifolia*), the dominant coastal wetland plant in the Study Area.

The literature review and shading analyses are discussed in Section 4.8.

During a January 15, 2002 agency coordination meeting to discuss development of an Emergent Marsh Vegetation Monitoring Plan for determining secondary wetland impacts due to shading, the NMFS suggested that the required mitigation acreage be determined by adding the direct wetland impacts to the amount of marsh that would be shaded for 4 hours or greater, which would allow up-front mitigation (see Section 4.8). Secondary emergent marsh losses would affect post-larval and juvenile brown shrimp and adult red drum, which prefer this habitat.

#### **Secondary Development**

Potentially developable upland is limited, and is located largely within the Hurricane Protection Levee at Golden Meadow and on Grand Isle. Construction of the proposed highway would enable better access to the Study Area and Grand Isle, and could increase pressure to develop wetland areas for commercial, residential, tourism and recreational purposes. The amount and degree of secondary development is difficult to predict due to the number of factors influencing such development (see Section 4.1). Any development in and subsequent impacts to emergent marsh vegetation and EFH would be under the jurisdiction of the NMFS, the COE and other permitting agencies and as such, would require an Alternatives Analysis and an Essential



Fish Habitat Assessment documenting impacts, avoidance and minimization efforts, and a mitigation plan, if appropriate.

#### 4.10.4 Mitigation Measures

The DOTD and FHWA have reached a consensus with the NMFS on EFH mitigation measures for the direct and secondary EFH impacts and completion of the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Mitigation will be required through 1:1 marsh creation with vegetative plantings and that creation of EFH marsh habitat will comply with all requirements and coordination with the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Documentation is provided in the Appendix.

The following conservation and enhancement measures could be implemented as part of the design and construction phases of this project to reduce impacts to EFH:

- Employ best engineering and management practices such as seasonal restrictions, dredging methods and disposal options
- Disposal of contaminated dredge material outside of the EFH
- Use of a turbidity screen during construction in identified sensitive areas
- Use clean dredged material to restore/rebuild oyster reefs, wetlands, cover benthic waste sites, and other beneficial use opportunities

- Restore EFH to improve productivity or functioning of specific ecosystems.

#### 4.11 PROTECTED SPECIES

Coordination with the FWS and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has occurred throughout project development process. The FWS reviewed the Study Area in accordance with the Endangered Species Act and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. No Federally- or State-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species or critical habitats, presently occur within the Study Area. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Natural Heritage Program (LNHP) was also contacted regarding sensitive species within the Study Area. They also reported that no state or federal parks, wildlife refuges, scenic rivers, or wildlife management areas are located within the Study Area (Refer to June 24, 1999 U.S. Fish and Wildlife letter and the November 16, 1999 Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries letter).

##### 4.11.1 Protected Species Impacts

Neither the Preliminary Alignments nor the No-Action alternative would impact any Federally- or State- listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species or critical habitats.

##### 4.11.2 Secondary Protected Species Impacts

No secondary impacts to Federally- or State- listed species or critical habitats would occur from construction or continued use of the proposed highway.

#### 4.12 OIL AND GAS RESOURCES

Oil and gas well locations were obtained from the Louisiana Geographic Information Center and entered into the Geographic Information System (GIS) to determine impacts for each alignment.

Producing oil and gas well impacts are summarized in Table 4-12. Producing wells are defined as wells that are actively producing or are shut-in but could readily produce product. The wells impacted are located around Leeville. Line B would impact the greatest number of producing wells, while Line A (Selected) and Line C would impact the least.

<b>Alignment</b>	<b>Oil</b>	<b>Gas</b>
No-Action	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	1	0
Line B	2	1
Line C	1	0

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc., Louisiana Geographic Information Center.

As a result of highway construction, economic impacts may occur to landowners due to the loss of an active oil or gas well. In conjunction with the property acquisition process, a qualified petroleum engineer would conduct a feasibility study for each impacted well to determine the estimated reserves. Results of the study would determine whether a well would be replaced by directional drilling or compensation would be provided to landowners based on estimated reserves. Adjustments to the

pile locations during final design may further minimize or entirely avoid oil and gas well impacts. All wells impacted by the proposed highway would be properly abandoned according to procedures established by the LADEQ.

The preliminary alignments should not preclude access to the area oil and gas well areas because the elevated highway would be a minimum of 13 feet above the water.

The No-Action alternative would not impact any oil or gas wells.

#### 4.13 PUBLIC LANDS

Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended (49 U.S.C. 303) prohibits the use of significant publicly owned public parks, designated recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges and significant historic sites unless it can be shown that:

- There is no prudent and feasible alternative that meets the project purpose and need that avoids use of that land; and
- The proposed action has considered all possible planning to minimize harm to the property that would result from the proposed action.

No Section 4(f) resources would be affected by the alignments, including the Selected Alignment.

The No-Action alternative would not impact public lands.

## 4.14 FARMLANDS

### 4.14.1 Farmland Impacts

The Preliminary Alignments would not impact farmlands. All alignments impact soils that meet the soil requirements for prime farmland. However, these soils are present in both urban or developed areas and estuarine emergent wetland systems, which are not considered prime farmland by the NRCS (see Table 4-13).

A Farmland Conversion Impact Rating Form (Form AD-1006) completed by the Lafourche Parish NRCS office is not required. The No-Action alternative would not impact farmlands.

<b>Alignment</b>	<b>Developed Land (ac)</b>	<b>Estuarine Emergent Wetland (ac)</b>
No-Action	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	1.0	0
Line B	1.0	0.7
Line C	1.0	0

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

### 4.14.2 Secondary Farmland Impacts

Secondary development at interchanges / intersections will not result in impacts to soils classified as prime farmland. However, soils classified as prime farmland between LA 1 and the Hurricane Protection Levee in south Golden Meadow potentially could be developed. These impacts can not be quantified at this time.

## 4.15 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 protects those properties that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended (49 U.S.C. 303) protects public parks, publicly owned recreation areas, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic and/or cultural resources of national, state or local significance from conversion to highway use unless there is no prudent or feasible alternative. In accordance with the requirements of Section 4(f), Section 106, the NEPA and Executive Order 11593, an assessment was made of the cultural resources in the Study Area.

A literature and records review was conducted to determine the locations of recorded archaeological and historic sites within the Study Area. Four prehistoric archaeological sites and one historic cemetery were located in the Study Area. The preliminary alignments would not impact any recorded archaeological sites or recorded historic structures.

A Geoarchaeological Study was conducted to identify areas of high probability for the occurrence of prehistoric cultural resources within each of the landforms mapped in the Study Area.

The FHWA, DOTD and the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) have reached a consensus for the completion of the cultural

resources efforts for this project. Terrestrial and underwater (magnetometer) archaeological and historic structure surveys will be conducted within the Selected Alignment identified in the Final EIS and Record of Decision once project right-of-way has been acquired. All sites located will be recorded and evaluated for their eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The surveys will be conducted and the findings submitted for SHPO evaluation and concurrence. Further agreements will be developed between the DOTD, FHWA, and the SHPO should the findings warrant such action. Significant sites and properties that would be adversely affected by the project may require data recovery or other mitigative techniques. All archaeological sites that warrant preservation in place will be avoided, provided that a prudent and feasible alternative for highway construction can be identified. This agreement is provided in the Appendix.

The No-Action alternative would not impact cultural resources in the Study Area.

#### 4.16 AIR QUALITY

Under the Clean Air Act of 1970, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for the protection of public health and welfare. The NAAQS addresses six major pollutants: Carbon Monoxide (CO), Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>), Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), Particulate Matter

(PM) and Lead (Pb). Of these pollutants, FHWA currently requires an evaluation of CO and O<sub>3</sub> for highway projects. PM is addressed with construction impact controls.

##### 4.16.1 Mesoscale (O<sub>3</sub>) Impacts and Issues

Lafourche Parish was designated by the EPA as an O<sub>3</sub> attainment area with limited maintenance plan requirements, effective February 25, 2002. The EPA made a conformity determination and ruled that the Parish complies with all conformity provisions of the State Implementation Plan. Correspondence is provided in the Appendix.

A mesoscale or "regional" analysis that examines the precursors of O<sub>3</sub> was not performed. It is unlikely that O<sub>3</sub> will be an impact for the following reasons:

- The project is not expected to increase the region's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT);
- In relation to any travel demand modeling required for any potential conformity issues, the project would be considered a non-significant parallel road relocation on either side of the existing LA 1 (It would be non-significant in regards to regional air quality because travel demand models are not sensitive enough to detect small changes in the roadway network), and;
- There is no predicted traffic volume inducement as a result of this project.

Overall, there is no expected change to the area's travel demand volumes other than some minor recirculation. Therefore, there would not be any subsequent changes to the regional air quality emissions burden.

Regional air quality would be unchanged for the No-Action alternative.

#### 4.16.2 Microscale (CO) Impacts and Issues

A microscale analysis to predict the generation and transportation of CO was not performed. The project is in a CO attainment area with enough diverse variables precluding the likelihood of having a CO impact according to the NAAQS.

It is unlikely that CO will be an impact for the following reasons:

- The project is not expected to change the local travel patterns other than minor access relocations. The through travel volumes are relocated only to either side of the existing route (LA 1);
- There are no signalized intersections in the immediate study area that could generate measurable idling emissions. Additionally, free flow conditions in this area are also not instrumental to notable CO concentrations;
- The subtropical climate [29° north latitude] is not conducive to notable CO levels because of the relative high minimum and maximum temperatures during the coldest month of the year. The average minimum and maximum

low temperatures for January are 41.8° and 60.8° F, respectively, as obtained from the local NOAA database, and;

- The predicted Design Year traffic volumes are also not conducive to CO issues because they are relatively low in regard to air quality.

#### 4.17 NOISE

A noise analysis was performed in accordance with the procedures and provisions of the DOTD Highway Traffic Noise Policy. The DOTD policy is approved and sanctioned by the FHWA and complies with the noise standards mandated by 23 U.S.C. 109(i).

The noise analysis included:

- Identification of existing activities, developed land, and undeveloped land which is planned, designed, and programmed
- Measurement of existing noise levels
- Prediction of Design Year No-Action noise levels
- Prediction of Design Year Build noise levels for all preliminary alignments
- Comparison of predicted noise levels to noise level guidelines
- Determination of traffic noise impacts, and
- Examination and evaluation of alternative noise abatement measures for reducing or eliminating the noise impacts.

#### 4.17.1 Prediction of Traffic Noise Levels

Traffic noise calculations were performed for the Design Year 2030 using the TNM 1.0b model. A 55-mph speed was used for the proposed highway. The fleet mix is based on vehicle classifications for the area and is comprised of 83% autos, 5% medium trucks, and 12% heavy trucks. (DOTD and

Michael Baker Jr., Inc., 2000). Approximately 110 locations were modeled to account for receptor sites most likely affected by the proposed project.

Table 4-14 shows the DOTD Noise Activity Category (NAC) criteria for various land use activity categories.

Activity Category	$L_{eq}(h)$	Description of Activity Category
A	56 (Exterior)	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	66 (Exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries and hospitals.
C	71 (Exterior)	Developed lands, properties, or activities not included in Categories A or B above.
D	--	Undeveloped lands.
E	51 (Interior)	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals and auditoriums.

Source: DOTD Highway Traffic Noise Policy, October 1997.

In situations where the DOTD NAC is approached or exceeded at any receptor location, noise abatement must be considered. Activity Category B, representative of residences, schools, churches and parks, was used as the criteria for sensitive receptors identified in this analysis. Additionally, Activity Category C receptors were also noted when businesses were part of a mixed land use area. The approach criteria are defined as 1 dBA less than the DOTD NAC.

When the DOTD NAC criteria was not met, the substantial noise increase criteria established by DOTD is considered.

Abatement must be considered if, as a result of the proposed action, the noise level at a particular site increases by 10 or more decibels over the existing condition.

#### 4.17.2 Traffic Noise Impacts

Noise impacts are determined based on the degree to which the projected noise levels approach or

exceed the established noise level activity category criteria and by how much the levels increase over the existing condition as a result of the proposed highway. Results of the noise analysis for each receptor area under all conditions modeled are presented in Table 4-15. Exhibit 4-2 shows the approximate receptor locations.

#### ***DOTD NAC Criteria Exceeded***

Table 4-15 presents the number of sensitive receptors that would equal or exceed the DOTD criteria. There are 14 receptors that currently approach or exceed the DOTD NAC for the existing condition. In the Design Year 2030, the predicted impacts would be 28 for the No-Action alternative. For the Build alternatives, in Design Year 2030, there are no DOTD NAC criteria impacts due to the diversion of local traffic to the new highway.

#### ***Exceedance of DOTD Substantial Increase Criteria***

Table 4-16 shows the number of sensitive receptors where a substantial increase in noise would occur due to the proposed highway. For these criteria, all preliminary alignments impact 3 sensitive receptors.

The DOTD Substantial Increase Criteria does not apply to the existing condition and was predicted to be zero for the No-Action alternative.

#### ***Exceedance of Both Criteria***

The total number of noise impacts is shown in Table 4-16. The existing condition would have 14

total impacts. In the Design Year 2030, the No-Action alternative would have 28 total impacts. The Build alternatives, in Design Year 2030, would impact three sensitive receptors.

#### ***Noise Abatement***

Noise abatement must be considered for sites when the DOTD NAC is approached or exceeded at any receptor location. In Louisiana, the approach criteria is 66 dBA for Category B receptors and the substantial increase criteria is 10 or more dBA over existing conditions. If a noise impact is identified, the abatement measures listed herein must be considered.

When noise abatement measures are being considered, every effort would be made to obtain noise reductions of at least 8 dBA for at least one receptor and other benefited receptors having at least a 5 dBA insertion loss.

Mitigation measures are not required for the existing conditions or the Design Year No-Action alternative because these measures are only analyzed for Type I highway noise impacts. Type I noise abatement measures are included as part of highway construction. The Alternatives Study included efforts to avoid or minimize noise impacts to sensitive receptors through alignment shifts and overall avoidance of residential areas.

**Table 4-15  
EXISTING AND PREDICTED SOUND LEVELS**

Receptor ID	Land Use	Estimated $L_{90}(h)$ dBA				
		Existing	No Action	Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	Line B	Line C
R1	Residential	53	56	66	66	66
R2	Residential	55	59	60	60	60
R3	Residential	57	61	58	58	58
R4	Residential	59	63	56	56	56
R5	Residential	63	67	56	56	56
R6	Residential	53	57	61	61	61
R7	Residential	55	59	59	59	59
R8	Residential	56	60	57	57	57
R9	Residential	59	63	56	56	56
R10	Residential	62	66	55	55	55
R11	Residential	53	56	61	61	61
R12	Residential	53	57	59	59	59
R13	Residential	53	57	58	58	58
R14	Residential	54	58	57	57	57
R15	Residential	56	60	56	56	56
R16	Residential	58	62	55	55	55
R17	Residential	57	61	55	55	55
R18	Residential	62	66	54	54	54
R19	Residential	53	54	62	62	62
R20	Residential	53	56	58	58	58
R21	Residential	53	57	57	57	57
R22	Residential	54	58	56	56	56
R23	Residential	56	60	54	54	54
R24	Residential	58	62	54	54	54
R25	Residential	60	64	54	54	54
R27 (1)	Residential	53	53	62	62	62
R28	Residential	53	54	59	59	59
R29	Residential	53	55	58	58	58
R30	Residential	53	57	55	55	55
R31	Residential	53	53	64	64	64
R32	Residential	53	53	61	61	61
R33	Residential	53	53	60	60	60
R34	Residential	53	53	59	59	59
R35	Residential	53	54	56	56	56
R36	Residential	53	57	55	55	55
R37	Residential	53	57	54	54	54

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Note 1: shaded areas warrant noise mitigation consideration according to DOTD policy.

Note 2: number in parenthesis corresponds to field measurement site shown in Exhibit 4-2.

Note 3: R/W Indicates a potential right-of-way acquisition.



**Table 4-15 (cont.)  
EXISTING AND PREDICTED SOUND LEVELS**

Receptor ID	Land Use	Estimated L <sub>adj</sub> (h) dBA				
		Existing	No. Action	Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	Line B	Line C
R38	Residential	55	59	53	53	53
R39	Residential	56	60	52	52	52
R40	Residential	53	53	63	63	63
R41	Residential	53	53	60	60	60
R42	Residential	53	53	59	59	59
R43	Residential	53	53	60	60	60
R44	Residential	53	53	56	56	56
R45	Residential	53	55	54	54	54
R46	Residential	53	53	57	57	57
R47	Residential	53	53	62	62	62
R48	Residential	53	53	60	60	60
R49	Residential	53	53	56	56	56
R50	Residential	53	53	54	54	54
R51	Residential	61	65	51	51	51
R52	Residential	62	66	52	52	52
R53	Residential	59	63	51	51	51
R54	Residential	57	61	50	50	50
R55	Residential	59	63	50	50	50
R56	Residential	63	67	52	52	52
R57	Residential	64	68	53	53	53
R58	Residential	57	61	49	49	49
R59	Residential	56	60	49	49	49
R60	Residential	66	70	55	61	56
R61	Residential	64	68	53	59	54
R62	Residential	60	64	49	53	52
R63	Residential	66	70	55	61	56
R64	Residential	68	72	57	63	57
R65	Residential	65	69	53	59	55
R66	Residential	68	72	56	62	57
R67	Residential	65	69	53	58	55
R68	Residential	70	74	58	59	60
R69	Residential	65	69	53	54	59
R71	Residential	60	64	54	49	54
R72	Residential	61	65	54	49	54
R73	Residential	60	64	55	49	55
R74	Residential	62	66	55	52	55

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Note 1: shaded areas warrant noise mitigation consideration according to DOTD policy.

Note 2: number in parenthesis corresponds to field measurement sites shown in Exhibit 4-2.

Note 3: R/W indicates a potential right-of-way acquisition.

**Table 4-15 (cont.)  
EXISTING AND PREDICTED SOUND LEVELS**

Receptor ID	Land Use	Estimated L <sub>eq</sub> (h) dBA				
		Existing	No-Action	Line A (Draft EIS Preferred)	Line B	Line C
R75	Residential	60	64	54	52	54
R76 (3)	Residential	58	62	54	51	54
R77	Residential	72	76	60	60	60
R78	Residential	60	64	56	53	56
R79	Residential	58	62	56	52	56
R80	Residential	59	63	57	53	57
R81	Residential	70	74	59	59	59
R82	Residential	65	69	57	57	57
R83 (4)	Residential	69	73	59	59	59
R84	Residential	58	62	57	53	57
R85	Residential	59	63	57	53	57
R86	Residential	56	60	57	52	57
R87	Residential	68	72	57	57	57
R88	Residential	74	78	R/W	57	R/W
R89	Residential	71	75	R/W	56	R/W
R90	Residential	70	74	57	57	57
R91	Residential	68	72	57	57	57
R92	Residential	59	63	57	56	57
R93	Residential	58	62	58	56	58
R94	Residential	71	75	59	59	59
Comm1	Commercial	62	66	R/W	R/W	R/W
Comm2	Mixed Comm/ Residential	53	55	64	64	64
Comm3	Commercial	61	65	52	52	52
Comm4	Commercial	68	72	57	63	57
Comm5	Commercial	63	67	52	54	52
Comm6	Commercial	51	55	55	52	55
Comm7	Commercial	63	67	58	58	58
Comm8	Commercial	56	60	48	48	48
Comm9	Commercial	65	69	65	65	65
Comm10	Commercial	51	55	53	53	53
Comm11 (5)	Commercial	55	59	55	55	55
Comm12	Commercial	52	58	54	54	54
Comm13	Commercial	56	60	56	56	56
Comm14	Commercial	57	61	57	57	57
Comm15	Commercial	64	68	56	52	60
Comm16	Commercial	62	66	54	54	54
Cem1	Surgney Cemetery	53	53	54	54	54
Church1 (2)	Smiths Memorial Shrine	64	68	53	54	61

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Note 1: shaded areas warrant noise mitigation consideration according to DOTD policy.

Note 2: number in parenthesis corresponds to field measurement sites shown in Exhibit 4-2.

Note 3: R/W indicates a potential right-of-way acquisition.

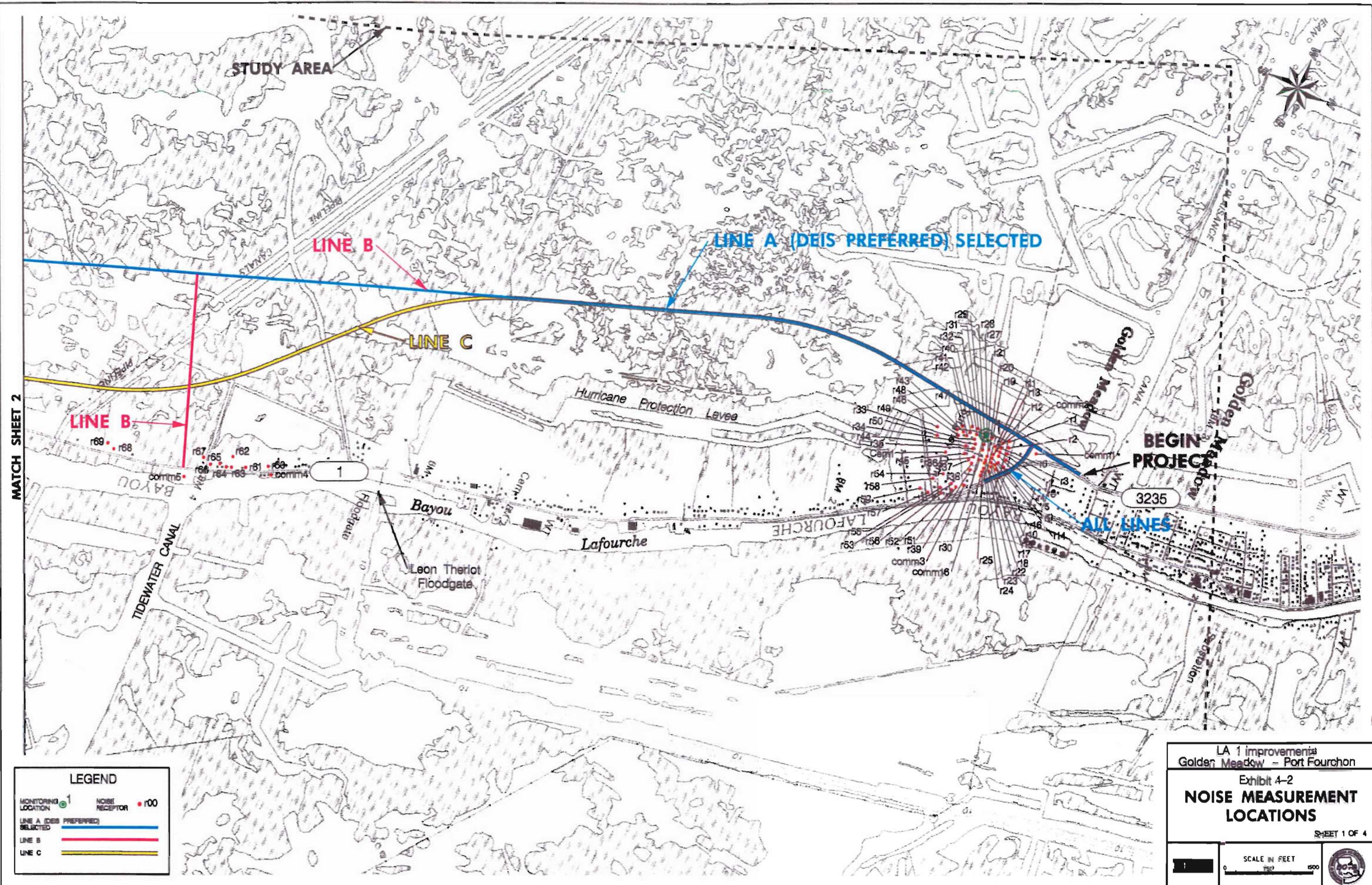
**Table 4-16  
NOISE IMPACT SUMMARY**

	Existing Year	2030 Design Year No-Action	2030 Design Year Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	2030 Design Year Line B	2030 Design Year Line C
Total Number of Sensitive Receptors	110	110	110	110	110
Sensitive Receptors Exceeding the DOTD Noise Abatement Criteria*	14	28	0	0	0
Sensitive Receptors with Substantial Noise Increase Criteria **	Not Applicable	0	3	3	3
Total Receptors Impacted	14	28	3	3	3

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

\* Approach Criteria is 66 dBA for Category B receptors

\*\* An Increase of 10 or more dBA over the existing condition



MATCH SHEET 2

**LEGEND**

MONITORING LOCATION 1 NOISE RECEPTOR r00

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED

LINE B


LINE C

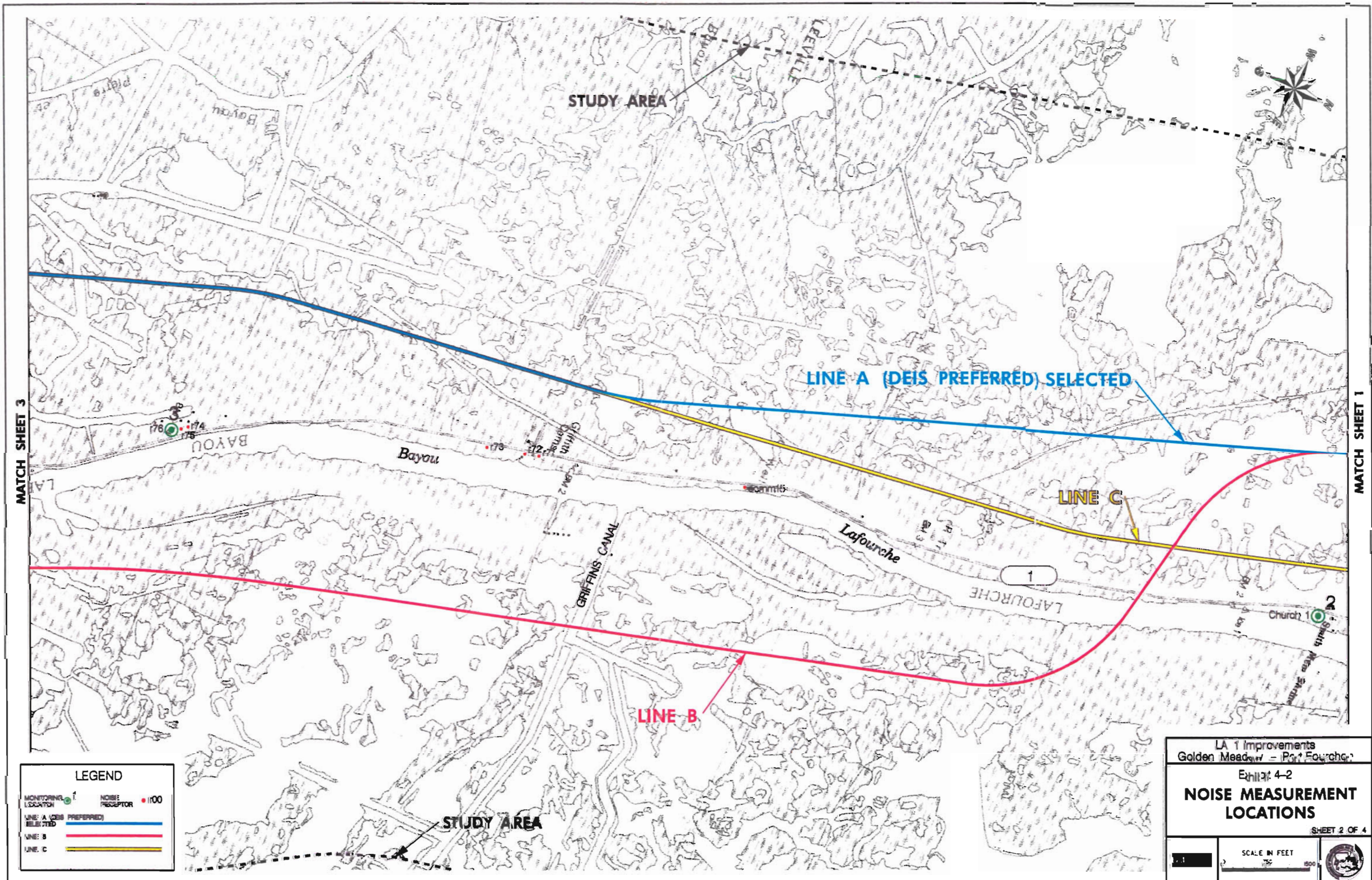
LA 1 improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon

Exhibit 4-2  
**NOISE MEASUREMENT LOCATIONS**

SHEET 1 OF 4

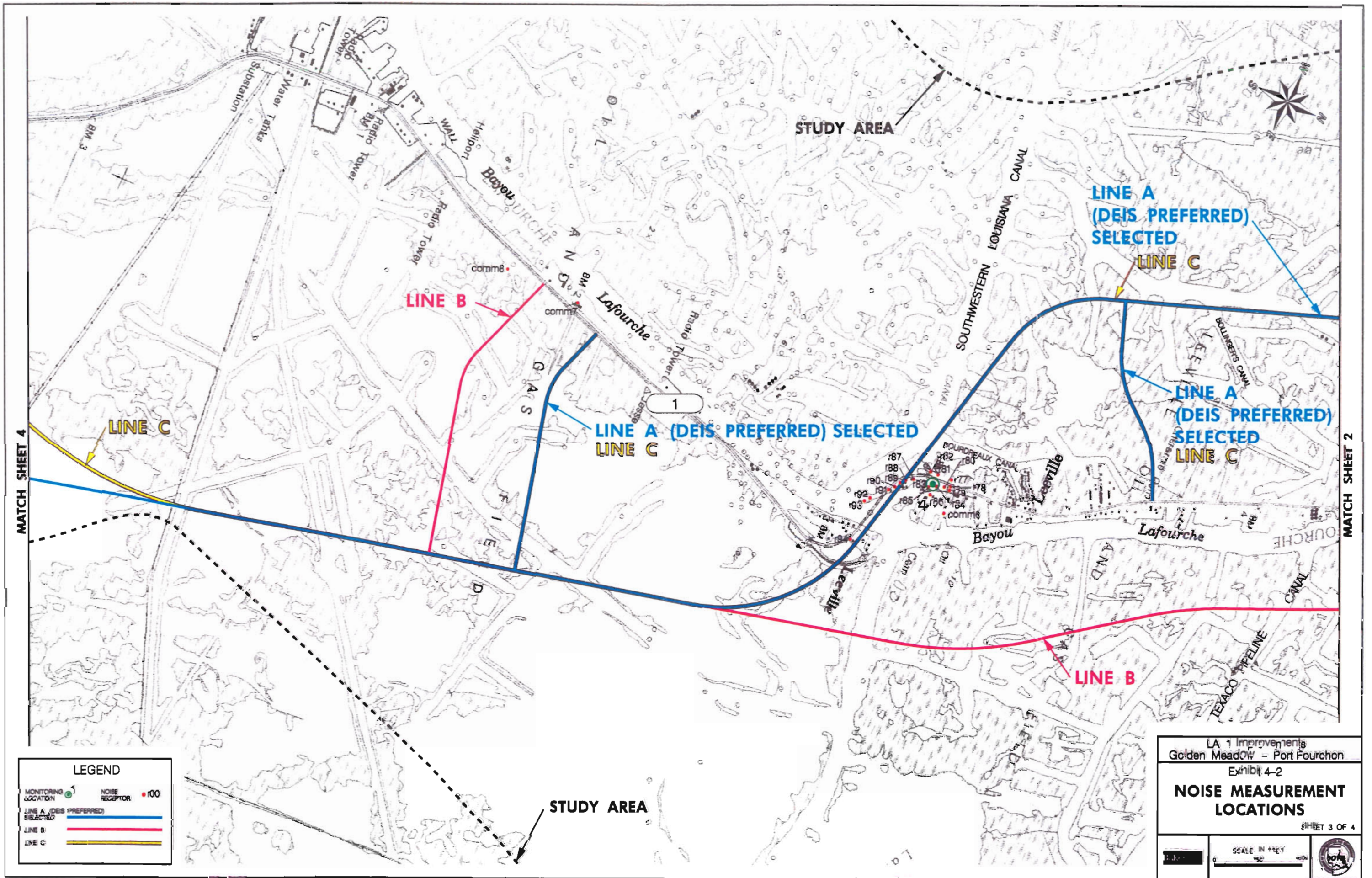
SCALE IN FEET  
0 500 1000





MATCH SHEET 3



MATCH SHEET 1





MATCH SHEET 4


MATCH SHEET 2

**LEGEND**

MONITORING LOCATION  NOISE RECEPTOR  780

LINE A (DEIS PREFERRED) SELECTED 


LINE B 

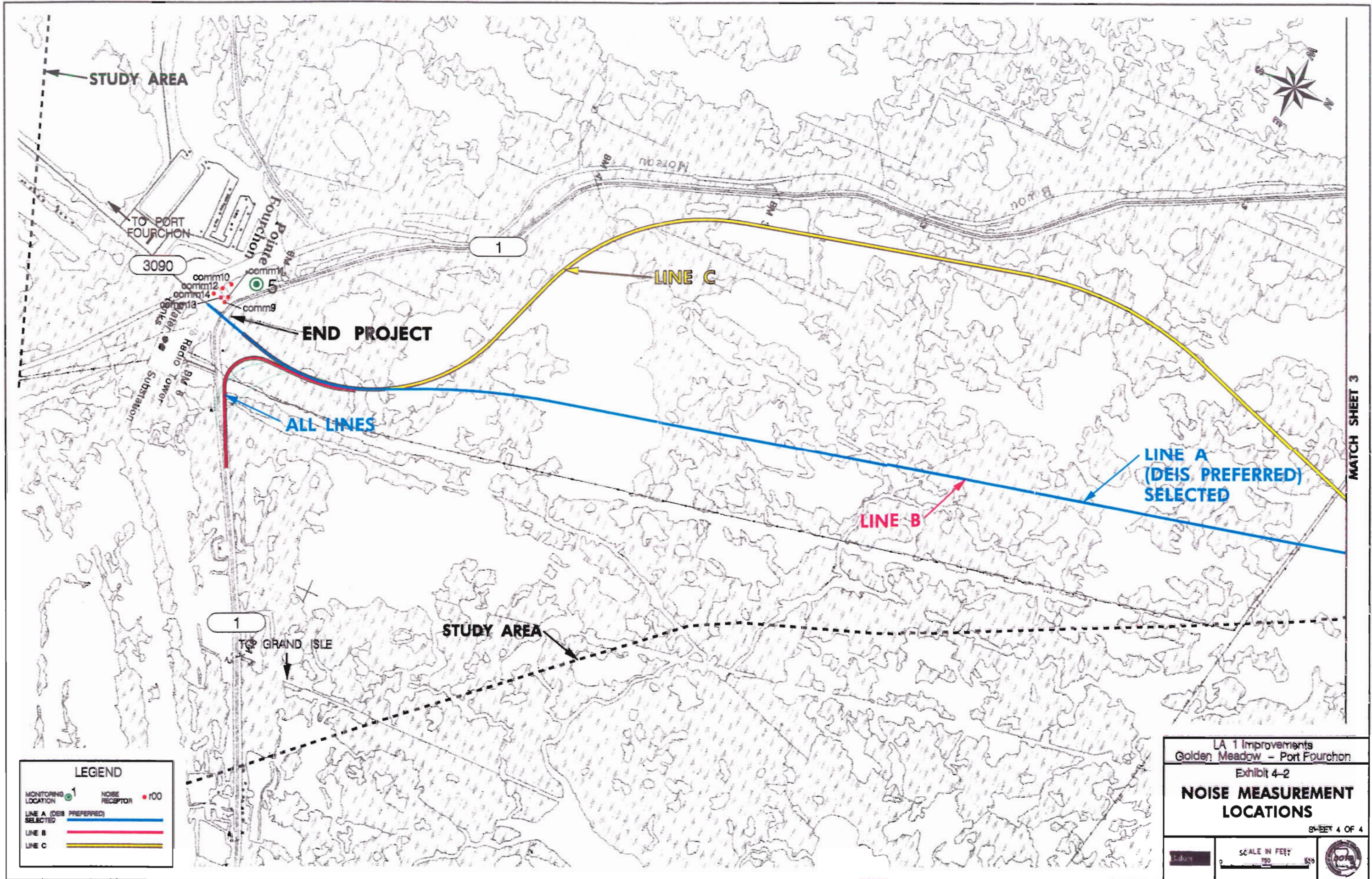
LINE C 

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
Exhibit 4-2  
**NOISE MEASUREMENT LOCATIONS**

SHEET 3 OF 4

SCALE IN FEET





### 4.17.3 Noise Abatement Measures

The DOTD Highway Traffic Noise Policy identifies several types of noise abatement measures that could be considered to mitigate noise impacts of the proposed highway. These measures include:

- Traffic management measures
- Alteration of vertical and horizontal alignments
- Acquisition of property rights for construction of noise barriers
- Noise insulation of public use or nonprofit institutional structures
- Construction of noise barriers.

Traffic management measures typically include control devices and signing for prohibition of certain vehicle types, time-use restrictions for certain vehicle types, and modified speed limits. However, the restriction of heavy vehicles or time-use restrictions by prohibitive signing on the proposed highway does not serve the need to help reduce congestion on the local roadway system. The restrictions would also be difficult to enforce. In addition, the abandonment and demolition of the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge would create a physical north-south travel barrier necessitating the use of the proposed highway to cross the Southwestern Louisiana Canal and Bayou Lafourche.

Horizontal and/or vertical realignments at affected areas were investigated and determined not feasible to minimize noise impacts. The preliminary alignments were developed to minimize

and/or avoid impacts to potentially sensitive areas. Any significant sound level reductions at impacted locations resulting from horizontal modifications may require large shifts in the alignment. This could entail additional property acquisition, require additional environmental studies, and could expose other areas to noise from the proposed project. Vertical alignment alteration was not considered a feasible noise abatement measure. Depressing the roadway would put the alignment below the 100-year base flood elevation. Most of the proposed alignment is on structure and elevating the roadway further would only serve to propagate the highway sounds farther away from its source.

Generally, the DOTD would build reasonable and feasible noise barriers within the right-of-way acquired for the highway. The acquisition of additional right-of-way for the construction of noise barriers is not a reasonable abatement measure at any location because of the berm barrier height necessary to mitigate the elevated highway noise impacts and the limited available upland area to place such a barrier.

Sound insulation abatement measures for public institutions are not warranted because there were no sites that qualified under this criterion. Therefore, no further consideration is warranted.

Of the noise abatement measures identified in the DOTD policy, barrier walls would provide the greatest degree of noise attenuation for the proposed highway. A solid, acoustically opaque



barrier (barrier wall) can theoretically reduce noise exposure to a property by as much as 15 to 20 dBA, although a typical reduction is approximately 5 to 10 dBA. The barriers can be constructed from common building materials such as concrete, wood, plastic, and recycled products. The design can range from relatively simple straight-line walls to complex designs that blend in with local features such as terrain and neighborhood characteristics. The materials should be rigid and sufficiently dense to provide adequate mitigation and drainage, while at the same time be attractive, durable, and relatively maintenance free. Both the on-site cost and the degree of noise attenuation must be considered when selecting barrier wall materials. In addition, it is unlikely that any one barrier wall type or material would be applicable in every situation, however, preliminary costs of \$25 per square foot were based on ground mounted concrete barriers.

For maximum effectiveness, barriers should be as close as possible to either the source or the receiver and should be high and long enough to adequately mitigate the site. Space limitations and public involvement often help in the determination of the type of barrier used. In some cases, the wall may serve to control access and eliminate the need and cost of right-of-way fencing.

#### 4.17.4 Determination of Reasonableness and Feasibility

The DOTD would identify both noise abatement measures which are reasonable and feasible and which are likely to be incorporated in the project. Noise abatement considerations evaluate both feasibility and reasonableness. The feasibility of mitigating noise impacts deals with quantitative elements such as topography, access points, drainage, safety, maintenance requirements, other noise sources, and whether the proposed insertion of a barrier provides sound level reductions by a minimum of 8 dBA for at least one receptor.

Reasonableness is based on such factors as the cost effectiveness of protecting an isolated or small number of receptors, exposed wall heights, distances to receptors from the mitigation source, a minimum decibel change of at least 5 dBA over the existing or future No-action levels, residential support or desires for noise abatement features, and concerns for physical and visual access to commercial establishments. DOTD noise policy limits the cost of a noise abatement measure to a maximum of \$15,000 per benefited receptor. Where noise abatement considerations are warranted, every reasonable effort will be made to achieve adequate noise level reductions for locations where the levels exceed the DOTD NAC or where the projected noise levels exceed the substantial increase criteria.

### ***Preliminary Noise Abatement Analysis***

A preliminary analysis addressed the receptors that required noise abatement consideration. The following locations were analyzed according to the conditions for implementing noise barriers. Preliminary abatement results were obtained by evaluating areas representative of the noise measurement locations that may warrant noise abatement consideration. These estimates are assumed to be worst-case conditions and, if implemented, would most likely require less than the noise barrier lengths stated.

For preliminary analysis purposes, a barrier height of 13 feet and a cost of \$25 per square foot was assumed to calculate potential barrier costs.

- **Area #1** – Receptor ID numbers R1-R59, Comm1, Comm2, Comm3, Comm16, and Cem1 (Surgney Cemetery). These receptors are located in the northern part of the Study Area in Golden Meadow. There are a total of 64 receptors in this area that include 59 residential, 4 commercial, and 1 cemetery receptor. All alignments would impact 3 residences, which are not adjacent to each other. Separate barriers would not be considered effective. An estimated minimum barrier length of 1,146 feet would be required with additional costs for barrier on structure. Ten receptors would be benefited at a cost of \$37,240 per receptor. A noise barrier is not a reasonable noise abatement measure because

the cost per benefited receptor exceeds the cost reasonableness criteria established by DOTD.

Currently, there are no reasonable or feasible noise abatement measures that would eliminate or reduce the expected highway traffic noise impact at the identified receptors.

During final design, the DOTD will consider the incorporation of design elements or the use of materials that may assist in reducing noise impacts at the identified receptors. Existing research has not documented the effectiveness of either certain design elements or materials as being identifiably effective in reducing noise impacts.

### **4.18 HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

The preliminary alignments would not impact known potential hazardous waste sites.

A Phase I Site Assessment was conducted on the upland areas of the alignments. A complete site assessment will be conducted on the Selected Alignment identified in the Final EIS and Record of Decision. If areas of contamination are present, appropriate measures would be taken to remediate the area prior to construction.

The No-Action alternative would not impact hazardous waste sites.

**4.19 COASTAL BARRIERS**

Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has occurred throughout the project development process.

The southeastern most portion of the Study Area lies within the Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit – Caminada S03. Exhibit 4-3 shows the relationship between the preliminary alignments and this Coastal Barrier Unit.

The length of coastal barrier encroachment by the preliminary alignments is presented in Table 4-17.

LA 1 from I-10 at Port Allen to LA 3090 at Port Fourchon is designated as a principal arterial of the National Highway System (NHS) because of its intermodal link to the nation's energy supply. The proposed action qualifies for an exception to the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA 1982) because it is critical to the exploration, extraction and transportation of energy resources provided through and supported by Port Fourchon.

The Draft EIS was submitted to the FWS for a CBRA exceptions review. The FWS granted an exemption to the CBRA for this project under 16 USC Section 3505(a)(1). Correspondence is provided in the Appendix. The No-Action alternative would not impact any established Coastal Barrier Units.

**Table 4-17  
COASTAL BARRIER ENCROACHMENT**

Alignment	Total Length (mile)	Encroachment Length (mile)
No-Action	0	0
Line A (Draft EIS Preferred) Selected	16.34	1.45
Line B	16.20	1.45
Line C	16.92	1.64

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Line C would have the greatest encroachment, while Line A (Selected) and Line B would have the least.

Direct and temporary impacts as they pertain to issues such as wetlands, essential fish habitat, and water quality within this Coastal Barrier Unit are discussed throughout Section 4. All preliminary alignments would have similar impacts.

Policies regarding transportation facilities in the four "Conservation" EMUs is not addressed. A stated goal of the Leeville EMU is the continued industrial concentration in the Leeville area.

Although beyond the Study Area, a stated goal of the Jefferson Parish Grand Isle EMU is the planned development in the Town of Grand Isle. Grand Isle is primarily recreational and residential with limited industrial and commercial use (Jefferson 1985). Grand Isle would be served by the proposed action.

LADNR has issued a Coastal Use Permit Application (P-991341) for the project. The proposed action is a use of state concern and in accordance with the Louisiana Revised Statute 49:214.5 will be processed through a Joint Public Notice System with the COE. Correspondence with the LADNR is located in the Appendix. A Coastal Use Permit Application will be prepared and submitted to the LADNR for review after the Record of Decision has been signed.

The No-Action alternative would not impact any established Lafourche Parish CZM Program EMU.

#### **4.21 INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHER MAJOR FEDERAL ACTIONS**

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources are implementing the "Marsh Creation South of Leeville" Project (BA-29/BA-32a, CWPPRA Priority Project List 9). The project is part of Region 3 of the Coast 2050 Plan and is funded and authorized

in accordance with the provisions of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) (16 USC Section 3951-3956) and has been approved by the PL 101-646 Task Force.

Exhibit 4-1 shows the preliminary alignments and their relationship to the marsh creation project. Property owner identification is underway and is advancing slowly due to the large number of property owners involved. The marsh creation site design has not begun (Peckham 2001). The proposed action would traverse the marsh creation project, as originally planned, but should not preclude the full development of the site.

Coordination with the EPA and the LADNR has occurred throughout the project development process.

The No-Action alternative would not impact the marsh creation project.

#### **4.22 ENERGY**

With the exception of the No-Action alternative, construction of any alignments would require short-term energy consumption. Construction related energy consumption would be generally based on the construction cost of the alternative. The amount of energy required for the production and placement of materials (asphalt, structures, cut, fill, etc.) during construction would be a fixed cost. Construction related energy consumption would be offset over the life of the project by the energy efficiencies gained with the use of an improved

#### 4.20 COASTAL ZONES

Coordination with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Division (LADNR) and Lafourche Parish has occurred throughout the project development process.

Exhibit 4-4 shows the relationship between the preliminary alignments and the Lafourche Parish Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program Environmental Management Units (EMU). Lafourche Parish is divided into 16 Environmental Management Units (EMU) for the purpose of recognizing environmental differences within the Parish. The preliminary alignments traverse five Parish EMU's, South Lafourche A, Golden Meadow, Raccourci, South Barataria (Area A) and Leeville.

The South Lafourche A EMU is classified as "Intensive Development", which includes all types of normal industrial, commercial, and residential activity that would normally be associated with intensive human habitation of an area. These areas are not normally subject to permitting under the CZM Program (Lafourche 1985). Continued commercial, industrial and residential development is encouraged in the EMU due to large areas of open space still available and protected by the HPL.

South Lafourche A EMU Policy 9 also states that the construction of relocated LA 1 should be completed as quickly as possible to allow proper

evacuation of the lower coastal zone into this area, as well as alleviate traffic congestion along existing LA 1.

The four remaining EMU's are classified as "Conservation", which includes large areas of marsh, cheniers, and some swamp forest. This classification discourages human habitation or other extensive land uses that would negate or impede the function of the ecosystem and exacerbate land loss and/or saltwater intrusion (Lafourche 1985).

The Lafourche Parish CZM Program recognizes that, even though, the majority of the EMU's are designated "Conservation", important corridors of transportation and nodes of development have existed in the past and still are being used to facilitate commerce and access to the coast. These corridors can and do support more intensive development than the surrounding wetlands and are treated differently regarding the issuing of permits (Lafourche 1985).

The General Policies of the Lafourche Parish CZM Program as modified by specific policies of the affected EMUs provide guidance on discouraging dredging, limiting creation of additional canals/channels and maintaining spoil banks; controlling hazardous materials and prohibiting illegal dumping; and issuing permits for permanent structures.

transportation facility. The LA 1 Improvements project would improve fuel efficiencies due to higher levels of service resulting from uniform speeds, less congestion, and free flow of traffic. As traffic is diverted to the proposed highway, previously congested segments of LA 1 and other area roadways would experience a decrease in traffic. Consequently, the operating efficiency would likely improve on most of these roads, improving levels of service, reducing travel times between destinations, and in turn reducing overall fuel consumption.

#### 4.23 CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

Construction activities for the proposed highway would impact the environment with most being classified as "short-term". The most common impacts associated with the construction of the proposed highway include open water and wetlands impacts, EFH impacts resulting from wetland habitat loss; temporary degradation of air, noise, and water quality; temporary disruption of traffic including maintenance, control, and safety concerns; the stockpiling and disposal of construction materials; and the effects of pile driving operations.

Construction in and adjacent to, waterways and within EFH can involve dredging and/or filling activities that result in elevated solids emanating from the project area. The distance the turbidity plume moves from the point of origin is dependent upon tides, currents, nature of the substrate,

construction activities, and the preventive measures employed. Excessive turbidities can abrade sensitive epithelial tissues, clog gills, decrease egg buoyancy, and reduce light penetration, thereby effecting photosynthesis of phytoplankton and submerged vegetation thereby causing localized oxygen depression. Suspended sediments subsequently settle, which can destroy or degrade shellfish beds and spawning sites (GOMFMC 1998).

Except for the fixed-span high-level bridges, construction of the proposed highway would utilize "end on" construction methods as a means of minimize disturbance to the EFH and marsh vegetation (see Section 2.5).

The fixed-span high-level bridges cannot be constructed using "end on" construction techniques due to the roadway grade and structure height. Conventional construction techniques would be used. Temporary construction barges used as a mat across the marsh areas, temporary low-level bridges constructed using "end on" construction, and temporary haul roads could be utilized. Fill material for the haul roads would be obtained from outside the Study Area. Construction canal dredging could be used, but was identified by the resource agencies as the least desirable construction method due to residual resource impacts.

Temporary construction impacts are difficult to predict because they depend on the Contractor's

individual construction techniques and available equipment. Construction of the fixed-span high-level bridges would result in impacts to open water and wetland areas and EFH habitat due to the use of any combination of temporary construction barges, temporary low-level bridges, temporary haul roads, or dredging. Dredging would be the least desirable construction method. Adequate access to the work area and the avoidance of known archaeological sites at Leeville may dictate the construction methods and their location.

Sufficient upland area exists at Golden Meadow, Leeville and Port Fourchon for construction staging and other construction related activities. Impacts to open water and wetland areas and EFH habitat is not anticipated.

Temporary construction impacts would be minimized to the extent possible and appropriate mitigation provided, including pre- and post-construction monitoring. Temporary construction barges and low-level bridges and their piles would be removed and the wetlands restored. Temporary haul roads would be lowered to marsh elevation and vegetation planted. Construction canals would be filled to pre-construction elevations. The DOTD will coordinate mitigation requirements with the COE, the NMFS, and other state and federal resource agencies, as appropriate.

A traffic control plan for each phase of construction would be developed during final design. To ensure driver and worker safety, all construction work

zones would adhere to current DOTD policies and procedures. The construction contractor would be required to meet the traffic maintenance requirements of DOTD's *Standard Specifications of Roads and Bridges* and the requirements of the traffic control plan.

LA 1, LA 3235 and LA 3090 would remain open to through and local traffic during construction. Continuous and safe access would be provided to all adjoining properties, and operations would be conducted so that the inconvenience to property owners would be held to a minimum.

Contractors would be required to observe and comply with all federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, and regulations that affect the conduct of the construction work. In addition, standard procedures contained in DOTD's *Standard Specifications of Roads and Bridges* that pertain to environmental protection would be followed. These procedures would be incorporated as General Conditions in the construction contract documents, and the construction manager and DOTD Resident Engineer would be responsible for enforcing compliance.

Construction activities can have a short-term impact on local air quality during periods of site preparation with particulate matter, also known as fugitive dust, having the greatest impact. This impact would typically occur in association with excavation and earth moving, asphalt aggregate handling, heavy equipment operation, use of haul

roads and wind erosion of exposed areas and material storage piles. The effect of fugitive dust would be negligible due to the type of project and the nature of the construction activities. Any necessary abatement measures will be in accordance with DOTDs *Standard Specifications of Roads and Bridges*.

Construction noise would vary greatly with the type of equipment in use at any particular time and the phase of construction activity. Noise levels during construction therefore would fluctuate greatly.

Construction operations, and associated noise, would be restricted to daytime hours in developed areas. Control of construction noise at the source is the most effective means to reduce noise. Construction equipment would comply with the noise standards adopted by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). All noise abatement measures will be in accordance with DOTDs *Standard Specifications of Roads and Bridges*.

Line A (Selected) and Line C would have similar temporary construction impacts. Line B would have greater temporary construction impacts due to the construction of two fixed-span high-level bridge crossings, at Bayou Lafourche approximately 1.9 miles downstream of the Leon Theriot Floodgate, and at the Southwestern Louisiana Canal.

The No-Action alternative would not result in any construction impacts.

#### 4.24 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Cumulative impacts are defined as those impacts that "result from the incremental consequences of an action when added to other past and reasonably foreseeable future actions" (Banks 1992). While the improvement of the Study Area transportation network could contribute to the region's growth, many other factors influence the location, expenditures, and timing of future residential, commercial, and industrial development, making it difficult to quantify the cumulative consequences of a particular action. Cumulative impacts would be similar for all preliminary alignments.

For this project, foreseeable actions were defined as those actions for which plans exist. One large scale action planned for the Study Area is the CWPPRA Marsh Creation Project (BA-29/BA-32a) south of Leeville. This project would create an estimated 153 acres of marsh habitat in a large open water area adjacent to LA 1. Sediment would be dredged from an open water area northeast of the marsh creation site. Development of this project would convert shallow waterbottoms and the water column to marsh.

Although beyond the Study Area, the COE has cited an increase in development pressure on Grand Isle, in Jefferson Parish, resulting from the recent completion of a new waterline. No specific actions were identified.



No other federal or private actions for major developments in the Study Area have been made public.

#### 4.25 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LOCAL SHORT-TERM USES AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Short-term impacts to the human and natural environment are anticipated by the construction of the proposed highway. Impacts to the human environment would include the relocation of families and businesses. The DOTD relocation program would minimize this inconvenience to the extent possible.

Short-term impacts to the natural environment would include erosion and siltation of bayous, marsh wetlands and open water. Implementation of an approved erosion and sedimentation control plan would minimize these impacts. Long-term impacts to wetlands involve fill required for construction of connector roads to the proposed highway. Successful creation or restoration of wetland habitat would mitigate for these long-term impacts. Short-term wildlife impacts would involve the disruption and displacement of species during construction. Long-term impacts would include the conversion of vegetative cover to a transportation use.

The proposed LA 1 Improvements project has been designated as a principal arterial of the National Highway System (NHS). LA 1 is included as part of

the NHS because of its intermodal link to the nation's energy supply.

#### 4.26 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES

Construction of the proposed highway would require a commitment of land, labor, natural resources, and financial resources. Land used for the proposed highway would be considered an irreversible commitment during the life of the facility. If a greater need arises for the use of this land in the future, the highway could be converted to another use. However, presently, there is no need to consider that this would occur.

Labor, construction materials, and fossil fuels for construction vehicles and equipment would be used during construction. Labor and natural resources would be used to fabricate construction materials. Generally, these materials are not retrievable. The use of these materials would not have an adverse effect on the continued availability of these resources.

Construction of the proposed highway would require funding from Federal and State sources. These funds would be committed to the construction and maintenance of the facility and not available for other uses.

The No-Action alternative would not require an expenditure of these resources.

## Section 5: LIST OF PREPARERS

### Federal Highway Administration

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Robert V. Mahoney	Environmental Specialist – M.S. degree in Civil Engineering
Multidisciplinary Review Team	Review Assistance

### Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

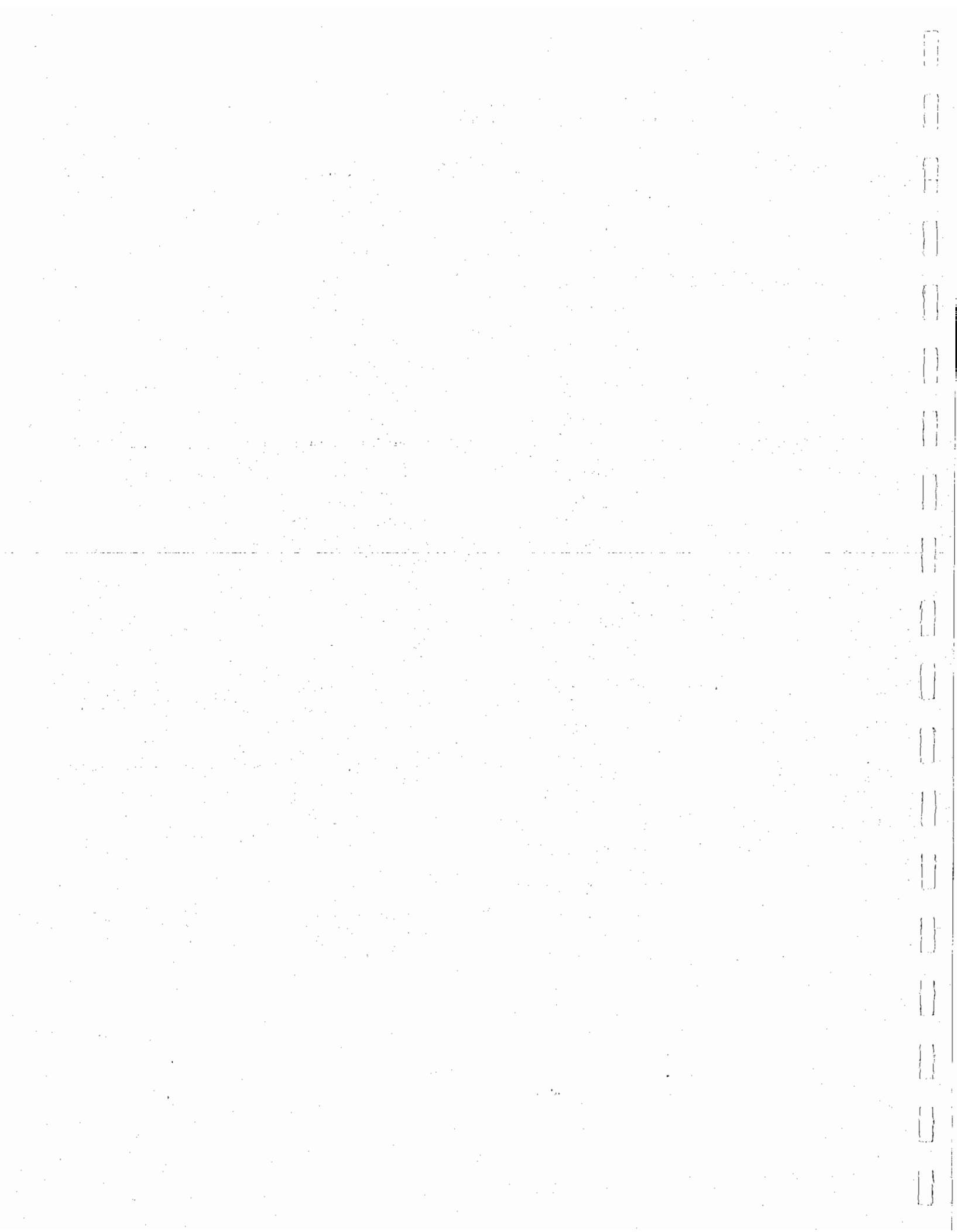
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Interdisciplinary Staff	Review Assistance

### Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.	Project Manager – M.S. degree in Civil Engineering
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LuAnn N. May	Senior GIS Analyst – B.S. degree in Management Information Systems
David M. Bednar, Jr., P.G.	Geologist – B.S. degree in Geology and M.S. degree in Earth Science
James P. Mooney	Cultural Resources Specialist – M.A. degree in Anthropology
Susan M. Mooney	Cultural Resources Specialist – M.A. degree in Anthropology
Andrew P. Kuchta	Senior Environmental Scientist – B.A. degree in Geography Community Urban and Regional Planning Concentration
Randy D. Luketic	GIS Technician
Steven J. Hinks	Cultural Resources Specialist – M.A. degree in Anthropology / Historical Archaeology
Marilyn E. Waddell	Administrative Assistance

### Subconsultants

Barry G. Brupbacher Senior Planner	DMJM+Harris, Inc. M.S. degree in Urban Studies
Om P. Dixit, P.E. Vice President	DMJM+Harris, Inc. M.S. degree in Civil Engineering and Masters degree in Business Administration



## Section 6: DISTRIBUTION OF STATEMENT

Copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement have been distributed to the following agencies and organizations:

<b>FEDERAL AGENCIES</b>	
William L. Conner Attn: Mr. Ronald J. Ventola Chief, Regulatory Functions Branch Commander, Department of the Army New Orleans District Corps of Engineers P.O. Box 60267 New Orleans LA 70160	Marcus N. Redford, P.E. Chief Bridge Administration Branch Eighth Coast Guard District Hale Boggs Federal Building 501 Magazine Street New Orleans LA 70130
U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration 903 San Jacinto Blvd #121 Austin TX 78701-2450	Richard Hartman National Marine Fisheries Service Habitat Conservation Division c/o Louisiana State University Baton Rouge LA 70803
Dr. Willie R. Taylor U.S. Department of the Interior Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance Main Interior Building, MS 2340 1849 C Street, NW Washington D.C. 20240	Patti Holland U.S. Department of the Interior U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service 646 Cajundome Boulevard Suite 400 Lafayette LA 70506
Chris C. Oynes Minerals Management Service Gulf of Mexico OCS Region 1201 Elmwood Park Blvd. New Orleans LA 70123	U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service P.O. Box 728 Santa Fe NM 87504
Tim Landreneau U.S. Department of the Interior Natural Resources Conservation Service 3737 Government Street Alexandria LA 71302	Michael P. Jansky 6ENXP U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 1445 Ross Avenue Dallas TX 75202
Pearl Young US-EPA-Office of Federal Activities NEPA Compliance Division - EIS Filing Section Ariel Rios Building (South Oval Lobby) Mail Code 2252-A, Room 7241 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW Washington D.C. 20044	Greg Solvey FEMA Region VI 800 North Loop 288 Denton TX 76201
<b>STATE AGENCIES</b>	
Governor M.J. "Mike" Foster Office of the Governor P.O. Box 94004 Baton Rouge LA 70804	Laurel Wyckoff State Historic Preservation Officer Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism P.O. Box 44274-CAP Ann 3rd. Baton Rouge LA 70804
Duke Rivet Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism Division of Archaeology P.O. Box 44274-CAP Ann 3rd. Baton Rouge LA 70804	Office of State Parks Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism P.O. Box 44426-CAP Ann 3rd. Baton Rouge LA 70804

<b>STATE AGENCIES (cont.)</b>	
LA Department of Economic Development Office of Commerce & Industry P.O. Box 94185 Baton Rouge LA 70804-9185	Burns Doss LA Department of Environmental Quality Hazardous Waste Division P.O. Box 82178 Baton Rouge LA 70884-2178
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Gary Lester Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program LA Department of Wildlife & Fisheries P.O. Box 98000 Baton Rouge LA 70898	LA Office of Emergency Preparedness 625 North 4th Street, Basement Baton Rouge LA 70802
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Representative Richard H. Baker 5757 Corporate Blvd. Suite 104 Baton Rouge LA 70808	Representative William J. Jefferson 501 Magazine Street Suite 1012 New Orleans LA 70130
Representative Christopher John P.O. Box 971 Crowley LA 70527	Representative Jim McCrery 6425 Youree Dr. #350 Shreveport LA 71101
Representative W.J. Tauzin 107 Federal Building Houma LA 70360	Representative David Vitter 3838 North Causeway Blvd. Suite 2900 Metairie LA 70002
<b>STATE SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES</b>	
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<b>STATE SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES (cont.)</b>	
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Representative Loulan Pitre, Jr. District 54 104 West 65th Street Cut Off LA 70345	Representative Warren Triche District 55 907 Jackson Street Thibodaux LA 70310
Representative Ernest D. Wooten District 105 104 New Orleans Street Belle Chasse LA 70037	
<b>NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBAL INTERESTS</b>	
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Brenda Dardar Chairperson United Houma Nation 20986 LA Hwy 1 Golden Meadow LA 70357	
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Lafourche Parish Office of Community Action P.O. Box 320 Raceland LA 70394	Lafourche Parish Coastal Zone Management Program P.O. Box 320 Raceland LA 70394
Norman Hebert Lafourche Parish Council P.O. Box 5548 Thibodaux LA 70301	Floodplain Administrator Lafourche Parish Police Jury P.O. Box 5598 Thibodaux LA 70301
Elmo Broussard Interim Superintendent of Schools Lafourche Parish School Board P.O. Box 879 Thibodaux LA 70302-0879	Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation District 204 East Bayou Road Thibodaux LA 70301-2941
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<b>LOCAL OFFICIALS (cont.)</b>	
Mayor Joe "Bubba" Townsend Town of Lockport 710 Church Street Lockport LA 70374	Mayor Warren J. Harang, Jr. City of Thibodaux 128 Elder Street Thibodaux LA 70301
St. Charles Parish Planning and Zoning Commission P.O. Box 302 Hahnville LA 70057	South Central Planning & Development Commission P.O. Box 846 Thibodaux LA 70302
South Lafourche Levee District P.O. Box 426 Galliano LA 70354	Claudette Sevin South Louisiana Economic Council P.O. Box 2048-NSU Thibodaux LA 70310
<b>OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AND PLACES</b>	
Kerry St. Pe Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program P.O. Box 2663 NSU Thibodaux LA 70310	Jefferson Parish Library Grand Isle Branch P.O. Box 827 Grand Isle LA 70358
Roy Francis Executive Director LA 1 Coalition P.O. Box 2048 NSU Thibodaux LA 70310	Stacey Hathaway-Bell Louisiana State Library Recorder of Documents P.O. Box 131 Baton Rouge LA 70821
Elizabeth Wise, Branch Librarian Martha Sowell Utley Memorial Library Main Branch 314 St. Mary Street Thibodaux LA 70301-2620	Paul Chiquet, Branch Associate Lafourche Parish Library Cut Off-Galliano Branch Highway 1 at West 15 <sup>th</sup> Street Galliano LA 70354
Tammy Robertson, Branch Manager Lafourche Parish Library Golden Meadow Branch 1501 N. Bayou Drive Golden Meadow LA 70357	Diana Uzee, Branch Manager Lafourche Parish Library Larose Branch Bayou Civic Center, E. Fifth Street Larose LA 70373
Branda Bascle, Branch Manager Lafourche Parish Library Lockport Branch 710 Church Street Lockport LA 70374	Earl Poche, Jr., Supervisor Lafourche Parish Library Raceland Branch 104 Mississippi Street Raceland LA 70394-0189
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## **Section 7: COORDINATION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

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Public outreach and coordination with local elected officials, state and federal resource agencies, and Native American tribes was an extensive part of the proposed LA 1 Improvements project. The public outreach program was specifically designed to address public, local officials, agency and Native American tribe concerns throughout the Study Process and encourage written comments. This section discusses these efforts from project initiation through the publication and distribution of the Final EIS. Lists of meetings including places and dates is provided at the end of this section.

### **7.1 SCOPING PROCESS**

The objective of the scoping process was to identify environmental, socioeconomic, engineering or other issues that should be considered during the study. Local elected officials, state and federal resource agencies and Native American tribes were invited to participate in a series of meetings in December 1999 and January 2000. These meetings provided an opportunity for participants to gain an understanding of the Study Process, discuss project benefits and concerns, and identify key issues to be considered during alternatives development. It was emphasized that early identification of environmental concerns maximized the ability to avoid and minimize impacts to these resources during alternatives development.

On May 5, 1999, a notice of intent was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 64, Number 86) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In September 1999, the DOTD initiated studies to prepare the EIS.

Solicitation of views and requests for relevant information concerning the study were sent to the resource agencies and Native American tribes and responses were received. These documents, along with all other agency correspondence are included in the Appendix.

#### **7.1.1 Local Officials Involvement**

A scoping meeting was held with local elected officials on January 24, 2000 at the Greater Lafourche Port Commission in Galliano, Louisiana. The meeting presented an overview of the Study Process and the proposed study area. Project concerns and benefits were discussed.

#### **7.1.2 Resource Agency Involvement**

A scoping meeting was held with state and federal resource and regulatory agencies on December 14, 1999 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to initiate early agency involvement and cooperation in the study. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the Study Process and to identify key issues to be considered during the Alternatives Study. Additionally, a mitigation meeting was held with state and federal resource and regulatory



agencies on January 25, 2000 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana to initiate early agency discussions on potential environmental impacts and possible mitigation measures to be considered during the development of the preliminary alignments. Due to their inability to attend, individual contact and coordination was made with the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Division of Archaeology to discuss Section 106 coordination throughout project development.

### **7.1.3 Native American Tribal Involvement**

Correspondence inviting tribal participation in the Study Process was sent to the United Houma Nation and the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc. This letter requested tribal participation at the December 14, 1999 scoping meeting and the identification of any issues or areas of traditional religious and cultural importance that should be considered during the Alternatives Study. No correspondence was received that identified specific concerns. All tribal correspondence is included in the Appendix.

## **7.2 ALTERNATIVES STUDY**

The meetings held during the Alternatives Study were designed to obtain specific comments from the meeting participants on the preliminary alignment locations. Attendance at these meetings was excellent and the comments received ultimately led to the identification of the Preferred Alignment presented in this document.

### **7.2.1 Public and Local Officials Involvement**

A public meeting was held in Larose, Louisiana on May 23, 2000. Information on the meeting date, location, time and content was publicized through two area newspapers. Project flyers announcing the meeting were also sent to all local elected officials for posting throughout the Study Area. The public meeting included an open forum session in which citizens had the opportunity to speak with project representatives and review the alignment locations. A short technical presentation and a question and answer period followed. Comment forms were available that requested additional environmental information and opinions on the alignments presented that should be considered during alignment refinements.

The preliminary alignments were displayed in two formats. Both visually presented the environmental inventory information contained in the GIS and used for the alignment comparative analysis. Sensitive information such as endangered species locations and known archaeological sites were not displayed to the public. The first format used a mapping background based on the DOTD parish highway map to display the preliminary alignments relative to the area road network. The second used a 1999 black and white aerial photograph background where land cover and development were visible.

Several handouts including a preliminary alignment location map and comparative analysis table were distributed. Comment forms were distributed that requested alignment preferences, suggested revisions and additional environmental information. Over 50 people attended the public meeting and 6 comment forms were received. The majority of comment forms and letters received identified selecting the shortest route and maintaining access to canals as the main areas of concern. Of the 6 written comments received, 5 favored the Line A alignment. Many individuals cited the shortest route as the basis for their decision. Following the public meeting, the display material was available for review at the Greater Lafourche Port Commission in Galliano, Louisiana.

### 7.2.2 Resource Agency Involvement

A meeting was held with the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE) on May 10, 2000 to discuss the preliminary alignments and wetland delineation methodology. Coordination with the COE is on going and will continue throughout the Study Process.

State and federal resource agencies were invited to participate in a May 22, 2000 meeting to review the preliminary alignments developed. This meeting focused on the effect of the preliminary alignments on environmental resources and included general discussions of minimization and mitigation efforts.

### 7.2.3 Alignment Revisions and the Preferred Alignment

Based on the comments received from the public, local officials, and state and federal resource agencies, a partial interchange was eliminated at Leeville due to the proximity of a nearby interchange that would service the travelling public.

State and federal resource agencies were invited to participate in a March 14, 2001 meeting to discuss the "work in progress" preliminary Draft EIS, the revised preliminary alignments and the identification of a Preferred Alignment. At the meeting, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requested that research and analyses be conducted regarding the shading effects on the health of smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alternifolia*), the dominant coastal wetland plant in the Study Area. This information was necessary in identifying a Preferred Alignment.

Federal cooperating agencies were invited to participate in a July 2, 2001 conference call to discuss the preliminary alignments, including the revisions to the Line A and Line C interchanges and connector roads at Leeville; the findings and conclusions of the requested shading analyses; a review of the comparative analysis of potential impacts of those alignments; and designation of a Preferred Alignment. Agencies participating included the COE, the NMFS, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA identified Line A as their preferred route. The COE

and NMFS concurred with the Preferred Alignment preference.

State and federal resource agencies were invited to participate in a January 15, 2002 meeting to develop an Emergent Marsh Vegetation Monitoring Plan for determining secondary wetland impacts due to the shading effect of the elevated highway. The COE, NMFS, DOTD, and FHWA agreed on mitigation replacement acreage instead of implementing a monitoring plan and negotiating mitigation at a later date. Wetland mitigation is discussed in Section 4.

#### **7.2.4 Native American Tribal Involvement**

Correspondence inviting continued tribal participation in the Study Process was sent to the United Houma Nation and the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc. These letters requested tribal participation at the May 22, 2000 and March 14, 2001 meetings to review the preliminary alignments, including the Preferred Alignment designation and to identify any issues or areas of traditional religious and cultural importance that should be considered during the development of the preliminary alignments. United Houma Nation and the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc. representatives attended the March 14, 2001 meeting. No specific concerns were identified. All tribal correspondence is included in the Appendix.

### **7.3 COORDINATION ON ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT**

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires coordination with the NMFS regarding the potential effects of proposed actions on Essential Fish Habitat. Early agency involvement and coordination has occurred with the NMFS. NMFS is a Federal Cooperating Agency for this proposed action and has been a very active participant in the Study Process. Coordination with the NMFS is on going and will continue throughout the Study Process. The NMFS stated at the January 15, 2002 agency coordination meeting that creation of replacement marsh habitat, as described in Section 4, will comply with all requirements and coordination with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. All NMFS correspondence is included in the Appendix.

### **7.4 ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION**

A public hearing was held in Larose, Louisiana on December 18, 2001 to obtain formal comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. The attendance and number of individual comments received is presented in Table 7-5.

Written comments on the Draft EIS were received from the Berwick, Louisiana Town Council and the Orleans Audubon Society. No written comments were received from the public on the Draft EIS. Comments received on the Draft EIS have been fully evaluated and considered in the identification

of the Selected Alignment. All comments expressing project concerns have been summarized and a response provided in Table 7-6.

State and federal resource agency comment letters on the Draft EIS are provided in the Appendix. These comments have been summarized and a response provided in Table 7-7. The US Coast Guard, Eighth Coast Guard District, a federal cooperating agency, did not comment on the Draft EIS.

### 7.5 PUBLIC NOTIFICATION METHODS

Notifications of meetings were handled in several ways:

- Direct mailings to persons on mailing lists (public, local officials, and agencies)
- Two area newspapers (Daily Comet, and Lafourche Gazette)
- Additional copies of announcements sent to local officials for posting in their communities.

Three types of mailing lists were maintained for the study: public, local officials and agencies. The public mailing list was initiated from sign-in sheets from the May 2000 preliminary alternatives public meeting. As each phone or written inquiry was received, these persons were added to the mailing

list. The current public mailing list contains nearly 80 names. Twenty-nine names are on the local officials' list (see Table 7-4). A combination of 19 state and federal agencies participated throughout the project either through meeting attendance or through regular mailings regarding on-going project studies and project status. In addition, project information was sent to the United Houma Nation and the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.

### 7.6 NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBAL INVOLVEMENT ON THE DRAFT EIS

The Draft EIS was sent to the Federally recognized Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, the Federally non-recognized United Houma Nation and the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc. for their review and comment. Comments from the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana have been summarized and a response provided in Table 7-8. No comments were received from the United Houma Nation or the Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc. All tribal correspondence is included in the Appendix.

Table 7-1 PUBLIC MEETINGS			
Date	Location	Attendance	Number of Written Comments
<b>Alternatives Study</b>			
May 23, 2000	Bayou Civic Center, Larose	50	6
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>6</b>

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Table 7-2 LOCAL OFFICIALS MEETINGS			
Date	Location	Invitees	Purpose
January 24, 2000	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	Local Officials' List	Study Scope and Purpose

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-3  
RESOURCE AGENCY MEETINGS**

Date	Agency	Purpose/Topic
December 14, 1999	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Scoping
January 25, 2000	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Mitigation
January 26, 2000	Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, Division of Archaeology	Section 106 Coordination
March 30, 2000	Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office (Hazardous Materials and Emergency Response)	Hazardous Spills Preparedness
March 30, 2000	Louisiana State Police Troop C	Hazardous Spills Preparedness
March 30, 2000	Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office (Marine Division)	Bayou and Canal Navigation
March 30, 2000	Lafourche Parish Emergency Preparedness Office	Hazardous Spills Preparedness
May 10, 2000	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Wetland Delineation / Section 404 Study Process Coordination
May 22, 2000	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Environmental Constraints & Preliminary Alignments
June 9, 2000	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Wetland Delineation
September 7, 2000	U.S. Coast Guard	Preliminary Alignments & Navigation
March 14, 2001	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement
July 2, 2001	Federal Cooperating Agencies	Preferred Alignment Designation
January 15, 2002	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Wetland Monitoring
May 1, 2002	Appropriate State and Federal Agencies	Construction

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-4  
LOCAL OFFICIALS**

Representative	Affiliation
Representative Loulan Pitre, Jr.	District 54
Senator Joel T. Chaisson, II	District 19
Norman Hebert	Lafourche Parish Council
Representative Warren Triche	District 55
	Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District
Representative H.B. "Hunt" Downer, Jr.	District 52
	Lafourche Parish
	St. Charles Parish Planning and Zoning Commission
	South Central Planning & Development Commission
Elmo Broussard	Lafourche Parish School Board
Senator Michael R. Robichaux	District 20
Representative Reggie P. Dupre	District 53
Representative Ernest D. Wooten	District 105
Mayor Jervis Autin	Town of Golden Meadow
Mayor Arthur Bellanger	Town of Grand Isle
Mayor Warren J. Harang, Jr.	City of Thibodaux
	South Lafourche Levee District
Mayor Joe "Bubba" Townsend	Town of Lockport
Roy Francis	LA 1 Coalition
Claudette Sevin	South Louisiana Economic Council
Representative W.J. Tauzin	
Representative Jim McCrery	
Representative Christopher John	
Representative David Vitter	
Representative Richard H. Baker	
Representative William J. Jefferson	
Senator Mary Landrieu	
Senator John B. Breaux	
Ted M. Falgout	Greater Lafourche Port Commission

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

Table 7-5 PUBLIC HEARING				
Date	Location	Attendance	Number of Oral Comments	Number of Written Comments
December 18, 2001	Bayou Civic Center, Larose	25	5	0
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

\* - Attendance based on hearing sign-in record

Table 7-6 SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT EIS		
ORAL COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE PUBLIC HEARING - COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS (in chronological order)		
Name	Comment	Response
State Representative Loulan Pitre, Jr.	Expressed overwhelming support for the proposed action at all levels, Federal and State government, private business and the public.	Comment noted.
Dave DeFelice, Jr., President – Lafourche Parish School Board	Concerned with safety on existing LA 1. Fully supports the proposed action.	Comment noted. The proposed action will be built to current design standards, which exceed the standards that existed when LA 1 was constructed.
Roy Francis, Executive Director, LA 1 Coalition	The LA 1 Coalition supports the proposed action.	Comment noted.
Windell Curole – South Lafourche Parish Levee District	Expressed concern about general public safety and hurricane emergency evacuation due to the low elevation of the existing roadway (inundation) the undependability of the existing Leeville bridge (ceases operation).	Comment noted. The proposed action will replace the existing Leeville bridge with a high-level structure. The elevated roadway will be constructed above the FEMA 100-year base flood elevation to account for tidal surges.
Ted Falgout, Executive Director – Greater Lafourche Port Commission	Expressed support for the proposed action and the importance of the highway to the Nation's energy supply.	Comment noted.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.



**Table 7-6 (cont.)  
SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT EIS**

<b>WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING THE COMMENT PERIOD - COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Response</b>
Berwick Town Council, January 7, 2002 Ralph E. Guidry, Jr., Councilman	Proposed action is ecologically imprudent and favors Port Fourchon and the oil industry over other industries. Indicated that the Morgan City/Berwick/Patterson area and the Port of Morgan City are a better location for Gulf of Mexico port commerce and the Millennium Port.	Comment noted.
Orleans Audubon Society, December 27, 2001 Jennifer O. Coulson, President	Suggested including a pullover site for bird watching or other scenic viewing activities.	A pullover site will be incorporated into the proposed action near the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge for bird watching or other scenic viewing activities. The location and design features will be determined during final design.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7**  
**SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

<b>Agency:</b> U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, January 4, 2002 Michael P. Janky	
<b>Issue:</b> DOCUMENT EVALUATION	
<b>Comment:</b>	EPA classifies your DEIS and proposed action as "LO," i.e., EPA has "Lack of Objections" to the selection of the preferred alternative. However, to strengthen the document, EPA is requesting additional information on secondary growth and potential wetland impacts be more fully discussed in the FEIS.
<b>Response:</b>	Comment noted. The suggested comments are detailed below.
<b>Issue:</b> WETLANDS	
<b>Comment:</b>	Section 3.9 – Wetlands This section of the DEIS should be strengthened by providing more information on historic and ongoing wetland losses in the general vicinity of the proposed project. The potential consequences of these losses (e.g. reduced productivity, greater risks of storm-related flooding in coastal areas) should be described. Specifically, the DEIS should provide the historic and ongoing wetland loss rates in the Barataria Basin, while describing the economic and ecological importance of the area's wetlands. The DEIS should also provide information on historic and ongoing losses of forested ridge habitat in the Barataria Basin, while describing the importance of such habitat to migratory bird species. This information should be provided in the FEIS.
<b>Response:</b>	Section 3.9 has been revised to include additional information on historic and ongoing wetland losses in the general vicinity of the proposed action.
<b>Issue:</b> SECONDARY DEVELOPMENT	
<b>Comment:</b>	Section 4.8 – Wetlands This section on "secondary development" should be strengthened by providing more discussion on whether the road project is likely to facilitate further development in Port Fourchon and Grand Isle. The potential consequences of such additional development should be described, regardless of whether a Section 404 permit would be required. While it would be difficult to quantify the change in development rates that could be attributed to the new road, the DEIS should have at a minimum qualitatively discussed the extent of change that could be expected. Similarly, the potential environmental consequences of such growth should be described qualitatively. This information would strengthen the NEPA document. Please discuss in the FEIS.
<b>Response:</b>	Section 4.8 has been revised to include additional qualitative discussion as to the extent that the project is likely to facilitate further development in Port Fourchon and Grand Isle.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)  
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

Agency: National Marine Fisheries Service, November 30, 2001  
Andreas Mager, Jr.

**Issue: SECONDARY DEVELOPMENT**

**Comment:** Section 4.1 – Social Impacts, Section 4.1.1 – Land Use/Land Cover Conversion, Secondary Development, Page 4-2, paragraphs 2 and 5

Portions of these paragraphs indicate that development would not be expected south of the Golden Meadow hurricane protection levee due to lack of developable uplands and the area's susceptibility to inundation during hurricanes. Based on our review of recent building proposals for projects to be sited in wetlands along Louisiana Highway 1 between Golden Meadow and Grand Isle, we disagree with these statements. Development of wetlands in this area for the purposes of camps, homes, marinas and other commercial enterprises has been proposed frequently within the past year. As such, we recommend these paragraphs be rewritten to correctly indicate that most of the secondary development that would occur as a result of the construction of this four lane elevated highway would be sited in wetlands.

**Response:** Comment noted. Section 4.1.1 has been revised to include additional qualitative discussion as to the extent that the project is likely to facilitate further development in Port Fourchon and Grand Isle.

**Issue: ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT**

**Comment:** Section 4.10 – Essential Fish Habitat Assessment, Section 4.10.4 – Mitigation Measures, Page 4-31, paragraph 1

The last potential conservation and enhancement measure listed consists of creating new habitat by converting non-EFH to EFH. As indicated at various portions of the document, there is little developable uplands in the project area. As such, it is extremely unlikely that conversion of those uplands to wetlands or water bottoms would be a prioritized use of those limited land resources. We recommend this mitigation measure be deleted.

**Response:** Mitigation measure deleted.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)  
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, January 2, 2002  
Glenn B. Sakavec

**Issue: PROTECTED SPECIES**

<b>Comment:</b>	<p>Section 3.12 – Protected Species</p> <p>As stated through previous correspondence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), no Federally-listed, threatened, endangered, or candidate species presently occur within the proposed highway corridor. Therefore, no further consultation will be required unless there are changes in the scope or location of the project, or project construction has not been initiated within one year. If the project is not initiated within one year, follow-up consultation should be conducted with the FWS's Ecological Services Office in Lafayette, Louisiana, prior to making expenditures for construction. If the scope or location of the proposed work is changed, consultation should occur as soon as such changes are made.</p>
<b>Response:</b>	<p>Comment noted. The Environmental Commitments section of the Summary has been expanded to include a commitment to reinstate FWS consultation should the scope or location of the proposed action change or should construction not be initiated within one year of the Record of Decision.</p>

**Issue: SURFACE WATER RESOURCES - HIGHWAY RUNOFF**

<b>Comment:</b>	<p>Section 4.1.6 – Surface Water Resources</p> <p>The subsection on stormwater runoff states that a literature review was conducted to research the effects of highway runoff on tidally-influenced marine environments and that the search only identified studies addressing the impact of highway runoff associated with high-traffic roadways in freshwater systems. The DEIS concludes that such studies are not applicable to the proposed project because the highway is considered to be a rural, low-volume facility located in a tidally-influenced environment and, therefore, stormwater will not be a significant environmental concern. Although portions of LA 1 will traverse rural areas, we do not consider it to be a typical roadway. Section 1 of the DEIS states that Port Fourchon has experienced a phenomenal growth rate, with an expansion from 2 to 150 businesses and an increase in acreage from 25 to 600 acres over the last two decades. Those changes have been largely influenced by a major increase in oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico. Also according to the DEIS, there has been a 500% increase in deepwater drilling activity yielding a 30 percent increase in oil production over the last decade. Gas production has also shown marked increases since 1985. Reports from the Louisiana State University (LSU) forecast significant increases in future deep-water exploration activities in the Gulf of Mexico. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' study projects that almost 60 percent of Louisiana's offshore drilling over the next 30 years will occur within the service area of Port Fourchon. In addition, LA 1 is designated as a National Highway System principal arterial connection to Interstate 10. Currently, approximately 17 percent of the traffic volume on LA 1 is comprised of trucks, many of which are commercial vehicles that transport a variety of chemical and petroleum products. Moreover, the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port at the Port Fourchon facility is estimated to handle 13 percent of the Nation's imported crude oil.</p>
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Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)  
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, January 2, 2002  
Glenn B. Sakavec

Issue: SURFACE WATER RESOURCES - HIGHWAY RUNOFF

**Comment (cont.):**

Much of the overall project need is justified on the projected increase in truck traffic on LA 1 and the fact that many of those vehicles are expected to carry products that could be harmful to the marine environment, we do not believe that LA 1 should be evaluated as a typical rural highway and cannot concur that the roadway runoff will not significantly effect the surrounding wetlands. Accordingly, measures to substantially reduce the potential effects of storm water runoff into the Nationally significant coastal wetlands surrounding the proposed highway should be fully considered.

While tidal flushing may serve to minimize the concentrations of some pollutants, heavy metals released into the environment are a chronic source of contamination, and certain heavy metals react with salt water to form other toxic compounds. According to a recent study conducted by the LSU Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, roadway runoff was cited as the most significant source of heavy metal pollution in the environment. To address that problem, researcher at LSU have been funded by the Louisiana Transportation Research Institute, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and others to develop a bio-filter which uses a floating bead clarifier to absorb pollutants from roadway runoff. That system was tested in the Baton Rouge area and has been utilized in estuarine areas in other parts of the country. Dr. John Sansalone, the lead LSU professor for the bio-filtration research, has indicated an interest in briefing State and Federal Highway agencies on this storm water pollution abatement technique. Accordingly, we recommend that the Final Environmental Impact Statement be revised to fully consider the issue of project-associated storm water pollution solutions for abatement of the adverse impacts on the Barataria Estuary and its important wetland habitats.

**Response:**

As part of the LA 1 Improvements environmental study, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify relevant studies that may document the affects of highway runoff on expansive, tidally induced marine environments. University libraries, conference proceedings, other research and the Internet were searched for relevant literature. No studies were identified that addressed this issue. Several studies were conducted that investigated the affects of highway runoff, but these focused on the effects of urban highways with high average daily traffic volumes on freshwater systems.

Research indicates that highway runoff would generate few substantial impacts with average daily traffic (ADT) of less than 30,000 vehicles (Maestri et al. 1988). The Design Year (2030) ADT for the portion of the project between Golden Meadow and Leeville is 21,300, and between Leeville and Pointe Fourchon is 11,930. Based on these predicted ADTs of less than 30,000 for the proposed highway, no substantial impacts to water quality would be expected due to highway runoff.

A 1998 toll road feasibility study conducted for the Greater Lafourche Port Commission, which included traffic counts, time-delay studies and roadside travel surveys to document travel patterns, determined that trucks accounted for 17% of the traffic. Consequently, Design Year Truck ADTs between Golden Meadow and Leeville, and Leeville and Pointe Fourchon would be expected to be 3,621 and 2,028, respectively.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)  
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

**Agency:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, January 2, 2002  
Glenn B. Sekavec

**Issue:** SURFACE WATER RESOURCES - HIGHWAY RUNOFF

<b>Response (cont.):</b>	<p>A review of national traffic data published by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics indicates that an average rural highway (interstate and arterial) is comprised of 13.7% trucks. Therefore, an average rural highway with 30,000 ADT would include 4,110 trucks. Although the project's percentage of truck traffic is higher than the average rural highway, the truck volume is less than the truck volume that would be expected from a typical 30,000 ADT rural highway. Consequently, no substantial impacts to water quality would be expected due to the project's predicted truck volume. Section 4.1.6 has been expanded to further discuss the anticipated truck volumes.</p> <p>The DOTD, through the Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC), has been a sponsor of Dr. John Sansalone's research with highway runoff collection systems and bio-filters. Representatives from DOTD, FHWA and Michael Baker Jr., Inc. met with Dr. Sansalone on February 17, 2000 to discuss his research, which includes characterizing and controlling urban storm water where ADTs approach 150,000 vehicles (15,000 trucks). Dr. Sansalone presented the bio-filter highway runoff collection system being used on I-10 over City Park Lake in Baton Rouge. I-10 over City Park Lake has an ADT of 122,300 vehicles (9,675 trucks) and has a bridge span of 887 feet.</p> <p>The Louisiana 1 Improvements project would construct a four-lane, divided fully controlled access elevated highway approximately 17 miles in length. Drawbacks to implementing Dr. Sansalone's bio-filter highway runoff collection system on the Louisiana 1 Improvements project include the number of clarifiers required for the length of the LA 1 Improvements project, the maintenance of the drainage system as well as treatment components, and the disposal of any hazardous material collected.</p> <p>In the absence of any research demonstrating the need for such a system, the design, construction, maintenance and safety, and disposal issues and costs associated with a highway runoff collection system for the LA 1 Improvements project is, at this time, unsupported. However, Section 2.5.1 has been revised to indicate that the scupper discharge pipes will include additional length so as not to preclude the attachment of a highway runoff collection system, should future research indicate the need for such a system. Current research does not support the need for a highway runoff collection system at this time.</p>
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**Agency:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - New Orleans District, February 15, 2002  
Ronald J. Ventola

**Issue:** DOCUMENT EVALUATION

<b>Comment:</b>	<p>We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS but, because of current workload, we are unable to thoroughly review the document. We previously provided comments on the pre-DEIS by letter dated September 25, 2001. A precursory review of the DEIS indicates that some of those comments have been incorporated into the DEIS. However, many of the recommended changes were not incorporated into the document. We recommend that you review the comments previously submitted and revise the document as suggested.</p>
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Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)  
SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

<b>Agency:</b> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – New Orleans District, February 15, 2002 Ronald J. Ventola	
<b>Issue:</b> DOCUMENT EVALUATION	
<b>Response:</b>	All of the comments provided by the COE on the pre-DEIS were evaluated in the development of the DEIS. The document was revised, as appropriate, to address many of the comments raised by the COE. In some instances, comments were not incorporated. Written responses for all comments received, indicating either the manner in which the comment was addressed or the rationale for not incorporating the comment into the DEIS were prepared and submitted to the COE prior to issuance of the DEIS.
<b>Issue:</b> SECONDARY DEVELOPMENT	
<b>Comment:</b>	Two issues of concern were the inadequacy of identification and discussion of secondary and cumulative adverse impacts that could be expected from the implementation of the proposed project and full disclosure of all direct impacts (i.e. temporary construction areas). An environmental impact statement is a full disclosure of impacts, both beneficial and adverse, associated with implementation of a proposed action and possible alternatives to the proposed action. These documents should provide an unbiased review of the project related impacts pointing out the beneficial aspects of the action while clearly identifying all direct and foreseeable secondary adverse impacts associated with each alternative. The review of direct and secondary impacts assists in determining regional cumulative effects. The final document should be a tool to assist regulatory agencies in making a permit decision. Our review indicates that the Final EIS would be much improved if you were to take a realistic look at the potential secondary impacts associated with the proposed action. Although highways are intended for transportation, other interest take advantage of these newly created corridors via providing facilities to them to service the users; cause and effect. Regulatory programs must eventually deal with the problem but initially the highway spurs the development.
<b>Response:</b>	Comment noted. Section 4 has been revised to include additional qualitative discussion as to the extent that the project is likely to facilitate secondary development in the Study Area.
<b>Issue:</b> TEMPORARY WORK AREA IMPACTS	
<b>Comment:</b>	All direct impacts associated with the proposed action should be identified in the discussion for each alternative. Only in this way can alternatives be accurately evaluated. According to the information in the DEIS, approximately 5.3 acres of wetlands would be directly impacted by the proposed action. This acreage only includes those impacts associated with fill placement required for construction of the roadway embankment. It doesn't address impacts resulting from other work areas. Additional work associated with access to the structure will be required but there is no indication of what impacts may occur to wetland areas. In our previous letter to you, we recommended that you provide information on temporary work areas. No estimation of the impact extent associated with these temporary work areas is provided in the discussion of direct impacts. We would also want discussed whether or not such areas would be restored or left as filled. These temporary work areas are difficult to restore to pre-project conditions.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

**Table 7-7 (cont.)**  
**SUMMARY OF AGENCY COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

Agency: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – New Orleans District, February 15, 2002  
 Ronald J. Ventola

**Issue: TEMPORARY WORK AREA IMPACTS**

**Response:** As indicated in the response to comments on the pre-DEIS previously submitted to the COE, temporary work areas are not identified because they are at the discretion of the Contractor. Construction impacts and Contractor compliance with various federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, and regulations are discussed in Section 4.23 – Construction Impacts.

Section 4.23 – Construction Impacts has been revised to include the further discuss on constructibility and construction impacts resulting from an agency coordination meeting held May 1, 2002.

**Issue: OIL WELL IMPACTS**

**Comment:** Additionally, there was mention at the public hearing of the necessity of relocation oil wells. What impacts would be associated with the relocation of an oil well; new slips and or access canals, dredging and the disposal of dredged material for access to new sites, etc.?

**Response:** The Selected (DEIS Preferred) Alignment would impact one producing oil well. Section 4.12 – Oil and Gas Resources, states that as part of the property acquisition process, a qualified petroleum engineer would conduct a feasibility study for each impacted well to determine the estimated reserves. Until the study findings are available, a determination cannot be made as to whether a well would be replaced by directional drilling or abandoned and appropriate compensation provided to the landowner based on estimated reserves.

Section 4.12 has also been revised to indicate that adjustments to the pile locations during final design may further minimize or entirely avoid oil and gas well impacts.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.



**Table 7-8  
SUMMARY OF NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBAL COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS**

Tribe: Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, January 14, 2002 Kimberly S. Walden	
<b>Issue: DOCUMENT EVALUATION</b>	
<b>Comment:</b>	Page 2-6, Right of Way Requirements South of the Hurricane Protection Levee, paragraph 2, sentence 4 states "one prehistoric archaeological site eligible for listing in the National Register...". The third paragraph states that due to potential impact of community, residential and businesses, as well as the inability to avoid and minimize adjacent environmental resources, reconstruction of LA 1 was not considered feasible and was eliminated from further consideration. The avoidance of the eligible prehistoric archaeological site is well appreciated by the Chitimacha Tribe.
<b>Response:</b>	Comment noted.
<b>Issue: TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTIES AVOIDANCE</b>	
<b>Comment:</b>	Page 2-37, under 2.5.3 Alignment Revisions, third paragraph informs that "no other alignment adjustments to improve service or...to further minimize impacts to sensitive environmental areas were identified." This gives us the understanding that all traditional cultural properties were properly identified and will be avoided.
<b>Response:</b>	The Selected (DEIS Preferred) Alignment minimizes impacts overall to traditional cultural properties and other cultural resources on record at the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, Division of Archaeology (SHPO). A Cultural Resources Survey will be conducted on the Selected Alignment and the findings submitted for SHPO evaluation and concurrence. Consultation with Native American tribes would occur should the findings warrant such action. Significant sites and properties that would be adversely affected by the project may require data recovery or other mitigative techniques. All archaeological sites that warrant preservation in place would be avoided, provided that a prudent and feasible alternative for highway construction could be identified.
<b>Issue: NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	
<b>Comment:</b>	Section 3: Affected Environment, page 3-1, 3.1.1 Demographics, paragraph two gives a brief overview of percentage of Native American populations, stating that most area communities have a higher population rate than that in Lafourche Parish and statewide. It is also stated that the current Native American population is mainly composed of individuals of Houma Indian descent, and gives a brief outline of the Houma migrating from Mississippi and Alabama, settling near Baton Rouge, and moving southward via Bayou Lafourche. It is further stated that the move was to escape conflicts with other tribes and white settlers, with the majority of Houmas residing in nearby Terrebonne Parish, but with some settling in Lafourche Parish because of the isolated geographic location and fertile land.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

<b>Table 7-8 (Cont.)</b>	
<b>SUMMARY OF NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBAL COMMENTS AND RESPONSES ON THE DRAFT EIS</b>	
<b>Tribe:</b> Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, January 14, 2002 Kimberly S. Walden	
<b>Issue:</b> NATIVE AMERICAN INDIAN DEMOGRAPHICS	
<b>Comment (cont.):</b>	The Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana is the only federally recognized Native American Tribe aboriginal to the State of Louisiana. Any prehistoric or early historic mounds in the Lafourche Parish area are the concern of the Chitimacha Tribe, as the Lafourche area is part of the aboriginal homelands of our Tribe. For instance, Bayou Lafourche is originally known as River of the Chitimacha. While recognizing that your study was on the current Native American population for this time period, by going into an early history of the Houma, it gives a false sense of original occupation which could possibly cause consultation problems, should any traditional properties be discovered during earth moving operations of the project. Please note in your records that consultation on a government-to-government basis is with federally recognized Native American Tribes.
<b>Response:</b>	Comment noted. Section 3.1.1 has been revised.
<b>Issue:</b> CULTURAL RESOURCES SURVEYS FINDINGS	
<b>Comment:</b>	Section 4: 4.15 Cultural Resources, paragraph two gives the background on how the determination of recorded archaeological and historic sites within the study area was conducted, as well as a geo-archaeological study to identify areas of high probability for the occurrence of prehistoric cultural resources within the landforms mapped in the study area. Paragraph four states that terrestrial and underwater archaeological and historic structure surveys will be conducted within the selected alignment to be identified in the Final EIS and Record of Decision. We are requesting a copy of this final report.
<b>Response:</b>	A copy of the Draft Cultural Resources Survey findings will be provided to the Chitimacha Tribe for review and comment. A copy of the Final Cultural Resources Survey findings will also be provided to the Chitimacha Tribe at the completion of the studies.
<b>Issue:</b> TRIBAL CONSULTATION	
<b>Comment:</b>	The Lafourche Parish area is all part of the aboriginal homelands of the Chitimacha. As such, large village sites, cultural/sacred sites, and traditional cultural properties were in place in that entire area. We request that if at any time during the course of your work, any traditional cultural properties were to be discovered, that you contact the Chitimacha Tribe as soon as possible so that consultation may begin.
<b>Response:</b>	Comment noted. The Chitimacha Tribe will be consulted on all issues of Native American Indian importance.

Source: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.



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# APPENDIX

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LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS

AGENCY AND TRIBAL CORRESPONDENCE

DOTD HIGHWAY TRAFFIC NOISE POLICY

DOTD ACQUISITION OF RIGHT OF WAY AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE



## **LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS**

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# LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS

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## THE LEVEL OF SERVICE CONCEPT

A Level of Service (LOS) is a letter designation that describes a range of operating conditions on a particular type of facility. The 1994 Highway Capacity Manual defines levels of service as "qualitative measures that characterize operational conditions within a traffic stream and their perception by motorists and passengers."

The critical point in this definition is the need to define service quality in terms that are perceived by drivers and passengers. Several key measures are used to describe service quality in these terms:

- Speed and travel time. One of the most easily perceived measures of service quality is speed, or its inverse, travel time. Drivers and passengers alike are keenly aware of the amount of time it takes to get from place to place. On freeways, speed is a very evident measure of service quality, while on street systems, the driver is very sensitive to total travel time.
- Density. Density is a parameter not often used in traffic analysis. Nevertheless, it is an excellent descriptor of service quality in many cases. Density describes the proximity of vehicles to each other in the traffic stream and reflects ease of maneuverability in the traffic stream, as well as the psychological comfort of drivers.
- Delay. Delay can be described in many ways. Highway capacity analysis uses delay in several different ways. At intersections, delay is defined in terms of the average stopped time per vehicle traversing the intersection. On rural two-lane highways, percent time delay is defined as the percent of time that all drivers spend in platoons behind slow-moving vehicles they cannot pass. In any of its uses, it represents excess or additional travel time due to traffic conditions or controls. Delay times

are portions of travel time that are particularly obvious to drivers and are particularly annoying or frustrating.

- Other measures. A variety of other measures are used to describe service quality. In some cases, measures used are not directly discernible to drivers or passengers. Such measures generally rely upon volumes or flow rates because the state of the art does not yet include other calibrated quality measures.

Six levels of service are defined for capacity analysis. They are given letter designations A through F, with LOS A representing the best range of operating conditions and LOS F the worst. The specific terms in which each level of service is defined vary with the type of facility involved. In general, LOS A describes a free-flowing condition in which individual vehicles of the traffic stream are not influenced by the presence of other vehicles. LOS F generally describes breakdown operations (except for signalized intersections) which occur when flow arriving at a point is greater than the facility's capacity to discharge flow. At such points, queues develop, and LOS F exists within the queue and at the point of the breakdown. Levels of service B, C, D, and E represent intermediate conditions, with the lower bound of LOS E often corresponding to capacity operations.

## LEVEL OF SERVICE DEFINITIONS

The six levels of service are generally described as follows.

- Level of Service A: This is a condition of free flow, accompanied by low volumes and high speeds. Traffic density will be low, with uninterrupted flow speeds controlled by driver desires, speed limits, and physical roadway conditions. There is little or no restriction in maneuverability due to the presence of other vehicles, and drivers can maintain their desired speeds with little or no delay.

- ❑ Level of Service B: This occurs in the zone of stable flow, with operating speeds beginning to be restricted somewhat by traffic conditions. Drivers still have reasonable freedom to select their speed and lane of operation. Reductions in speed are not unreasonable, with a low probability of traffic flow being restricted. The lower limit (lowest speed, highest volume) of this level of service has been used in the design of rural highways.
- ❑ Level of Service C: This is still in the zone of stable flow, but speeds and maneuverability are more closely controlled by the higher volumes. Most of the drivers are restricted in their freedom to select their own speed, change lanes, or pass. A relatively satisfactory operating speed is still obtained, with service volumes suitable for urban design practice.
- ❑ Level of Service D: This level of service approaches unstable flow, with tolerable operating speeds being maintained, though considerably affected by changes in operating conditions. Fluctuations in volume and temporary restrictions to flow may cause substantial drops in operating speeds. Drivers have little freedom to maneuver, and comfort and convenience are low. These conditions can be tolerated, however, for short periods of time.
- ❑ Level of Service E: This cannot be described by speed alone, but represents operations at lower operating speeds, typically, but not always, in the neighborhood of 30 miles per hour, with volumes at or near the capacity of the highway. Flow is unstable, and there may be stoppages of momentary duration. This level of service is associated with operation of a facility at capacity flows.
- ❑ Level of Service F: This describes a forced-flow operation at low speeds, where volumes are below capacity. In the extreme, both speed and volume can drop to zero. These conditions usually result from queues of vehicles backing up for a restriction downstream. The section under study will be

serving as a storage area during parts or all of the peak hour. Speeds are reduced substantially and stoppages may occur for short or long periods of time because of the downstream congestion.

The above information was taken directly from Traffic Engineering, by William R. McShane and Roger P. Roess 1990, and Traffic Engineering Theory and Practice, by Louis J. Pignataro 1973.

# AGENCY AND TRIBAL CORRESPONDENCE

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Services and Satellite Communications. Those who plan to attend are invited to submit proposed discussion topics. Requests to make presentations to the assembled forum should be made to the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** listed.

**DATES:** June 1-4, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** Alexandria, VA.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Registration and submission of suggested discussion topics may be made to Ms. Dottie Wilkins, telephone (202) 484-2535, fax (202) 484-1510 or email at [dottie.ctr.wilkins@faa.gov](mailto:dottie.ctr.wilkins@faa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Open to the aviation industry with attendance limited to space available. Participants are requested to register their intent to attend this meeting by May 10, 1999. Names, affiliations, addresses, telephone and facsimile numbers should be sent to the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on April 30, 1999.

Donald W. Streeter,  
C/SOIT Co-Chairman.

[FR Doc. 99-11296 Filed 5-4-99; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Satellite Operational Implementation Team (SOIT) hosted forum on the capabilities of the Global Position System (GPS)/Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) and Local Area Augmentation System (LAAS)

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of meeting.

**Name:** FAA SOIT Forum on GPS/WAAS/LAAS Capabilities.

**Time and date:** 9 a.m.—5 p.m., May 17-18, 1999.

**Place:** The Holiday Inn Fair Oaks Hotel, 11787 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax, Virginia 22033.

**Status:** Open to the aviation industry with attendance limited to space available.

**Purpose:** The FAA SOIT will be hosting a public forum to discuss the FAA's GPS approvals and WAAS/LAAS operational implementation plans. This meeting will be held in conjunction with a regularly scheduled meeting of the FAA SOIT and in response to aviation industry requests to the FAA Administrator. Formal presentations by the FAA will be followed by a question and answer session. Those planning to attend are invited to submit proposed discussion topics.

**Registration:** Participants are requested to register their intent to attend this meeting by

May 3, 1999. Names, affiliations, telephone and facsimile numbers should be sent to the point of contact listed below.

**Point of contact:** Registration and submission of suggested discussion topics may be made to Mr. Steven Albers, phone (202) 267-7301, fax (202) 267-5086, or email at [steven.CTR.albers@faa.gov](mailto:steven.CTR.albers@faa.gov).

Issued in Washington, D.C., on March 22, 1999.

Hank Cabler,

SOIT Co-Chairman.

[FR Doc. 99-11293 Filed 5-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Aviation Administration

**Notice of Intent To Rule on Application 99-04-C-00-DSM To Impose and Use the Revenue From a Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) at Des Moines International Airport, Des Moines, IA**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to rule on application.

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to rule and invites public comment on the application to impose and use the revenue from a PFC at Des Moines International Airport under the provisions of the Aviation Safety and Capacity Expansion Act of 1990 (Title IX of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990) (Pub. L. 101-508) and Part 158 of the Federal Aviation Regulations (14 CFR Part 158).

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before June 4, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments on this application may be mailed or delivered in triplicate to the FAA at the following address: Federal Aviation Administration, Central Region, Airports Division, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64106.

In addition, one copy of any comments submitted to the FAA must be mailed or delivered to Mr. William F. Flannery, Aviation Director, at the following address: City of Des Moines, 5800 Fleur Drive, Suite 201, Des Moines, IA 50321.

Air carriers and foreign air carriers may submit copies of written comments previously provided to the City of Des Moines, under section 158.23 of Part 158.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Lorna Sandridge, PFC Program Manager, FAA, Central Region, 601 E. 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64106, (816) 426-4730. The application may be reviewed in person at this same location.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FAA proposes to rule and invites public comment on the application to impose and use the revenue from a PFC at the Des Moines International Airport under the provisions of the Aviation Safety and Capacity Expansion Act of 1990 (Title IX of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990) (Pub. L. 101-508) and Part 158 of the Federal Aviation Regulation (14 CFR Part 158).

On April 8, 1999, the FAA determined that the application to impose and use the revenue from a PFC submitted by the City of Des Moines, Iowa, was not substantially complete within the requirements of section 158.25 of Part 158. The City of Des Moines submitted supplemental information on April 16, 1999, to complete the application. The FAA will approve or disapprove the supplemental application, in whole or in part, no later than August 18, 1999.

The following is a brief overview of the application.

**Level of the proposed PFC:** \$3.00  
**Proposed charge effective date:** Ju 2005.

**Proposed charge expiration date:** February, 2006.

**Total estimated PFC revenue:** \$1,850,000.

**Brief description of proposed project:** Storm water detention facility.

Any person may inspect the application in person at the FAA office listed above under **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

In addition, any person may, upon request, inspect the application, notices and other documents germane to the application in person at the Des Moines International Airport.

Issued in Kansas City, Missouri on April 20, 1999.

George A. Hendon,

Manager, Airports Division Central Region

[FR Doc. 99-11292 Filed 5-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

**Environmental Impact Statement: Lafourche Parish, Louisiana**

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.  
**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared for a proposed highway project in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** William C. Farr, Program Operations

24214

Federal Register/Vol. 64, No. 86/Wednesday, May 5, 1999/Notices

Manager, Federal Highway Administration, P.O. Box 3929 (Room 255), Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 70821, Telephone: (225) 389-0465, Facsimile: (225) 389-0758.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FHWA, in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD), will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on a proposal to construct a new highway facility on current or new alignment. The proposed project, known locally as the LA 1 Improvements from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon, is generally located in the present LA 1 corridor from Golden Meadow, Louisiana to Port Fourchon, Louisiana. The roadway includes several alternates based on the number of navigable bridges needed for various alignments. The approximate length of the project is 29 kilometers (18 miles).

The proposed improvements would improve the capacity, reliability, and safety of the existing LA 1 and increase regional access to Port Fourchon for persons, businesses and industry in the region. It is a part of the National Highway System and would improve access to the vitally important deep-water port of Port Fourchon on the coast of Louisiana.

The northern terminus of the proposed project will be the southern end of route LA 3235 and the southern terminus will be Port Fourchon.

Alternatives to be considered are:

(1) The "Do-nothing" Alternative, where the current and existing LA 1 is repaired and maintained in its present location, capacity, and character.

(2) The "Build" Alternative, considering several different alignments, roadway type and control of access.

An agency scoping meeting will be held at a time and place to be determined at a later date. Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, state, and local agencies and to private organizations, including conservation groups and groups of individuals who have expressed interest in the project in the past. At least one public informational meeting will be held in the project area that will be affected. In addition, a Public Hearing will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the public informational meeting(s) and the Public Hearing. The draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment prior to the Public Hearing.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are

addressed, and all significant issues identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on April 28, 1999.

William A. Sussmann,

Division Administrator, FHWA, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

[FR Doc 99-11227 Filed 5-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-99-5200; Notice 2]

#### Capacity of Texas, Inc.; Grant of Application for Temporary Exemption From Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 105

For the reasons expressed in this notice, we are granting the application by Capacity of Texas, Inc., of Longview, Texas ("Capacity"), for a temporary exemption from the anti-lock requirements of Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 105 *Hydraulic and Electric Brake Systems* that became effective March 1, 1999. Capacity applied for an exemption on the basis that "compliance would cause substantial economic hardship to a manufacturer that has tried in good faith to comply with the standard." 49 CFR 555.6(a).

We published a notice of receipt of the application on March 10, 1999, and afforded an opportunity for comment (64 FR 11979). We received one comment on the application, from the National Truck Equipment Association (NTEA), which supported it.

The discussion that follows recapitulates Capacity's arguments and is based on information contained in the company's application.

#### Why Capacity Needs a Temporary Exemption

S5.5 of Standard No. 105 requires any motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 10,000 pounds, except for a vehicle that has a speed attainable in 2 miles of not more than 33 mph, to be equipped with an antilock brake system if it is manufactured on and after March 1,

1999. Capacity manufactures bus chassis that it provides to World Trans Inc., of Hutchinson, Kansas, for completion. However, with respect to the buses that will be covered by the exemption, if granted, Capacity has informed us that, pursuant to the opt granted the manufacturer of an incomplete vehicle by 49 CFR 568.7(f) it is assuming the responsibilities of a final-stage manufacturer (World Trans). As such, Capacity will certify that the completed buses comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards, and provide notification a remedy if required.

#### Why Compliance Would Cause Capacity Substantial Economic Hardship

Capacity produces a limited quantity (100 or less yearly) bus chassis for World Trans, and, as discussed more fully below, has been unable to find a vendor who is willing to provide antilock controllers. Therefore, if Capacity is not granted an exemption will have to withdraw the chassis production, and World Trans's bus production will be diminished. This will cause both Capacity and World Trans to lose income in each of the years for which an exemption has been requested. Capacity's projected net income for its fiscal year ending Oct 31, 1998, was \$2,631,018. Its projected net income for the year ending Oct 31, 1999, is \$2,286,617 if an exemption is granted, and \$1,945,087 if it is not. Thus, net income would be reduced \$341,530 in the absence of an exemption covering production from March 1-October 31, 1999.

#### How Capacity Has Tried To Comply With the Standard in Good Faith

Capacity contacted four different brake component suppliers. Its search for an anti-lock controller began with Lucas/Varity (formerly Kelsey-Hayes) because of its longtime association with Ford Motor Company and the fact that the bus chassis uses a common Dana drive axle with many Ford light duty trucks. But the company was told that no development could be approached until Capacity could guarantee a purchase order in the range of 10,000 controllers.

Capacity next approached Eaton-Bosch, and found that it is currently producing hydraulic anti-lock brake systems for vehicles up to 12,000 lb GVWR. Although the company is developing a system for vehicles up to 20,000 lbs GVWR, the system won't be finalized until 2001.

The third vendor that Capacity approached was ITT Automotive-T



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

646 Cajundome Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506

June 24, 1999



William C. Farr  
Program Operations Manager  
Federal Highway Administration  
P.O. Box 3929, Room 255  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821

Dear Mr. Farr:

The Fish and Wildlife Service has reviewed a June 6, 1999, Federal Register Notice (our reference ER 99/0413) announcing a notice of intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Louisiana State Highway 1 improvements from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. That notice provides the Service an early opportunity to submit technical assistance input to the EIS scoping process. In response to that request, the Service provides the following comments in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

On November 18, 1998, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development requested the Service's Lafayette Field Office to provide technical assistance comments on the above-referenced project. By letter dated December 14, 1998 (copy attached), the Service documented several concerns with the proposed project, including direct impacts to brackish marsh and associated fish and wildlife habitat resources, and potential contamination of estuarine habitat via surface runoff and accidental spills. That letter recommended that the EIS address a full range of access routes, access points, and construction methods, including end-on construction of an elevated highway and installation of gutters or catchments for stormwater runoff control.

No Federally listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species presently occur within the proposed highway corridor. Therefore, no further consultation will be required unless there are changes in the scope or location of the project, or project construction has not been initiated within one year. If the project has not been initiated within one year, follow-up consultation should be accomplished with this office prior to making expenditures for construction. If the scope or location of the proposed work is changed, consultation should occur as soon as such changes are made.

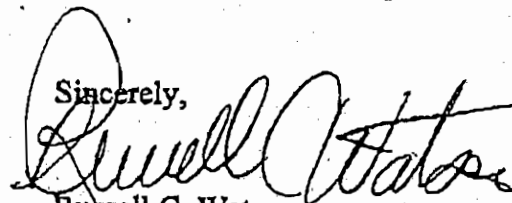
According to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) survey, a colonial waterbird rookery is located in the vicinity of the Golden Meadow Oil and Gas Field. To minimize disturbance to colonial nesting birds, all activity occurring within 1,500 feet of the rookery should be restricted to the non-nesting period (i.e., September 1 through February 15, depending on species present). Colonies may be present that are not currently listed in the database maintained by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. That database is updated primarily by monitoring



the colony sites that were previously surveyed during the 1980,s. Until a new, comprehensive coast-wide survey is conducted to determine the location of newly-established nesting colonies, we recommend that a qualified biologist inspect the proposed work site for the presence of undocumented nesting colonies during the nesting season. Please contact Bill Vermilion with LDWF (225-765-2821) for more information regarding the rookery location and status.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. If further information is needed, please contact Patti Holland (318/291-3121) of this office.

Sincerely,



Russell C. Watson  
Acting Field Supervisor

Attachment: as noted

cc: OEPC, Washington, D.C.

**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

*A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation*

November 5, 1999

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Agency»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«City», «State» «Zip»

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
*Airport Office Park, Building 3*  
*420 Rouser Road*  
*Coraopolis, PA 15108*

RE: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
LaFourche and Terrebonne Parishes  
*Solicitation of Views*

Dear «Salutation» «Name\_2»:

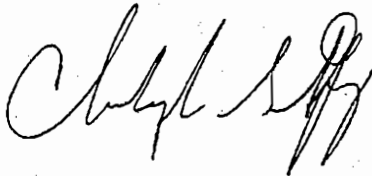
The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) has retained the consulting firm of Michael Baker Jr. Inc., to conduct an environmental study for improvements to LA 1 in the Port Fourchon area. Early in the planning stages of a transportation project, views from federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and individuals are solicited. The special expertise of these groups can assist us with the early identification of possible adverse economic, social, or environmental effects or concerns. Your assistance in this regard will be appreciated.

Due to the earliness of this request for your views, very limited data concerning the proposed project exists. We have, however, attached a sketch map showing the general location of the project, along with a preliminary project description.

It is requested that you review the attached information and furnish us with your views and comments by December 5, 1999. Replies should be addressed to Christopher G. Gesing, P.E., Michael Baker Jr., Inc., 420 Rouser Road, Airport Office Park, Building 3, Coraopolis, PA 15108. Please reference the State Project Number in your reply.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachments  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD

**FOURCHON  
SOLICITATION OF VIEWS**

Name_1	Name_2	Title	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State	Zip	Salutation
John	Brady Jr.	Chairman	Lafourche Telephone Co., Inc.	P.O. Box 188		Thibodaux	LA	70301	Sir or Madam
Representative Mitch Kirby	Theriot	Chairman	District 54	P.O. Box 328		Larose	LA	70373	Mr.
Senator Ron	Verret	Chairman	Unified Houma Nalton	Star Route Box 95-A		Golden Meadow	LA	70374	Representative
Representative Warren	Landry	Hebert	District 19	P.O. Box 189		Lafourche Parish Council	LA	70357	Mr.
	Norman		District 56	P.O. Box 5548		Lafourche Parish Council	LA	70069-0189	Senator
Representative H.B. "Hunt"	Downer, Jr.		Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District	907 Jackson Street		Thibodaux	LA	70301	Sir or Madam
Chris	Mellon		District 52	1018 St. Mary Street		Thibodaux	LA	70301	Representative
			Houma-Terrebonne Chamber of Commerce	P.O. Box 7015		Houma	LA	70361	Sir or Madam
			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	1700 St. Charles Street		Baton Rouge	LA	70360	Sir or Madam
			Lafourche Parish	Office Community Action	P.O. Box 320	Raceland	LA	70394	Sir or Madam
			Chamber of Commerce	P.O. Box 1462		Larose	LA	70373	Sir or Madam
V.J.	Kirkpatrick	President	St. Charles Parish Planning and Zoning Commission	P.O. Box 302		Hahnville	LA	70057	Sir or Madam
Ted M.	Falgout	Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 480		Thibodaux	LA	70301	Mr.
Gregory	Miller		Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation Dist. O/L	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux	LA	70354	Mr.
			Louisiana State Police	Troop C	P.O. Box 1330	Gray	LA	70359	Sir or Madam
			National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7535	Mr.
Elmo	Broussard	Intern Superintendent of Schools	South Central Planning & Development Commission	P.O. Box 846		Thibodaux	LA	70302	Sir or Madam
Senator Michael R.	Robichaux	Dupre	Lafourche Parish School Board	P.O. Box 878		Thibodaux	LA	70302-0878	Mr.
Representative Reggie P.	Woolen		Department of the Army	N.O. Dist. Corps of Engineers		New Orleans	LA	70160-0267	Sir or Madam
Representative Ernest D.	Aulin		Lafourche Parish Police Jury	P.O. Box 5598		Thibodaux	LA	70301	Sir or Madam
Mayor Jarvis	Bellanger		District 20	P.O. Box 68		Thibodaux	LA	70375	Senator
Mayor Arthur	Harang, Jr.		District 105	P.O. Box 3893		Houma	LA	70361	Representative
Mayor Warren J.			Town of Golden Meadow	104 New Orleans Street		Belle Chasse	LA	70037	Representative
			City of Grand Isle	P.O. Box 307		Grand Isle	LA	70358	Mayor
			South Lafourche Levee District	128 Elder Street		Thibodaux	LA	70301	Mayor
Mayor Joe "Bubba"	Townsend		Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Calliano	LA	70354	Sir or Madam
Roy	Francis	Executive Director	Town of Lockport	710 Church Street		Thibodaux	LA	70310	Sir or Madam
Claudette	Sevin		LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 2048 NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70374	Mayor
STATE			South Louisiana Economic Council	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310	Mr.
			Department of Transportation	Federal Aviation	ATTN: ASW-472	Fl. Worth	TX	76193	Sir or Madam
			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000	Sir or Madam
Representative W.J.	Tauzin		Department of Economic Development	107 Federal Building		Houma	LA	70360	Representative
			LA Forestry Association	Office of Commerce & Industry	P.O. Box 94185	Baton Rouge	LA	70804-9185	Sir or Madam
Representative Jim	McCrary		6425 Youree Dr. #350	P.O. Drawer 5067		Alexandria	LA	71301	Sir or Madam
Congressman Chris	John		Department of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Forestry	P.O. Box 1628	Shreveport	LA	71101-4600	Representative
			Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	P.O. Box 871		Baton Rouge	LA	70821	Sir or Madam
Representative David	Vitter		Department of Agriculture & Forestry	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733	Sir or Madam
			Division of Archaeology	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge	LA	70821-3554	Sir or Madam
Representative Richard H.	Baker		Department of Public Safety	3848 North Causeway Blvd.	Suite 2900	Metairie	LA	70002	Representative
Lisa	Miller		Department of Environmental Quality	Highway Safety Commission	P.O. Box 66336	Baton Rouge	LA	70804	Sir or Madam
				5757 Corporate Blvd.	Suite 104	Baton Rouge	LA	70808	Representative
				P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70884-2231	Ms.



# DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS

P.O. BOX 60267

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

October 19, 2000

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

Operations Division  
Operations Technical Support Branch

cc: Michele Deshotels

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing  
Project Manager  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, Pennsylvania 15108

Dear Mr. Gesing:

This is in response to your letter, dated November 5, 1999, which addresses your proposal for conducting an environmental study for improvements to Route LA 1 in the Port Fourchon area of Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes. The state project number is identified as State Job No. 700-29-0112.

This proposal has been reviewed for potential Department of the Army (D.O.A.) regulatory requirements and impacts on any D.O.A. projects.

There are no anticipated adverse impacts on any D.O.A. projects.

Insufficient information has been provided to make a firm determination about the extent of D.O.A. regulatory jurisdiction involved, needs for D.O.A. permits for performance of proposed construction on existing or new alignments, or the types of permits that could be required or allowable. Lands classifiable as wetlands, waters classifiable as other waters and navigable waters are identifiable within and in close proximity to the project area.

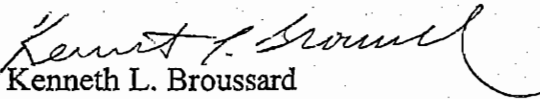
Agencies proposing to perform work for which D.O.A. permits could be required should apply for those permits well in advance of need for a permit or performance of any work for which a permit could be required. Applications for permits should, in each instance, include sufficient and detailed maps, drawings, photos, and data for evaluation of the proposal.

Off-site locations of activities such as borrow, disposals, haul-and detour-roads and work mobilization site developments may be subject to D.O.A. regulatory requirements and have an impact on a D.O.A. project.

Should you have questions concerning wetlands determinations or need for on-site evaluations by D.O.A. personnel, you may contact Dr. J.D. Bruza at (504) 862-1288 or -2270.

Should you have questions concerning D.O.A. regulatory permit requirements or performance of the proposed work, you may contact Mr. R.W. Duke or Mr. R.D. Swindler at (504) 862-2261 or -2278, respectively.

Sincerely,

  
Kenneth L. Broussard  
Acting S.O.V. Manager

Copies Furnished:

Dr. Terry Howey  
Coastal Management Division  
Department of Natural Resources  
Post Office Box 44487  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Mr. Kevin P. Belanger  
Federal Program Review Coordinator  
South Central Planning & Development Commission  
Post Office Box 846  
Thibodaux, Louisiana 70302



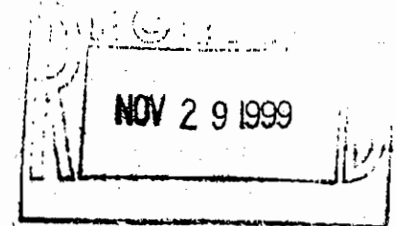
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Habitat Conservation Division  
c/o Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803-7535

cc: Michele Deshotels

November 23, 1999

F/SER44/GM:jk  
225/389-0508

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108



Dear Mr. Gesing:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received your November 5, 1999, letter soliciting our views on Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development State Project Number 700-29-0112. The project would construct a new highway from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana.

The NMFS is responsible for the conservation, management, and restoration of living marine resources and the coastal habitats supportive of those fishery species. Although only limited information has been provided regarding the project, the NMFS has identified several issues of concern that should be considered in your environmental review.

#### Essential Fish Habitat

Principle among issues of concern is the impact of the highway expansion on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) and associated marine fishery resources. The proposed project probably would be located in an area identified as EFH for post-larval and juvenile white shrimp, brown shrimp, and red drum. Categories of EFH in the project vicinity include estuarine emergent wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation, mud substrates, and estuarine water column.

Project area wetlands consist of tidally-influenced, brackish and saline marshes supporting plant species such as marshhay cordgrass, smooth cordgrass, Olney's three-square, salt marsh bulrush, sea ox-eye, black needle rush, black mangrove, and marsh elder. Based on our knowledge of this area and a review of development activities in nearby locations, sheltered shallow waterbottoms in this area may support widgeon grass and other species of submerged aquatic vegetation. These vegetated wetlands provide nursery and foraging habitats for a variety of economically-important marine fishery species, including spotted seatrout, red and black drum, flounder, Atlantic croaker, gulf menhaden, stripped mullet, brown and white shrimp, and blue crab. Some of these estuarine-dependent species serve as prey for other species managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (e.g. red



drum, mackerels, snappers, and groupers) and highly migratory species managed by the NMFS (e.g. billfish and sharks). Project area marshes and grass beds also produce nutrients and detritus, important components of the aquatic food web, which contribute to the overall productivity of the Timbalier Bay estuary. Furthermore, these vegetated wetlands provide water quality support functions by filtering runoff from developed areas and Louisiana Highway 1.

In evaluating various highway construction alternatives, we recommend you select the alignment that would avoid, to the maximum extent practicable, adverse dredge and fill impacts to EFH and associated fishery resources. This evaluation should include a review of alternative road building techniques such as end-on-end construction and other methods that could reduce impacts to wetlands. Additionally, we recommend you include the cost of mitigating for all adverse wetland impacts in any analysis of various alignments and construction techniques.

### Coastal Wetlands Restoration

The potential for direct and indirect impacts to intertidal brackish and saline marshes in the Port Fourchon area is of particular concern to the NMFS. The areal extent of these habitats is rapidly declining in coastal Louisiana due to both natural processes and human activities. Significant joint efforts between the State of Louisiana and the Federal government are underway to restore marsh under the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act. Several wetland restoration projects located between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon have been constructed or are in the planning stages, including the West Belle Pass Headland Restoration and the Marsh Creation Adjacent to LA1 South of Leeville projects. These projects represent a \$10 million public investment in the restoration and preservation of coastal habitats.

In addition, a number of wetland mitigation projects have been constructed in the area. These mitigation projects are designed to compensate for the destruction of marsh resulting from development activities permitted under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Any impacts to areas serving as mitigation must be compensated through the construction of equivalent mitigation, usually at a much higher ratio. We recommend your evaluation of alternatives include potential impacts to planned and completed wetland restoration and mitigation projects.

### Secondary Impacts

The NMFS is concerned that the proposed highway improvements could adversely impact water quality in Timbalier Bay and surrounding areas. The design and construction of roads and bridges can result in poor water circulation and exchange within coastal marshes. The grading of roads may lead to increased nutrient loading and contaminant inputs from surface runoff and accident-related fuel spills, engine leaks, improper trash disposal, and other sources generally associated with road traffic. We recommend construction methods and road designs that would minimize adverse wetland impacts be considered in any alternatives analysis that will be undertaken.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. If you wish to discuss this project further, please contact Gregory Miller at 225/389-0508.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Richard Hartman".

Richard Hartman  
Chief, Baton Rouge Office



# UNITED HOUMA NATION

20986 Hwy. 1  
Golden Meadow, LA 70357  
(504)475-6640  
Fax: (504)475-7109

*Brenda Dardar, Chairwoman*



December 2, 1999

Christopher G. Gesing, PE  
Project Manager  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
PO Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

cc: Michele Deshotels

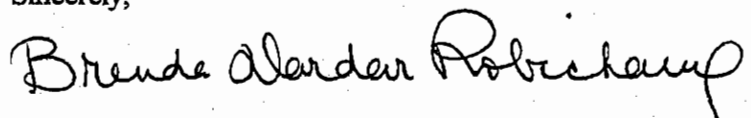
**RE: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
FAP No. HP-NH-T021 (002)  
Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes**

Dear Mr. Gesing:

I have received your notice regarding the above mentioned project. After reviewing the provided map and description of the project, the United Houma Nation Tribal Council is not aware of any potential impacts to any Houma tribal lands. However, in the process of construction, should you discover any significant cultural artifacts or findings, I am requesting that I be contacted immediately.

Please call me at (504)475-6640 if you have any questions or require additional information regarding this matter.

Sincerely,



Brenda Dardar Robichaux  
UHN Chairwoman

BDR:lc

**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

November 5, 1999

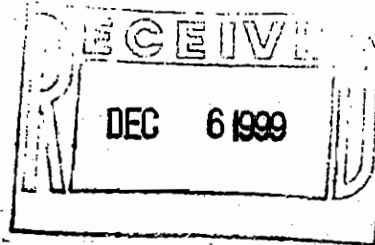
Greg Solvey  
FEMA Region VI  
800 North Loop 288  
Denton, TX 76201

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

Office Location:  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
LaFourche and Terrebonne Parishes  
*Solicitation of Views*



Dear Mr. Solvey:

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) has retained the consulting firm of Michael Baker Jr. Inc., to conduct an environmental study for improvements to LA 1 in the Port Fourchon area. Early in the planning stages of a transportation project, views from federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and individuals are solicited. The special expertise of these groups can assist us with the early identification of possible adverse economic, social, or environmental effects or concerns. Your assistance in this regard will be appreciated.

Due to the earliness of this request for your views, very limited data concerning the proposed project exists. We have, however, attached a sketch map showing the general location of the project, along with a preliminary project description.

It is requested that you review the attached information and furnish us with your views and comments by December 5, 1999. Replies should be addressed to Christopher G. Gesing, P.E., Michael Baker Jr., Inc., 420 Rouser Road, Airport Office Park, Building 3, Coraopolis, PA 15108. Please reference the State Project Number in your reply.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chris Gesing".

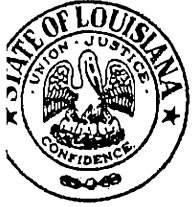
Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachments  
CGG/mew

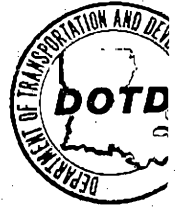
cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD

cc: Michele Deshotels

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY REGION VI	
REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE	
Coordinate with Local Government Floodplain Administrator to obtain necessary development permit.	
Handwritten signature of Michele Deshotels	12/1/99
Environmental Officer	Date



STATE OF LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
P. O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245



J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

November 8, 1999

KAM K. MOVASS,  
SECRETARY

SPN 700-29-0112  
PORT FOURCHON-GOLDEN MEADOW  
LA 1 IMPROVEMENTS  
LAFOURCHE PARISH

cc: Michele Deshotels

Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker, Jr., Incorporated  
Building 3, Airport Office Park  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

SUBJECT: SOLICITATION OF VIEWS

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Lafourche Parish indicates that the entire length of proposed the LA1 improvement project is in a Special Flood Hazard Area (Zone A - areas of 100-year flood), with base flood elevations ranging from 10-13' MSL. Also, the FIRM indicates that a portion of the project area is in a Zone V - areas of 100-year coastal flood with velocity.

During and after the project, consideration must be given to clearing debris and keeping the surrounding area clear in order to allow for the accumulation and flow of flood water.

You should contact the Parish Permit Official: Darla Duet, P.O. Drawer 5548, Thibodaux, LA, 70302, 504/446-8427 regarding any and all Parish requirements for this project and the appropriate permits.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these projects. If additional information is needed, please contact our office, (225) 379-1408.

Sincerely,

Sandra L. Batten  
Floodplain Insurance Analyst

Enclosure



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

JACK C. CALDWELL  
SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

NOV. 9, 1999  
Date

LA DOTD

cc: Michele Deshotels

Applicant  
Christopher B. Gesing, P.E.  
Agent

Work Description  
Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow LA 1 improvements

RE: P 991341, Coastal Use Permit Application

The person indicated below, will be the Coastal Management Division employee responsible for processing your application and should be your primary contact with the Coastal Management Division.

Name	Phone	Email
Ed Britton	(225) 342-7941	EDB@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Christine Charrier	(225) 342-8738	CHRISTINER@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Chris Davis	(225) 342-6140	CHRISD@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Jim Holcombe	(225) 342-7940	JIMH@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Abby Marston	(225) 342-7358	ABBYM@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Chris Melton	(225) 219-4969	CHRISME@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Dana Pennington	(225) 342 7942	DANAP@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Bill Pittman	(225) 342-6466	BILLP@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Tim Robertson	(225) 342-7472	TIMR@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Jeff Thibodeaux	(225) 342-8917	JEFFT@DNR.STATE.LA.US
Ivy Twyman	(225) 342-6469	IVYT@DNR.STATE.LA.US

Dear Applicant:

You are hereby advised that your application for a Coastal Use Permit was received and it has been determined that your proposed activity is a use of state concern in accordance with Louisiana revised Statute 49:214.5 and therefore will be processed through the Joint Public Notice System.

Under the Joint Public Notice System, the Coastal Management Division (CMD) has sent a copy of this permit application to the New Orleans District Corps of Engineers (NOD/COE). The NOD/COE and CMD will each process this application separately. All correspondence and calls regarding this application should reference the Coastal Use Permit Number indicated above.

Should you have questions concerning your application, please contact the person referenced above.

Sincerely,  
JPN Coordinator



LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

BOB ODOM, COMMISSIONER

W.G. "BUD" COURSON, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER



ASSISTANT  
COMMISSIONERS

November 9, 1999

Agricultural &  
Environmental Sciences  
Matthew Keppinger, III  
P. O. Box 3596  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
5) 925-3770  
:: 925-3760

cc: Michele Deshotels

Consumer  
Services  
Bernard Broussard  
P. O. Box 3098  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
5) 922-1341  
:: 922-0477

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Engineer  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

Animal Health  
Services  
John Delphin  
P. O. Box 1951  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
5) 925-3962  
:: 925-4103

Re: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Port Fourchon-Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes

Forestry  
William D. Frey  
P. O. Box 1628  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
5) 925-4500  
:: 922-1356

Dear Mr. Gesing:

Management  
Finance  
John Rhorer  
P. O. Box 3481  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
5) 922-1255  
:: 925-6012

I have no comments at this time regarding above project.

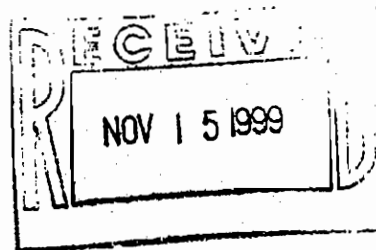
Marketing  
Debra Malone  
P. O. Box 3334  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
5) 922-1277  
:: 922-1289

Sincerely,

Bradley E. Spicer  
Assistant Commissioner

Land & Water  
Conservation  
Bryley E. Spicer  
P. O. Box 3554  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
5) 922-1269  
:: 922-2577

BES/vw



### Lafourche Parish School Board

P. O. BOX 879  
THIBODAUX, LOUISIANA 70302-0879  
TELEPHONE: 504-446-5631  
FAX: 504-446-0801

November 10, 1999

cc: Michele Deshotels

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P. E., Project Manager  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow --- LA 1 Improvements

Dear Mr. Gesing:


As Superintendent of Lafourche Parish Schools, I fully support the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) in its efforts to conduct an environmental study for improvements to LA 1 – specifically, on the proposed project known locally as the LA 1 Improvement from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. It is my understanding that the proposed improvements would improve the capacity, reliability, and safety of the existing LA 1 and increase regional access to Port Fourchon for persons, businesses and industry in the region.

I am very much aware of the economic impact that occurred due to the development of Port Fourchon. The jobs created and materials purchased by the various companies associated with Port Fourchon resulted in an increase in commercial activities and had a direct affect on our sales tax collection. In addition, property tax rolls increased as a result of the construction of warehouses and office areas.

These economic benefits resulted in increased educational services that are provided to students. Several examples include: (1) the expansion of *English as a second language* classes in order to meet the needs of children with foreign languages; (2) expansion of vocational programs at the high schools in order to meet the needs of industry; and (3) increases in student population in preparation for the increased number of families coming into the community.

The environmental study for improvements to LA 1 in the Port Fourchon area would in fact be vital to the South Lafourche area; and it would not appear to have a negative impact on the school system.

Sincerely yours,



Elmo Broussard  
Interim Superintendent of Schools

EB:gar

COUNCIL:  
DONOVAN BARKER  
PAUL CHAMPAGNE  
RICHARD CHAMPAGNE  
THOMAS TRANT  
WELDON TRICHE

DIANE MATAYA  
ACTING TOWN CLERK



710 CHURCH STREET  
LOCKPORT, LA 70374  
(504) 532-3117  
FAX (504) 532-7143

J.B. TOWNSEND, JR. - MAYOR

LOCKPORT, LOUISIANA

November 15, 1999

cc: Michele Deshotels

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing  
Project Manager - Michael Baker, Jr., INC.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15231-0259

Re: La. State Job No. 700-29-0112  
Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow

Dear Mr. Gesing,

Reference your letter of November 5, 1999 soliciting views on the improvements of Highway LA-1 between Port Fourchon and Golden Meadow, please be advised that the Town of Lockport administration fully supports this particular phase of the LA-1 improvements.

The improvement of LA-1 as stated will have a positive economical impact on Lafourche Parish, and the municipalities within the parish.

Very truly yours,

Joe B. Townsend, Jr.  
Mayor

NOV 18 1999

# State of Louisiana



cc: Michele Deshotels

James H. Jenkins, Jr.  
Secretary

Department of Wildlife & Fisheries  
Post Office Box 98000  
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000  
(225) 765-2800

M.J. "Mike" Foster,  
Governor

November 16, 1999

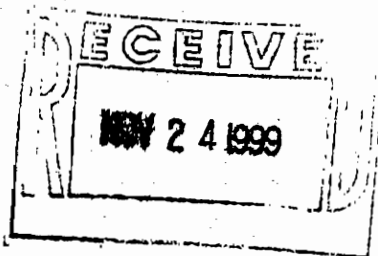
Mr. Christopher Gesing  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112

Dear Mr. Gesing:

Personnel of the Habitat Section of the Fur and Refuge Division have reviewed the preliminary data for the captioned project. In reviewing our database, no rare, threatened, or endangered species or critical habitats were found within the area of the captioned project that lies in Louisiana. No state or federal parks, wildlife refuges, scenic streams, or wildlife management areas are known at the specified site within Louisiana's boundaries.

The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program has compiled data on rare, endangered, or otherwise significant plant and animal species, plant communities, and other natural features throughout the state of Louisiana. Heritage reports summarize the existing information known at the time of the request regarding the location in question. They should not be considered final statements on the biological elements or areas being considered, nor should they be substituted for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program requires that this office be acknowledged in all reports as the source of all data provided here.



Sincerely,

Gary Lester, Coordinator  
Natural Heritage Program

GDL:rwg





# PORT FOURCHON

OFFICE: 16819 EAST MAJ  
GALLIANO, LOUISIANA

"LOUISIANA'S MULTI-USE PORT"

TED M. FALGOUT  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

November 17, 1999

Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

cc: Michele Deshotels

Re: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021 (002)  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes

Dear Mr. Gesing:

As a partner in the above referenced project, I feel compelled to reply to your solicitation for comments on the above referenced project even though I know I will have more than ample time to interject my views during the study.

In general, I feel that this project should be undertaken with the "big picture" in mind. For it to receive a proper evaluation, one must understand and keep in prospective the unique geologic setting of South Louisiana and especially the Bayou Lafourche Ridge.

This ridge offers Southeast Louisiana its only highway access to the Gulf of Mexico or "Golden Gulf" as it should be called. There is no other feasible alternative to this corridor. So, what is this worth economically, socially, and environmentally to this state and nation? These are the facts that should be fleshed out in this study. What is it worth now and in the future?

How significant is it that this corridor leads to this state's only Port on the Gulf and its only inhabited Barrier Island? How vital is this corridor to this nation's energy supply and national defense when it provides access to "America's New Frontier – Deepwater Oil and Gas" as the U. S. Minerals Management Service predicts. How significant is this corridor to LOOP, this nation's only offshore oil port which handles 13% of our total foreign oil consumption and an ever increasing amount of domestic oil as well and is connected to 35% of this country's refining capacity. How significant is LOOP to accommodating FPSO's, currently the only technology available to transport oil and gas from the ultra-deep waters of the Gulf.

How significant is this highway to providing the extremely time sensitive deployment of environmental response teams and equipment after an oil spill? How significant is the need for a highway that splits this nation's two most productive estuaries, the Barataria and Terrebonne in terms of emergency response, commercial seafood movement, recreation and tourism?

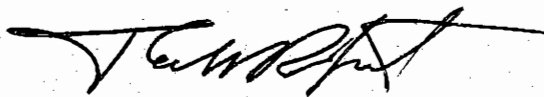
How significant is this highway to hurricane evacuation of offshore workers and residents of the region?

What is happening in global trade? What opportunities exist (or will be lost) if Louisiana does not have adequate landside connectivity to the Gulf? How critical is rail to this business, and how can we accommodate it in conjunction with a new highway? Much of this information has been gathered by the Port of New Orleans in their Millennium Port Study.

These are the issues that must be fleshed out in order to properly evaluate the value and need of this highway. Only after we have properly identified what is at stake, can we fathom the impact of no action and truly weigh the costs vs. benefits.

It should also be made very clear, that without major improvements, coastal land loss will increasingly threaten this highway's very existence.

Yours very truly,



Ted M. Falgout  
Executive Director

TMF:sll



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

3737 Government Street  
Alexandria, Louisiana  
71302

November 22, 1999

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

cc: Michele Deshotels

Dear Mr. Gesing:


Re: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Port Fouchon - Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
LaFourche and Terrebonne Parishes  
*Solicitation of Views*

Thank you for providing our agency with the opportunity to respond to the Solicitation of Views in your letter dated November 5, 1999, wherein you requested views and comments on the above project.

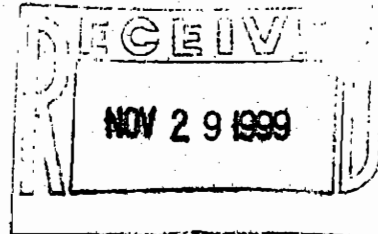
It does not appear that this project will impact any of our work in the vicinity. Further, we do not believe that this work will have an adverse effect on the surrounding environment when completed if appropriate erosion control measures are taken during construction.

Should you have questions regarding the above comments, please feel free to contact Tim Landreneau, District Conservationist in the Thibodaux field office at 504-447-3871, Ext. 3.

Sincerely,

  
ACTING FOR

E. J. Giering III, P.E.  
State Conservation Engineer



Cc: Tim Landreneau, DC, NRCS, Thibodaux, LA



State of Louisiana  
Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

DEC 03 1999

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E., Project Manager  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

cc: Michele Deshotels

Dear Mr. Gesing:

RE: Project No. 700-29-0112, proposed LA 1 improvements; Michael Baker Jr., Inc.,  
Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Office of Environmental Services (OES), has received your request for comments dated November 5, 1999, regarding the above referenced project. Based on an in-house review of the information you have submitted to this Department, the OES has no objection to the implementation of the proposed project for the LA Highway 1 improvements, provided that the issues listed below are satisfied if required. Please note that no field investigation was conducted on this project.

This Office recommends that you investigate the following requirements that may impact your proposed project:

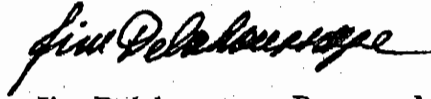
1. if any of the proposed work is located in wetlands or other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, you should contact the Corps in order to apply for any necessary permits;
2. if a permit is required from the Corps, a Water Quality Certification from OES may also be required;
3. all precautions should be observed to protect the groundwater of the region (SEE ATTACHMENT);
4. all precautions should be observed to control nonpoint source pollution from construction activities (SEE ATTACHMENT); and
5. the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), has a stormwater general permit for construction areas equal to or greater than five acres. It is recommended that you contact Jan Cedars at (504) 765-2784 to determine if your proposed improvements are covered under that general permit.



Mr. Gesing  
Page Two (2)

If you have any questions, please contact the Application Verification Unit at (504) 765-2965.

Sincerely,



Jim Delahoussaye, Program Manager  
Permits Division

JD\trp  
Attachment

c:

Southeast Regional Office  
Surveillance Division



State of Louisiana  
Department of Environmental Quality



L.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

December 6, 1999

cc: Michele Deshotels

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: SOV 700-29-0112; Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes  
Proposed LA 1 improvements

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Department of Environmental Quality has received your request for comments on the above referenced project.

There were no objections based on the information submitted to us. However, the Office of Environmental Services has made the following comments:

Please see the letter from the Office of Environmental Services, Permits Division.

"Any approval, or letter of no objection, granted by LDEQ is relevant only to the granting of funds for the proposed project. This does not relieve the applicant of his responsibility for obtaining any other permits or approvals necessary from LDEQ or other State, Local, or Federal agencies, nor does it influence the Department's ultimate decision on those permits or approvals. A copy of our brochure on construction best management practices is enclosed."

e



cycled paper

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE P.O. BOX 82231 BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70884-2231

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



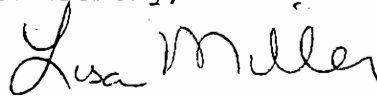
December 6, 1999  
Page 2

Please submit any future SOV's to the following address and we will expedite it as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Lisa Miller  
Department of Environmental Quality  
P. O. Box 82231  
Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2231

Should you need any additional information please call me at (225) 765-0723.

Sincerely,



Lisa L. Miller  
Contracts & Grants

llm  
Enclosures

Aaron Caillouet, Parish President

December 6, 1999

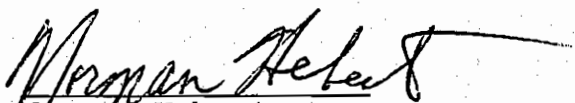
Christopher G. Gesing, P. E.  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

Re: State Project No:700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No: H. P.-NH-T021 (002)  
Port Fourchon-Golden Meadow  
LA. 1 Improvements  
Lafourche and Terrebone Parishes

Dear Mr. Gesing:

Lafourche Parish Public Works Department and the Parish of Lafourche have no objection to the referenced project at this time and fully support the "Build" alternative.

Sincerely,

  
Norman Hebert  
Public Works Department

cc: Michele Deshotels

Council Members:

DISTRICT 1  
Flowers  
DISTRICT 2  
Soignet  
DISTRICT 3  
Jones

DISTRICT 4  
Robert P. Naquin  
DISTRICT 5  
Ernest "Tibby" Boudreaux  
DISTRICT 6

DISTRICT 7  
Marvin P. Robichaux  
DISTRICT 8  
Barry Uzee  
DISTRICT 9  
Lindel Toups

DISTRICT 10  
Thomas W. Guidry  
DISTRICT 11  
Kenneth "Matt" Matheme  
DISTRICT 12  
Darryl F. Marlborough

DISTRICT  
V. J. "Vince" N  
DISTRICT  
Rod Toups  
DISTRICT  
Daniel Lorrz





## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HUNT DOWNER, JR.  
SPEAKER

POST OFFICE BOX 94062  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70  
PHONE 225-342-7263  
FAX 225-342-0402

December 7, 1999

Mr. Christopher Gesing  
Project Manager  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

cc: Michele Deshotels

Re: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NHT021(002)  
Port Fouchon - Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvement

Dear Mr. Gesing:

I appreciate this opportunity to comment on a project that is of regional, state, and national importance. As I am sure you will come to understand, this section of highway under investigation is critical for hurricane evacuation of thousands of residents of South Lafourche and Grand Isle and also approximately 6,000 workers on platforms in the Gulf of Mexico. This highway is also one of the deadliest highways in the state. With its winding curves, lack of shoulders, and volume of tractor-trailer trucks, it is a hazardous road to travel.

I am also certain that you will be in contact with a local group called the LA 1 Coalition, which is working to improve this highway system; in fact, I know the Coalition has worked to get this very study funded. I am confident that Mr. Ted Falgout of the Greater Lafourche Port Commission and Mr. Roy Francis of the LA 1 Coalition can expand even more so on the level of activity at Port Fouchon and Louisiana Offshore Oil Port. The one thing I would like to stress in my comments is the need to complete this report in a timely fashion. This highway needed to be improved 10 or 20 years ago. Myself and other members of the State Legislature are anxiously awaiting the results.

If you have any comments or questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 225-342-7263.

With kindest personal regards, I remain

Louisiana proud

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hunt Downer".

Hunt Downer

HD/ce



Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

December 3, 1999

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Agency»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«City», «State» «Zip»

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

Office Location:  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Route LA 1  
LaFourche and Terrebonne Parishes  
*Agency Scoping Meeting*

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker) is pleased to invite you to participate in the LA 1 Improvements project from Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary environmental documentation.

As part of this study, Baker will be investigating the environmental, socioeconomic, and engineering issues related to the proposed highway facility. A Scoping Meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. on December 14, 1999, in Room 312B of the Department of Transportation and Development Headquarters Building, 1201 Capital Access Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the study process and to identify specific issues you may have relative to your area of expertise.

Your participation in providing current, relevant information will insure the development of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We look forward to meeting with you and to your continued input throughout the duration of this project. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (412) 269-4636.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.

Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD

FOURCHON  
AGENCY MAILING LIST

Name 1	Name 2	Title	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State	Zip
Greg	Solvey		FEMA Region VI	800 North Loop 288		Denton	TX	76201
Ted M.	Falgout	Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 490		Galliano	LA	70355
Tim	Landreneau	District Conservator	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria	LA	71304
			Comm/8th Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans	LA	70130-3395
			Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans	LA	70150-0267
			U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	646 Cajum-Dome Boulevard	Suite 400	Lafayette	LA	70503
Gary	Lester	Coordinator Natural Heritage Program	Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70951
Mance	Watson		Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
			Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Brenda	Dardar	Chairperson	United Houma Nation	20986 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow	LA	70366
3Kirby	Verret	Chairman	United Houma Nation	Star Route Box 95-A		Golden Meadow	LA	70366
Mona	Kogel	Director	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive	Suite B-1	Baton Rouge	LA	70801
Michael P.	Jansky	6ENXP	Environmental Protection Agency	P.O. Box 44274	Capitol Annex 3rd	Baton Rouge	LA	70801
Morton	Wakeland Jr.	Marine & Wetlands Section (6WQ-EM)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Chris	Melton	Superintendent	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Office of Groundwater	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge	LA	70801
			National Park Service	365 Canal Street	Suite 3080	New Orleans	LA	70112
			Office of Conservation	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge	LA	70804-9275
			Rivers Trails & Conservation Assn.	National Park Service	8857 B Sullivan Road	Baton Rouge	LA	70801
			U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe	NM	87504-0728
Gregory	Miller		National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7531
Lisa	Miller		Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70804-2231
			Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70311
			Department of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge	LA	70821-3554
			Dept. of Culture Recreation & Tourism	P.O. Box 44426-CAP Ann 3rd		Baton Rouge	LA	70801
			Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation Dist. Of LA	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux	LA	70301-2941

Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes

**Subject:** Agency Scoping Meeting  
**Attendees:** See Attached List  
**Time and Place:** December 14, 1999, 10:00 a.m.  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Baton Rouge, LA  
**Purpose:** To discuss the study process and resource agency concerns

**Discussions:**

1. Michele Deshotels opened the meeting and asked that everyone in attendance briefly identify themselves and their agency/affiliation.
2. Chris Gesing provided a brief history of the project. Past studies of this area were discussed.
3. It was emphasized that the purpose of the Agency Scoping Meeting was to obtain agency input on their main areas of concern and to determine at which step in the study process various environmental issues would be considered. Baker will use a Geographic Information System (GIS) to build an environmental inventory of the project area based on agency identified important environmental resources. This will maximize avoidance opportunities during alternatives development. Additional consideration of environmental resources will be conducted once preliminary alternatives are developed, again based on agency concern of specific environmental issues. Early agency identification of key project environmental issues ensures that these concerns will be adequately considered and addressed at the appropriate place in the study process and with the appropriate level of detail.
4. The project study process flowchart was discussed. One of the first study objectives is to expand and develop the project Purpose and Need. Existing information will be supplemented with results of Baker's on-going traffic study and will include local official involvement. A local official's meeting will be scheduled for January 2000.
5. The GIS Environmental Inventory was discussed. Existing environmental information will be gathered from various resource agencies based on discussions at this Scoping Meeting. Data will be entered into the project GIS and will be displayed on a 1999 aerial photograph background.
6. The Alternatives Study was discussed. Line and grade for several new alignments will be investigated and will include conceptual structure designs (Leeville Bridge crossing). Methods of construction to minimize environmental impacts will be explored (end-on construction, etc.). Once preliminary alternatives have been developed, environmental field studies will be conducted to delineate wetlands, identify historic structures and noise receptors, and confirm any hazardous materials sites. Public, local official, and agency meetings will be held to present the preliminary alternatives. Comments will be reviewed and alternatives will be revised where necessary. This phase of work should be completed by April 2000.
7. A Preferred Alignment will be identified and examined in detail in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Once this document is completed and distributed for review, a public hearing will be held to obtain comments on the Draft EIS. Comments will be addressed in the Final EIS which is scheduled for completion in August 2000.

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Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes

8. Patti Holland, US Fish and Wildlife (USFWS), asked if environmental studies should be completed prior to alignment development. The project study process has been developed to gather environmental data at two levels. The first level consists of obtaining existing study area environmental information at the onset of the project based on issues discussed during the scoping process. This information is used by the engineers as they develop preliminary alignments. Detailed field studies are then conducted to determine potential impacts. Alignments revisions to avoid and minimize impacts to sensitive resources are then considered.
9. The NEPA/404 merged process was discussed. A draft Section 404 permit application will be submitted with the Draft EIS. A joint public hearing with the Corps of Engineers (USCOE) is also proposed. LA Department of Natural Resources Coastal Management Division may also participate due to coastal permitting issues.
10. A Mitigation Team was proposed to address project mitigation issues, including wetlands mitigation. The Team would consist of various state and federal resource agencies and other interested parties that have a stake in the mitigation process. The initial Mitigation Team meeting will be held in January 2000. Monthly meetings may be necessary depending on the identified project issues. Due to budgetary and staffing constraints, some agencies may not be able to attend monthly meetings. It was suggested that meeting agendas be sent to all participants prior to the meetings so that agencies could choose to attend based on expected topics. USFWS stated that they would be active at concurrence points, would have increased involvement at the alternatives phase of project, and would participate on the Mitigation Team primarily through the review of meeting minutes.
11. The Environmental Inventory and other associated issues were discussed by the group.

Wetlands:

- Start with aerial photography (1999 Black and White and Color Infrared, if available)
- Some selective ground truthing
- Field delineation - USCOE should be contacted to establish acceptable field techniques
- Identification of Isohaline Lines
- Hydrology

Vegetative communities:

- Natural Heritage Information
- Other Resource Agencies

Wildlife communities:

- Essential Fish Habitats
- Aquatic and terrestrial wildlife
- Wading Bird Colonies - Natural Heritage should have information - Survey may be required

Protected species - None identified to date - continue agency coordination

Surface water resources:

- LA Department of Environmental Quality - water quality inventory
- LA Office of Conservation - well information
- LA Oil Spill Coordinator's Office (LOSCO) LandSat Thematic Mapper Images

Cultural Resources:

- Historic structures inventory - > 50 years old
- Section 106 - coordination with Tribes of the area
- Recorded Sites - SHPO coordination

Relocations:

- Field identification of standing structures - residences, businesses, community facilities

Environmental Site Assessment:

- Existing database review
- Field verification of sites

Existing coastal restoration activities / mitigation areas:

- Locations



Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes

- Identify / avoid
- Mitigation areas

Priority projects list:

- Attend the project nomination meetings in January
- Identify EPA projects

Highway Surface Water Runoff

Hurricane Levy Impacts

Corps Disposal Areas – Identify areas of dredged material

Coastal Restoration Division Projects

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program Documents

Coastal Restoration Division Projects

LOOP EIS - May provide background material

12. Ted Falgout, Executive Director of the Port of Fourchon, commented that the Draft EIS should address socioeconomic benefits of the project as well as impacts. His recent conversations with oil production companies operating out of the Port of Fourchon indicated that new deep water drilling techniques would increase oil production from a current level of 150,000 barrels/day to an estimated 700,000 barrels/day in 2007. This magnitude of production increase will increase the demand for production supplies and will further increase Port activity. Ted also stressed the importance of an improved LA 1 for hurricane evacuation, not only for residents, but for the thousands of off-shore platform workers.
13. Kerry St. Pe, National Estuary Program, suggested that the LA 1 Improvement project could enhance the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Management Plan through the innovative development of mitigation options that benefit the region as a whole, such as an educational center.
14. Engineering and other issues were discussed and included:
  - Areas of focus
    - Golden Meadow – how to tie to 4-lane section
    - Leeville bridge
    - Southern terminus
  - Hurricane traffic evaluation
  - Truck traffic evaluation
  - Conceptual and Operational Spill Response
  - Study should include a rail scenario – “a transportation corridor”
  - Study should evaluate cost of maintaining existing LA 1
  - Structure – entire length – less impacts
  - Leeville rail bridge could be a lift structure since it would be less disruptive
  - Maintenance and operation
    - spill with hazardous waste
    - highway runoff
    - develop spill response mechanism
15. Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.



LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)

Agency Scoping Meeting  
December 14, 1999

NAME	AGENCY / DIVISION	PHONE NUMBER
1. Michele Deshotels	DOTD	225-929-9190
2. GABRIEL ADAMS	DOTD/ENVU	225-929-9180
3. Tim Smith	Baker	318 222 8111
4. Mara Pritchard	Baker	412-269-4620
5. Bill Farr	FHWA	225-757-7615
6. CHRIS GESING	BAKER	412-269-4600
7. Richard L. Savoie	DOTD	225-379-1384
8. Patli Holland	US FWS	337-291-3100
9. ROGER SWINARDEN	CORPS OF ENGINEERS	504 862-2000
10. KEENE BEALE	C-K ASSOC.	225 755-1000
11. Roy Francis	LA 1 Coalition	504-448-4400
12. Ted Falsout	Port Fourchon	504 632-6700
13. Kerry St. Pe	BTNER <small>(Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program)</small>	1800 259-0000
14. RICH MAJOR	C-K ASSOC	1-225-755-1000
15. DAVID MILLER	DOTD / BRIDGE DES	225-379-1300
16. Gregory Miller	NOAA - NMFS	225-389-0500
17. Jan Grenfell	DOTD	225-929-9183
18. BILL PITTMAN	CMD / DNR	225-342-6400
19.		
20.		

**MICHAEL BAKER, JR., INC.**  
**PHONE CALL REPORT**

PROJECT/LOCATION: Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow S.O.No.: 24203-000-0001-00000  
LA 1 Improvements DATE: January 14, 2000  
State Job No.: 700-29-0112

To: Tim Smith From: Duke Rivet  
Repres.: Michael Baker Jr., Inc. Repres.: Louisiana SHPO  
Phone No.: 318-222-8110 Phone No.: 225-342-8170  
Subject: Agency Scoping Meeting Minutes

Duke Rivet, Louisiana SHPO, called regarding the December 14, 1999 meeting minutes on the LA 1 Improvement project we had sent for his review. Duke wanted to clarify that under cultural resources both recorded historic and prehistoric site information would be collected from the SHPO. I stated that this was correct and that we would be meeting with them in the near future to collect this information. Duke apologized for not being able to attend the Scoping Meeting, but said that he was in regular contact with Michele Deshotels and was familiar with the project. Duke offered to provide any assistance we needed in obtaining relevant information for this project and hoped to be able to participate in future meetings.

**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

*A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation*

January 12, 2000

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»

«Title»

«Agency»

«Address\_1»

«Address\_2»

«City» «State» «Zip»

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
*Local Officials Committee*

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. is pleased to invite you to participate in the environmental and location study of the LA 1 Improvements project. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary NEPA documentation for the proposed highway facility between Port Fourchon and Golden Meadow. This project would improve the capacity, reliability and safety of the existing LA 1 and increase regional access to Port Fourchon for persons, businesses and industry in the region. It is part of the National Highway System.

We are beginning our work on this project by conducting a series of meetings with various state and federal resource agencies and local officials within the project area. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information on previous work, outline plans for future work and obtain your input on important issues as they relate to the construction of a new facility. We request your attendance at a meeting of local officials scheduled for 2:00 p.m. January 24, 2000 at the Greater LaFourche Port Commission Administrative Office, 16819 East Main in Galliano.

We look forward to meeting with you and to your continued involvement in this project. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (318) 222-8110.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD



**LOCAL OFFICIALS  
MAILING LIST**

Name_1	Name_2	Title	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State
Representative Loulan	Pitre, Jr.		District 54	104 West 65th Street		CutOff	LA
Senator Joel T. Norman	Chaisson, II Hebert		District 19	P.O. box 1255		Destrehan	LA
Representative Warren	Triche		Lafourche Parish Council	P.O. Box 5548		Thibodaux	LA
Representative H.B. "Hunt"	Downer, Jr.		District 55	907 Jackson Street		Thibodaux	LA
			District 52	1018 St. Mary Street		Thibodaux	LA
			Lafourche Parish	P.O. Box 7015		Houma	LA
			St. Charles Parish Planning and Zoning Commission	Office Community Action	P.O. Box 320	Raceland	LA
			South Central Planning & Development Commission	P.O. Box 302		Hahnville	LA
			Lafourche Parish School Board	P.O. Box 846		Thibodaux	LA
Elmo	Broussard	Interim Superintendent of Schools		P.O. Box 879		Thibodaux	LA
Senator Michael R.	Robichaux		District 20	P.O. Box 68		Mathews	LA
Representative Reggie P.	Dupre		District 53	P.O. Box 3893		Houma	LA
Representative Ernest D.	Wooten		District 105	104 New Orleans Street		Belle Chasse	LA
Mayor Jervis	Aulin		Town of Golden Meadow	P.O. Box 307		Golden Meadow	LA
Mayor Arthur	Bellanger		Town of Grand Isle	P.O. Box 200		Grand Isle	LA
Mayor Warren J.	Harang, Jr.		City of Thibodaux	128 Elder Street		Thibodaux	LA
Mayor Joe "Bubba"	Townsend		South Lafourche Levee District	P.O. Box 426		Galliano	LA
Roy	Francis	Executive Director	Town of Lockport	710 Church Street		Lockport	LA
Claudette	Sevin		LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 2048 NSU		Thibodaux	LA
STATE			South Louisiana Economic Council	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux	LA
Representative W.J.	Tauzin			107 Federal Building		Houma	LA
Representative Jim	McCreary		6425 Youree Dr. #350			Shreveport	LA
Congressman Chris	John			P.O. Box 971		Crowley	LA
Representative David	Vitter			3838 North Causeway Blvd.	Suite 2900	Metairie	LA
Representative Richard H.	Baker			5757 Corporate Blvd.	Suite 104	Baton Rouge	LA
Representative William J.	Jefferson			501 Magazine Street	Suite 1012	New Orleans	LA
Senator Mary	Landrieu		Room 326	Federal Building		Baton Rouge	LA
Senator John B.	Breaux		501 Magazine Street	Suite 1005		New Orleans	LA
Ted M.	Falgout	Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	16819 East Main		Galliano	LA

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Local Officials Meeting

**Attendees:** See Attached List

**Time and Place:** January 24, 2000: 2:00 p.m.  
Greater LaFourche Port Commission  
Galliano, LA

**Purpose:** To discuss the study process and Local Official's concerns

**Discussions:**

1. Chris Gesing opened the meeting and asked that everyone in attendance briefly identify themselves and their affiliation.
2. Chris Gesing provided an explanation of the highway development process, which is divided into four (4) major steps: Environmental Clearance, Design Engineering, Right-of-way Acquisition, and Construction. The LA 1 Improvements project between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon is in the Environmental Clearance portion of the process.
3. Chris Gesing provided a brief history of the project and described the Study process for the project. The project study process flowchart follows four broad steps: Scoping and Purpose & Need, Alternatives Development and Environmental Documentation. Today's meeting with Local Officials is part of the Scoping process.
4. The engineering considerations for this study will focus on a highway alignment. There is a local desire to include a parallel rail line, but consideration of this alignment will be limited to gathering preliminary environmental data to facilitate more detailed studies in the future.
5. Chris Gesing discussed the overall schedule for this study. The first Public Meeting is scheduled for late April, a Public Hearing is scheduled for June/July and the Final Environmental Impact Statement will be completed in September. A Record of Decision (ROD) would likely occur in late-2000. The ROD would allow the project to move from Environmental Clearance to the Design Engineering.
6. The meeting was opened up to questions and comments. Joe Townsend, Mayor of Lockport, stated the town of Lockport supported any effort to make Port Fourchon more accessible. He added that he felt LA 1 was the weak link in Port access and availability and that improvements to LA 1 would aid citizen concerns with weather related road problems. John Lajaunie, Nichols University, stated that Port Fourchon served as the economic catalyst for the region and agreed that during storm events LA 1 south of Leeville can be hazardous due to road inundation.
7. Mara Pritchard asked the group to identify the locations where hurricane evaluation congestion occurs. The group indicated that the area just south of the Leeville Bridge is flood-prone and would become the "choke point" during a storm event. A hurricane event does not have to occur for the road to become impassible. Flooding in this area can occur anytime that a southeastern storm comes ashore. The area just south of the bridge is only a few feet higher than high tide. The group recalled that a few years ago a police cruiser was lost because a local experienced police officer thought he could pass over the flooded roadway only to be swept off the road by the waves.
8. Roy Francis indicated that 6,000 to 13,000 offshore workers depended on LA 1 for hurricane evacuation.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

9. Mara Pritchard asked if there was any conflict between the vessel and vehicle traffic at the lift bridge during inclement weather. The group explained that the bridge did not operate when wind speeds exceeded 30 mph.
10. Roy Francis advised Baker that many of these incidents have been documented in the Mineral Management Service, US Department of the Interior reports. Baker will review these reports for information to be included in the Purpose and Need Summary.
11. Ted Falgout provided the group with a brief summary of the Port's current and planned activities. The Port has a possible 1,700 acres of property available for expansion, of which 600 acres are committed and under construction. The port has also acquired 3,500 acres available for wetland replacement. Some of this acreage may be available to be used as a mitigation site for the new highway. Ted further explained that the Port provides services to 150 independent companies. While most oil and natural gas is transferred from ships and platforms via pipelines, equipment, supplies, and work forces use the highway to access the Port. The Port serves as an inter-modal facility providing an exchange point between landside and offshore modes of transportation.
12. The group indicated that the Town of Leeville should be connected to any new highway. It is very important that the businesses located here are not "left out of the loop."
13. Meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)

Local Officials Meeting  
January 24, 2000

NAME	AFFILIATION	PHONE NUMBER
1. Ted Falgout	Port Fourchon	504 6326701
2. Roy Francis	LA1 Coalition	504 448 4480
3. JOHN P. LAJANNIE	NICHOLLS STATE	504 448 4210
4. michèle Deshotels	DOTD	225-929-9192
5. Huy Nguyen	FHWA	225-757-7620
6. GABRIEL ADAMS	DOTD	225-929-9186
7. Richard L. Savoie	DOTD	225-379-1384
8. JOE TOWNSEND	MAYOR-TOWN OF LOCKPORT	504-532-3117
9. Mara PITCHARD	Michael Baker JR. Inc.	412-269-4624
10. Jerry Pitts	FHWA	225-757-7618
11. Bill Farr	FHWA	225-757-7615
12. Tim Smith	Baker	318 222 8110
13. CHRIS GESING	BAKER	412-269-4636
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15.		
16.		
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20.		

**Baker**

January 12, 2000

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Agency»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«City» «State» «Zip»

RE: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
*Mitigation Team Meeting*

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

*A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation*

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. is pleased to invite you to participate as a Mitigation Team member for the environmental and location study of the LA 1 Improvements project. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary NEPA documentation for the proposed highway facility between Port Fourchon and Golden Meadow. A scoping meeting was previously held on December 14, 1999 to discuss the study process and to identify specific issues to be considered during project development.

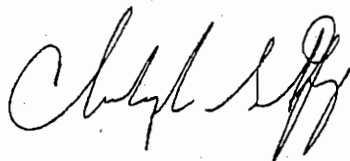
This project is being developed through a thorough consideration of alternatives that avoid and minimize impacts to the natural environment to the greatest extent practicable. All project impacts to the environment will be documented and mitigation measures will be developed that satisfy state and federal regulatory requirements. Mitigation Team members will discuss and formulate mitigation measures and strategies to address the anticipated project impacts.

We request your attendance at the first Mitigation Team meeting scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on January 25, 2000 in the second floor conference room of the DOTD Headquarters Building, 1201 Capital Access Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Your involvement in this effort will lead to the successful development of a comprehensive mitigation plan for the LA 1 Improvement project.

We look forward to meeting with you and to your continued input throughout the duration of this project. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (412) 269-4636.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD





AGENCY MAILING LIST

Name_1	Name_2	Title	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State	Zip
Greg	Solvey		FEMA Region VI	800 North Loop 288		Denton	TX	76201
Ted M.	Falgout	Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 490		Galliano	LA	70354
Tim	Landreneau	District Conservationist	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria	LA	71302
Roger D.	Swindler		Comm/6th Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans	LA	70130-3396
Patli	Holland		Department of the Army	N.O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans	LA	70160-0267
Gary	Lester	Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	646 Cajum Dome Boulevard	Suite 400	Lafayette	LA	70506
Marice	Watson		Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898
			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Brenda	Dardar		Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
			United Houma Nation	20966 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Kirby	Verret	Chairman	United Houma Nation	State Route Box 95-A		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Monra	Kogel	Director	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive	Suite B-1	Baton Rouge	LA	70816
Michael P.	Jansky	6ENXP	Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Morton	Wakeland Jr.	Marine & Wetlands Section (6WQ-EM)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Office of Groundwater		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Chris	Melton	Superintendent	Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
			National Park Service	365 Canal Street	Suite 3080	New Orleans	LA	70130
			Office of Conservation	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge	LA	70804-9275
			Rivers Trails & Conservation Asst.	National Park Service	8657 B Sullivan Road	Baton Rouge	LA	70803
			U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe	NM	87504-0728
Gregory	Miller		National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7535
Lisa	Miller		Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70884-2231
Kerry	St. Pe		Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
			Department of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge	LA	70821-3554
			Dept. of Culture Recreation & Tourism	P.O. Box 44426-CAP Ann 3rd.		Baton Rouge	LA	70804
Roy	Francis		LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
			Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation Dist. Of LA	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux	LA	70301-2941

Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes

**Subject:** Mitigation Team Meeting

**Attendees:** See Attached List

**Time and Place:** January 25, 2000: 10:00 a.m.  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Baton Rouge, LA

**Purpose:** To discuss potential project mitigation measures and strategies

**Discussions:**

1. Chris Gesing opened the meeting and asked that everyone in attendance briefly identify themselves and their affiliation.
2. A brief history of the project was presented that provided and described the Study process. The project study process flowchart was discussed and included: Scoping and Purpose & Need, Alternatives Development, and Environmental Documentation.
3. The project Purpose and Need was discussed. In general, the project need is recognized by DOTD, the public, and most state and federal agencies and includes future capacity issues as well as hurricane evacuation needs. Existing information and studies will be reviewed and summarized and supplemented with the results of Baker's on-going traffic studies and local official's involvement.
4. The GIS Environmental Inventory was reviewed. Based on discussions at the December 14, 1999 Agency Scoping Meeting, existing environmental data is being gathered from various resource agencies that will be entered into the project GIS and displayed on a 1999 aerial photograph background.
5. The engineering considerations for this study will focus on a highway alignment alternative. On-going traffic studies will determine if the proposed facility will be 2 or 4 lanes to accommodate projected future traffic.
6. The first Public Meeting is scheduled for late April, a Public Hearing is scheduled for June/July and the Final Environmental Impact Statement will be completed in September. A Record of Decision (ROD) would likely occur in late-2000. The ROD would allow the project to move from Environmental Clearance to the Design Engineering.
7. David Franks, US Coast Guard, commented on bridge permits. Each body of water crossed by the new facility would require a separate bridge permit. The number of water body crossings will be determined as the alignment alternatives are developed. Coordination with the Coast Guard will continue to address this issue.
8. James Barlow, Corps of Engineers, stated that mitigation requirements would likely be dependent on design of the facility and whether it is constructed on fill or on structure. Mr. Barlow stated that the COE mitigation requirements would rely on input from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) since the project area is within identified Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The COE stressed that mitigation measures should be employed during the design phase of the project, such as end-on construction techniques, to minimize impacts. The COE stated that many mitigation projects to date have not been successful. Shoreline protection projects may receive some mitigation credits, but are often costly to construct. Other mitigation techniques include hydraulic dredging to restore marsh area. Mr. Barlow commented that in addition to direct construction impacts, the shadow affect of the structure on the native vegetation will need to be considered.

Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes

9. Roy Francis, LA 1 Coalition, presented an aerial photograph that showed 3,500 acres just north of the port that had been purchased by the Port Commission for wetland replacement. Some of this acreage may be available as a mitigation site for the new highway.
10. Gregory Miller, NMFS, stated that spoil and any type of fill would be detrimental to the marine life in this area, specifically post-larval and juvenile white shrimp, brown shrimp, red drum, and Spanish mackerel, as well as secondary impacts associated with highway runoff. The EIS developed for this project should address potential impacts to these species.
11. Maria Webre, LA Dept. Wildlife and Fisheries, stated that wading bird colonies may be in the project area and should be avoided if possible.
12. Duke Rivet, LA Division of Archaeology, stated that known historic, prehistoric, and burial sites should be identified and avoided. Baker will be conducting a records check at the LA Division of Archaeology and Division of Historic Places to obtain this information. Mr. Rivet commented that there may be submerged shell middens in the area, but did not anticipate the need for a Phase I survey at this time.
13. Surface water runoff was discussed. Andrew Barron, LA Dept. of Environmental Quality, has been working on several projects where storm drains are fitted with filters to treat runoff. An LSU project is also investigating the mechanical filtration of runoff from Interstate 10. Cost and maintenance issues of both techniques were discussed. Further research on the runoff issue will continue.
14. Hazardous waste sites within the project area will be identified and avoided. A hazardous spill response plan will be developed. The Port has companies familiar with spill containment that may be available to respond to a highway spill, should one occur.
15. Consideration of a parallel rail line along with the highway alternative was discussed. Previous discussions have centered around collecting information on rail feasibility in conjunction with the highway and perhaps clearing a "transportation corridor" in the environmental document that would address both highway and rail issues and impacts. Since the project purpose and need will focus on issues relating to highway alternatives, (e.g. capacity issues, safety, hurricane evacuation), it was determined that rail would not be an alternative discussed in this EIS.
16. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Mitigation Team Kick-off Meeting  
January 25, 2000

	NAME	AGENCY / DIVISION	PHONE NUMBER
1.	Tim Smith	Baker	318 222 8110
2.	JAMES MOONEY	BAKER	870-247-3974
3.	Andrew Barron	LDDEQ - NPS	225-765-0834
4.	Huy NGUYEN	FHWA	225-757-7620
5.	Doug LaBar	C-K Assoc.	225-755-1000
6.	RICH MAJORE	C-K ASSOC	225-755-1000
7.	KERRY BEALE	C-K ASSOC	225-755-1000
8.	DAVID FRANK	USCG	504-589-2964
9.	DUKE RIVET	CA DIV. OF ARCHAEOLOGY	225-392-8174
10.	BOB MAHONEY	FHWA	225-757-7624
11.	Jerry Pitts	FHWA	225-757-7614
12.	RICHARD L. SAVOIE	DOTD	225-379-1384
13.	Todd M. Miller	USACOE	504-862-1570
14.	ROGER SWINDLER	CORPS - PERMIT	504 <sup>862</sup> <del>862</del> -2278
15.	James Baelow	Corps of Engineers - Permits	504-862-2250
16.	Gregory Miller	NOAA-NMFS	225-389-0508
17.	MARIA Webre	LDWF	(225) 765-2384
18.	John Kurgan	Baker	412-269-6343
19.	Mara PRITCHARD	Baker	412-269-4624
20.	Chris Gesing	Baker.	412-269-4634

Mitigation Team Kick-off Meeting  
January 25, 2000

NAME	AGENCY / DIVISION	PHONE NUMBER
21. Roy P Francis	LAI Coalition	504 448 448
22. Bill Farr	FHWA	225-757-7615
23. Michele Deshotels	DOTD	225-929-9190
24. GABRIEL ADAMS	DOTD	225-929-9186
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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Habitat Conservation Division  
c/o Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803-7535

February 3, 2000 F/SER44/GM:jk  
225/389-0508

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
420 Rouser Road  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

Dear Mr. Gesing:

On December 14, 1999, and January 25, 2000, staff of the Baton Rouge office of the National Marine Fisheries Service participated in scoping meetings for Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) State Project Number 700-29-0112. The meetings focused on environmental planning prior to constructing a new highway from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon, in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. In a letter dated November 23, 1999, we provided initial comments regarding the proposed new highway, including concerns regarding potential impacts to wetlands, Federally-funded coastal restoration projects, wetland mitigation sites, water quality, and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The purpose of this letter is to inform you of the consultation requirements for this project under the EFH provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act)(P.L. 94-265).

The proposed project is located in an area identified as EFH for post-larval and juvenile white shrimp, brown shrimp, red drum, and Spanish mackerel. Categories of EFH in the project vicinity include estuarine emergent wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), mud, sand and shell substrates, and estuarine water column. Detailed information on Federally managed fisheries and their EFH is provided in the 1998 generic amendment of the Fishery Management Plans for the Gulf of Mexico prepared by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC). The generic amendment was prepared as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act. In addition, we are providing you with a copy of an EFH guidance document to assist in the understanding of consultation requirements and analysis of EFH issues (see enclosure).

Because this highway project is located within an area identified as EFH, provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act require consultation with the NMFS regarding potential impacts to EFH. As the major project sponsor, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the lead Federal agency that usually would be responsible for EFH consultation with the NMFS on this project. However, during the January 25, 2000, scoping meeting, the NMFS was informed that a merged National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) -- Clean Water Act (CWA) strategy would be utilized to satisfy Federal environmental impact analysis and wetland regulatory requirements for the project. Under this scenario, the EFH assessment can be prepared by either the FHWA or the New Orleans



District of the Corps of Engineers for inclusion into the NEPA document. Alternatively, provisions in the Magnuson-Stevens Act allow the LDOTD to prepare the EFH assessment and initiate consultation with NMFS on behalf of the lead Federal agency if LDOTD agrees to the approach and the NMFS is advised of the agreement in writing.

The Environmental Impact Statement being prepared to satisfy NEPA/CWA requirements should include a review of the proposed project and its potential impacts to EFH. This EFH assessment must include: (1) a description of the proposed action; (2) an analysis of the impacts, including cumulative effects, of the action on EFH, the managed species, and associated species by life history stage; (3) the Federal agency's views regarding the effects of the action on EFH; and, (4) proposed mitigation, if applicable.

We hope this has clarified the EFH consultation responsibilities relative to this proposed highway project. If you wish to discuss EFH requirements further, please contact Gregory Miller by telephone at 225/389-0508 or by email at [gregory.miller@noaa.gov](mailto:gregory.miller@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,



Richard Hartman  
Chief, Baton Rouge Office

Enclosure



STATE OF LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
P. O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245



April 2, 2001

"MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

KAM K. MOVASSAGI  
SECRETARY

STATE PROJECT NO.: 700-29-0112  
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO.: HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 IMPROVEMENTS  
ROUTE: LA 1  
PARISH: LAFOURCHE

Mr. Richard Hartman, Chief  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Habitat Conservation Division Engineers  
c/o Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803-7535

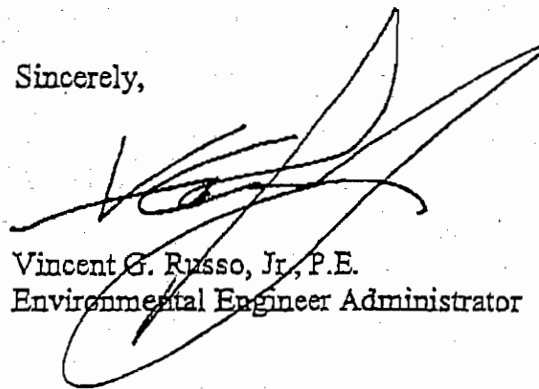
SUBJECT: Authorization of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to conduct consultations

Dear Mr. Hartman:

Attached is a letter from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) authorizing the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD) or its consultants to conduct all consultations of Section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1855(b)) with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for all actions, authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for the proposed captioned project.

If you should have any questions, please contact me at 225-248-4190.

Sincerely,



Vincent G. Russo, Jr., P.E.  
Environmental Engineer Administrator

VGR/ga  
Attachment  
cc: FHWA





FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

March 20, 2001

IN REPLY REFER TO  
Essential Fish Habitat  
Consultation with National  
Marine Fishers Service

Kam K. Movassaghi, Ph.D., P.E.  
Secretary  
Department of Transportation  
and Development  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Attention: Mr. Vincent Russo

Dear Dr. Movassaghi:

Consultation requirements of Section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (16 U.S.C. 1855(b)) provide that Federal agencies must consult with the National Marine Fishers Service (NMFS) on all actions, authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH).

This letter is to authorize the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development or your consultants to initiate and carry out the consultation with the NMFS for proposed federal aid projects. It is anticipated that the coordination will normally take place within the National Environmental Policy Act process.

Sincerely yours,

Virgil Page  
Planning and Research Engineer



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

February 7, 2000

IN REPLY REFER TO  
FAP HP-NH-T021(002)  
SP 700-29-0112  
LA 1 Improvement Study  
Golden Meadow to  
Port Fourchon  
LaFourche Parish

RE: Environmental Impact  
Statement

Colonel William L. Conner, Commander  
Department of the Army  
New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers  
P. O. Box 60267  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160-0267

Attention: Mr. Ronald J. Ventola  
Chief, Regulatory Functions Branch

Dear Colonel Conner:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the subject project. Since the project will certainly require a section 404 permit and because of your agency's legal jurisdiction over such permits we are requesting you to be a cooperating agency.

The proposed project, known locally as the LA 1 Improvement Project is generally located in the present LA 1 corridor from Golden Meadow, Louisiana to Port Fourchon, Louisiana. Alternates for the 18 mile long project include upgrading the existing facility, upgrading the facility on new location and the no build alternative.

Your agency's involvement should entail those areas under its jurisdiction, and no direct writing or analysis will be necessary for the document's preparation. The following are activities we will take to maximize interagency cooperation:



- 1) Invite you or your representative to coordination meetings.
- 2) Consult with you on any relevant technical studies that will be required for the project.
- 3) Organize joint field reviews with you.
- 4) Provide you with project information, including study results.
- 5) Encourage your agency to use the above documents to express your views on subjects within your jurisdiction.
- 6) Include information in the project environmental documents that cooperating agencies need to discharge their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) responsibilities and any other requirements regarding jurisdictional approvals, permits, licenses, and/or clearances.

Please involve all appropriate sections within the Corps of Engineers.

You have the right to expect that the EIS will enable you to discharge your jurisdictional responsibilities. Likewise you have the obligation to inform us if, at any point in the process, your needs are not being met. We expect that at the end of the process the EIS will satisfy your NEPA requirements including those related to project alternatives, environmental consequences, and mitigation. Further, we intend to utilize the EIS as our decision making document and as the basis for any required permit applications. We expect permit applications to proceed concurrently with the EIS approval process.

We look forward to your response to the request and your role as a cooperating agency on this project. If you have any question or would like to discuss in more detail the project or our agency's roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this EIS, please contact Mr. William Farr at (225) 757-7615.

Sincerely yours,

\s\ William A. Sussmann

William A. Sussmann  
Division Administrator

cc: Mr. Vincent Russo

jmp:sb

g:\users\jpitts\dist02\environ\portcoe.jmp



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

February 7, 2000

IN REPLY REFER TO  
FAP HP-NH-T021(002)  
SP 700-29-0112  
LA 1 Improvement Study  
Golden Meadow to  
Port Fourchon  
LaFourche Parish

RE: Environmental Impact  
Statement

Mr. Richard Hartman, Chief  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Habitat Conservation Division Engineers  
c/o Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803-7535

Dear Mr. Hartman:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the subject project. Since the project will certainly require a Section 404 permit and because of your agency's legal jurisdiction over such permits, we are requesting you to be a cooperating agency.

The proposed project, known locally as the LA 1 Improvement Project is generally located in the present LA 1 corridor from Golden Meadow, Louisiana to Port Fourchon, Louisiana. Alternates for the 18 mile long project include upgrading the existing facility, upgrading the facility on new location and the no build alternative.

Your agency's involvement should entail those areas under its jurisdiction, and no direct writing or analysis will be necessary for the document's preparation. The following are activities we will take to maximize interagency cooperation:

~~READING  
FILE~~

- 1) Invite you or your representative to coordination meetings.
- 2) Consult with you on any relevant technical studies that will be required for the project.
- 3) Organize joint field reviews with you.
- 4) Provide you with project information, including study results.
- 5) Encourage your agency to use the above documents to express your views on subjects within your jurisdiction.
- 6) Include information in the project environmental documents that cooperating agencies need to discharge their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) responsibilities and any other requirements regarding jurisdictional approvals, permits, licenses, and/or clearances.

Please involve all appropriate sections within the National Marine Fisheries Service.

You have the right to expect that the EIS will enable you to discharge your jurisdictional responsibilities. Likewise you have the obligation to inform us if, at any point in the process, your needs are not being met. We expect that at the end of the process the EIS will satisfy your NEPA requirements including those related to project alternatives, environmental consequences, and mitigation. Further, we intend to utilize the EIS as our decision making document and as the basis for any required permit applications. We expect permit applications to proceed concurrently with the EIS approval process.

We look forward to your response to the request and your role as a cooperating agency on this project. If you have any question or would like to discuss in more detail the project or our agency's roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this EIS, please contact Mr. William Farr at (225) 757-7615.

Sincerely yours,

\s\ William A. Sussmann

William A. Sussmann  
Division Administrator

cc: Mr. Vincent Russo, LDOTD  
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

February 7, 2000

IN REPLY REFER TO  
FAP HP-NH-T021(002)  
SP 700-29-0112  
LA 1 Improvement Study  
Golden Meadow to  
Port Fourchon  
LaFourche Parish

RE: Environmental  
Assessment

Mr. Marcus N. Redford, P.E.  
Chief Bridge Administration Branch  
Eighty Coast Guard District  
Hale Boggs Federal Building  
501 Magazine Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130-3396

Dear Mr. Redford:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the subject project. Since the project will certainly require a bridge permit and because of your agency's legal jurisdiction over such permits we are requesting you to be a cooperating agency.

The proposed project, known locally as the LA 1 Improvement Project is generally located in the present LA 1 corridor from Golden Meadow, Louisiana to Port Fourchon, Louisiana. Alternates for the 18 mile long project include upgrading the existing facility, upgrading the facility on new location and the no build alternative.

Your agency's involvement should entail those areas under its jurisdiction, and no direct writing or analysis will be necessary for the document's preparation. The following are activities we will take to maximize interagency cooperation:

~~READING  
FILE~~

- 1) Invite you or your representative to coordination meetings:
- 2) Consult with you on any relevant technical studies that will be required for the project:
- 3) Organize joint field reviews with you;
- 4) Provide you with project information, including study results:
- 5) Encourage your agency to use the above documents to express your views on subjects within your jurisdiction: and
- 6) Include information in the project environmental documents that cooperating agencies need to discharge their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) responsibilities and any other requirements regarding jurisdictional approvals, permits, licenses, and/or clearances.

Please involve all appropriate sections within the U.S. Coast Guard.

You have the right to expect that the EIS will enable you to discharge your jurisdictional responsibilities. Likewise you have the obligation to inform us if, at any point in the process, your needs are not being met. We expect that at the end of the process the EIS will satisfy your NEPA requirements including those related to project alternatives, environmental consequences, and mitigation. Further, we intend to utilize the EIS as our decision making document and as the basis for any required permit applications. We expect permit applications to proceed concurrently with the EA approval process.

We look forward to your response to the request and your role as a cooperating agency on this project. If you have any question or would like to discuss in more detail the project or our agency's roles and responsibilities during the preparation of this EIS, please contact Mr. William Farr at (225) 757-7615.

Sincerely yours,

\s\ William A. Sussmann

William A. Sussmann  
Division Administrator

cc: Mr. Vincent Russo

jmp:sb

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HP-NH-T021(02)



Reference letter... UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE Habitat Conservation Division c/o Louisiana State University Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803-7535

February 29, 2000

F/SER44/RI/jk

225/389-0508

DATE	2/29/00						
TO	Mr. Sussmann						
FROM	Richard Hartman						
SUBJECT	LA 1 Improvement Project						
ADMIN							
FISCAL							

Mr. William A. Sussmann, Divisional Administrator U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration 5304 Flanders Dr., Suite A Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808

Dear Mr. Sussmann:

The Baton Rouge office of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received your letter dated February 7, 2000, requesting our participation as a cooperating agency in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the LA 1 Improvement Project. Your letter further indicated that no direct writing or analysis would be requested of NMFS staff. With that understanding, this office agrees to participate as a cooperating agency on the EIS, as permitted by the staff resources we have available.

While your letter requested we involve all appropriate sections within the NMFS, this office is not responsible for Endangered Species consultations. During the preparation of the Endangered Species sections of the EIS, we recommend you consult with the Protected Resources Division of the NMFS. Their address and phone number is:

9721 Executive Center Drive, N. St. Petersburg, FL 33702 (727) 570-5312

Additionally, I would appreciate it if you would understand that we have limited staff in this office and all are extremely busy. Therefore, I would also appreciate your giving us as much advance notice as possible of all meetings for which you desire our attendance. All information relative to this project should be addressed in the future to the attention of Gregory Miller at our address. Additionally, scheduling of meetings should be coordinated with either him or myself.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Richard Hartman

Richard Hartman Chief, Baton Rouge Office





**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

May 10, 2000

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Attn»  
«Agency»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«City» «State» «Zip»

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA I Improvements  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LaFourche Parish  
*Alignment Study Review Meeting*

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker) is requesting your continued participation in the LA I Improvements project from Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary environmental documentation.

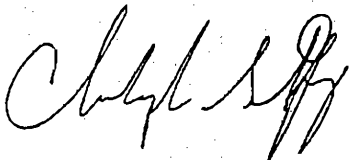
As part of this study, Baker will be investigating the environmental, socioeconomic, and engineering issues related to the proposed highway facility. An Alignment Study Review Meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. on May 22, 2000 in the second floor conference room of the Department of Transportation and Development Headquarters Building, 1201 Capital Access Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The purpose of this meeting is to review the environmental resource information collected and the preliminary alignments developed. This meeting precedes a public meeting to be held on May 23, 2000.

We have enclosed a set of preliminary alignment drawings and an alignment comparative analysis so you can become familiar with the alternatives developed prior to the meeting. These alignments are still preliminary, and as such, should not be distributed to the public at this time. A meeting agenda is also enclosed.

Your participation will insure the development of a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We look forward to meeting with you and to your continued input throughout the duration of this project. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (412) 269-4636.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels → DOTD



**FOURCOURN  
AGENCY MAILING LIST**

Name_1	Name_2	Attn:	Title	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State	Zip
Greg	Solvey			FEMA Region VI	800 North Loop 288		Denton	TX	76201
Ted M.	Falgout		Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 490		Galliano	LA	70354
Tim	Landreneau		District Conservationist	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria	LA	71302
Marcus N.	Redford, P.E.		Chief Bridge Administration Branch	Eight Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans	LA	70130-3396
William L.	Conner	Attn: Mr. Ronald J. Ventola Chief, Regulatory Functions Branch	Commander	Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans	LA	70160-0267
Patti	Holland		Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	646 Cajum Dome Boulevard	Suite 400	Lafayette	LA	70506
Gary	Lester			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898
Marice	Watson			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Brenda	Dardar		Louisiana Natural Heritage Program	Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Kirby	Verret		Chairperson	Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Mona	Kogel		Chairman	United Houma Nation	20966 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Michael P.	Jansky		Director	United Houma Nation	Star Route Box 95-A		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Morton	Wakeland Jr.		Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive	Suite B-1	Baton Rouge	LA	70816
Chris	Mellon		Superintendent	Environmental Protection Agency	P.O. Box 44274	Capitol Annex 3rd.	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
Gregory	Miller		Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Lisa	Miller			Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Keny	St. Pe		Office of State Parks	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Roy	Francis			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Office of Groundwater	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
				National Park Service	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
				Office of Conservation	365 Canal Street	Suite 3080	New Orleans	LA	70130
				Rivers Trails & Conservation Asst.	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge	LA	70804-9275
				U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	8857 B Sullivan Road	Baton Rouge	LA	70803
				National Marine Fisheries Service	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe	NM	87504-0728
				Department of Environmental Quality	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7535
				Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70884-2231
				Department of Agriculture & Forestry	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
				Dept. of Culture Recreation & Tourism	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge	LA	70821-3554
				LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 44428-CAP Ann 3rd.		Baton Rouge	LA	70804
				Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation D	P.O. Box 2049-NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
					204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux	LA	70301-2941

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Agency Preliminary Alignment Review Meeting

**Attendees:** See Attached List

**Time and Place:** May 22, 2000: 1:00 p.m.  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Baton Rouge, LA

**Purpose:** To present and discuss the results of the Preliminary Alignments Study

**Discussions:**

1. Chris Gesing opened the meeting and asked that everyone in attendance briefly identify themselves and their agency/affiliation.
2. An overview of the environmental resource data collection was provided. Resources identified included upland or developed areas, wetlands, cultural resource sites, oyster leases, and floodplains. It was noted that no wading bird colonies, T&E species, hazardous waste sites or LaDNR mitigation areas were identified within the Study Area. The information collected was placed into a Geographic Information System (GIS) and used to avoid or minimize environmental resource impacts to the extent possible during preliminary alignment development.
3. It was noted that an EPA Demo Project was approved in January 2000 and should be included as an environmental constraint. Kerry Beale indicated that there were no demo projects when the environmental data was gathered, but they would investigate and proceed as appropriate.
4. Patti Holland indicated that FWS is working toward identifying and designating proposed critical habitat areas for the federally threatened piping plover. Only those sites within the critical habitat area that are considered sandy beach habitat are of concern. However, after further review and discussion it was determined that the proposed highway would not impact beach habitat and that the piping plover is not an issue of concern for this project.
5. Greg Miller inquired as to whether any Coast 2050 creation sites were located within the Study Area. These sites should be documented. The Coast 2050 Plan is designed to sustain and restore coastal resources. Coordination with state and federal agencies to date has not determined any sites that would be impacted by this project. Coordination efforts are on going and any information obtained will be considered as part of the planning process.
6. Courtesy copies of the Project Purpose and Need (P&N) statement were distributed. Chris indicated that the P&N statement was being officially transmitted to the resources agencies this day.
7. Chris presented the preliminary alignments developed. It was noted that the roadway is a 4-lane elevated rural arterial on new location and will utilize end on construction. The crossing of navigable waterways and the rationale for the interchange locations was discussed. These alignments were developed to avoid or minimize impacts to the social and natural environments.
8. It was agreed that the Line B partial directional interchange at Sta. 530±00 should be eliminated due to cost and its close proximity to other full interchanges.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

9. James Barlow inquired as to whether rebuilding or upgrading existing LA 1 was considered. It was noted that rebuilding or upgrading existing LA 1 was considered. The following points were discussed:
  - a) Traffic analyses indicate that a 4-lane roadway is required to carry design year volumes, which would require substantial widening of the existing roadway.
  - b) In order to maintain a roadway elevation above the FEMA 100-year elevation the existing roadway would need to be raised approximately 15 feet. The 4-lane section width combined with the embankment side-slope would be substantially wider than the existing right-of-way and would result in impacts to every adjacent property.
  - c) The resultant embankment would substantially impact the wetlands systems and exposed sandy areas along existing LA 1.
  - d) The existing soils have a very high rate of settlement (approximately 3 feet per century). Any embankment improvement would eventually need raised to compensate for unavoidable settlement.
10. James commented that consideration for rebuilding or upgrading LA 1 should be addressed in the EIS.
11. Patti commented that access issues for oil and gas companies should be addressed in the EIS.
12. Patti inquired as to whether the existing LA 1 corridor could be returned to its natural condition south of Leeville (i.e. pavement removed) once the new roadway was constructed. It was noted that there were existing utility corridors along LA 1 that needed to be maintained and that there were no plans at this time to relocate the utilities to the new roadway structure.
13. Ted Falgout added that if the new roadway became a toll road, a free road must be maintained to provide the residents of Grand Isle a transportation choice (toll or free). Bob Mahoney pointed out that a funding source is not in place at this time for the new roadway.
14. The alignment comparative analysis of environmental impacts was discussed. It was noted that the impacts were based on a "zone of impact" that is generally 25 feet beyond the edge of structure. This is consistent with DOTD minimum right of way requirements.
15. End on construction proposed for the project will have a much smaller "zone of impact" and will minimize impacts overall. It was agreed that Baker should revise the "zone of impact" to be more consistent with the end on construction methodology proposed.
16. Greg Miller inquired as to why there was no response to NMFS letters regarding essential fish habitat coordination as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Chris indicated that Baker's interpretation of the NMFS letters was that the requirements were already being met through on-going coordination efforts and no additional action was necessary. Greg indicated that a letter response was necessary. Chris indicated that a letter response would be sent to NMFS on FHWA's behalf by the end on the week.
17. Joe Suhayda presented a Hurricane Tracking map generated using Arc Info. He noted that elevated structures place far less friction on water flows. An embankment section high enough to be above the FEMA 100-year flood elevation would raise flood elevations on the leeward side of the roadway.
18. Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)

**Agency Meeting**  
**Preliminary Alignment Review**  
**May 22, 2000**

NAME	AGENCY / DIVISION	PHONE NUMBER
1. CHRIS GOSING	BAKER	412-269-4636
2. JOE SUHAYDA	LWRRI / LSU	225-388-8620
3. NEDRA KOREVEC	LWRRI / LSU	225-388-6027
4. VIBHAS ARAVAMUTHAN	LWRRI / LSU	225-388-6027
5. Michele Deshotels	DOTD	248-4192 225-929-9192
6. GABRIEL ADAMS	DOTD	248-4186-after 225-929-9186
7. Patti Holland	U.S. FWS	337-291-3121
8. James A. Barlow Jr	Corps of Engineers	504 862-2250
9. ROBERT SWINDLER	" "	" " 2278
10. DAVID BEDNAR, JR.	Baker	318-222-8110
11. WAYNE Aymond	DOTD - BRIDGE DESIGN	225-379-1302
12. Richard L. Savoie	DOTD - Road Design	225-379-1384
13. Tony M. Ducote	DOTD Bridge Design	379-1325
14. Bill Farr	FHWA	757-7615
15. BOB MAHONEY	FHWA	225-757-7624
16. Jerry Pitts	FHWA	225-757-7618
17. Colby Guidry	FHWA	
18. Kerry Beale	C-K	225-755-1007
19. Patrick Guelfo	C-K ASSOC	225-7551000
20. Maria Webre	LDWF	225-765-238
Gregory Miller	NOAA-NMFS	225 389 0508

LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)

Agency Meeting  
Preliminary Alignment Review  
May 22, 2000

NAME	AGENCY / DIVISION	PHONE NUMBER
21. OM DIXIT	FREDRICK HARRIS	504-529-4533
22. Barry Brubacher	" "	" "
23. Ted Falgout	Port Fourchon	504 632 6701
24. Roy Francis	LA 1 Coalition	504 448-448
25.		
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State of Louisiana  
Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

MAY 22 2000

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P. E., Project Manager  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

RE: Project No. 700-29-0112; proposed environmental and engineering studies for LA 1 improvements; Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.; Calcasieu Parish

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Office of Environmental Services (OES), has received your request for comments dated May 10, 2000, regarding the above referenced project. Based on an in-house review of the information you have submitted to this Department, the OES has no objection to the implementation of the proposed project, provided that the issues listed below are satisfied if required. Please note that no field investigation was conducted on this project.

Please note that any project that results in a discharge to waters of the state may require submittal of a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit application.

This Office recommends that you investigate the following requirements that may impact your proposed project:

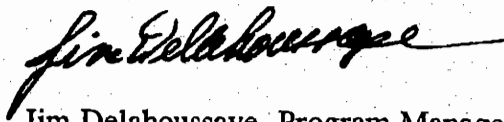
1. if any of the proposed work is located in wetlands or other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, you should contact the Corps in order to apply for any necessary permits;
2. if a permit is required from the Corps, a Water Quality Certification from OES may also be required;
3. all precautions should be observed to protect the groundwater of the region (SEE ATTACHMENT);
4. all precautions should be observed to control nonpoint source pollution from construction activities (SEE ATTACHMENT); and
5. the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), has a stormwater general permit for construction areas equal to or greater than five acres. It is recommended that you contact Jan Cedars at (225) 765-2784 to determine if your proposed improvements are covered under that general permit.



Mr. Gesing  
Page Two (2)

If you have any questions, please contact the Contracts and Grants Section at (225) 765-0723.

Sincerely,



Jim Delahoussaye, Program Manager  
Permits Division

JD\ar  
Attachment

---

c:

Southwest Regional Office  
Surveillance Division



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

June 20, 2000

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: SOV 700-29-0112; LaFourche Parish  
Proposed LA 1 improvements

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Department of Environmental Quality has received your request for comments on the above referenced project.

There were no objections based on the limited information submitted to us. Should you encounter a problem during the implementation of this project, please make the appropriate notification to this Department.

The Office of Environmental Services has made the following comments:

Please see the letter from the Office of Environmental Services, Permits Division.

"Any approval, or letter of no objection, granted by LDEQ is relevant only to the granting of funds for the proposed project. This does not relieve the applicant of his responsibility for obtaining any other permits or approvals necessary from LDEQ or other State, Local, or Federal agencies, nor does it influence the Department's ultimate decision on those permits or approvals. A copy of our brochure on construction best management practices is enclosed."

cc: Michele Deshotels



cycled paper

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE • P.O. BOX 82231 • BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70884-2231

ANEQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



June 20, 2000  
Page 2

Please submit any future SOV's to the following address and we will expedite it as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Lisa Miller  
Department of Environmental Quality  
P. O. Box 82231  
Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2231

Should you need any additional information please call me at (225) 765-0723.

Sincerely,



Lisa L. Miller  
Contracts & Grants

llm  
Enclosures

U.S. Department  
of Transportation

United States  
Coast Guard



Commander  
Eighth Coast Guard District  
Hale Boggs Federal Building

501 Magazine Street  
New Orleans, LA 70130-3396  
Staff Symbol: obc  
Phone: 504-589-2965  
FAX: 504-589-3063

16591A  
May 22, 2000

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P. E.  
Project Manager  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

Dear Mr. Gesing:

Please reference your letter dated May 10, 2000, with attachments, requesting our continued participation in State Project No. 700-29-0112, LA 1 Improvements from Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. After initial review, it has been determined that this action will require the issuance of a bridge permit. The Federal Highway Administration will be lead agency on this project and the U. S. Coast Guard will be a cooperating agency.

We look forward to working with you on this project. If you need any further assistance, please contact Mr. David Frank of my staff at 504-589-2965.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcus N. Redford".

MARCUS N. REDFORD, P.E.  
Chief, Bridge Administration Branch  
By direction of the Commander  
Eighth Coast Guard District

cc: GJK/JCH/Cfile, CGGesing/Pfile  
TJSmith  
24203

cc Michele Deshotels - DOTD  
Barry Brupbacher - Frederic R. Harris, Inc.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Agency Preliminary Alignment Review Meeting

**Attendees:** David Frank U.S. Coast Guard  
Chris Gesing Baker  
Barry Brupbacher F.R. Harris  
Om Dixit F.R. Harris

**Time and Place:** September 7, 2000: 8:30 a.m.  
Frederic R. Harris, Inc. Offices  
New Orleans, LA

**Purpose:** To present and discuss the Preliminary Alignments developed

**Discussions:**

1. Barry Brupbacher opened the meeting and indicated that the purpose was to present and discuss the three preliminary alignments with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). The USCG could not attend the May 22, 2000 meeting where the preliminary alignments were reviewed by the resource agencies.
2. Barry presented the preliminary alignments and noted that the proposed highway is a 4-lane elevated rural arterial on new location and will utilize end on construction. The crossing of navigable waterways and the rationale for the interchange locations was discussed. These alignments were developed primarily to avoid or minimize impacts to the social and natural environments.
3. David indicated that USCG would only be concerned with the "bridge" portions of the project. Those reaches over navigable waters.
4. David inquired as to the marine recreational uses in the area as well as private docks and marinas. Barry indicated that meetings were held with the Lafourche Parish Sheriff and with a few of the identified marinas or private docks to discuss current vessel usage and height. The Sheriff provided good insight as to which channels were deep enough to pass larger vessels. This information was used to establish clearances at channel crossings.
5. David recommended that we contact all marinas. USCG has been involved in lawsuits on other projects where marinas have indicated that they had no knowledge of the project. USCG will also want the marina addresses in the areas for their mailing lists.
6. The navigable channel bridge crossings were discussed.
  - a) Barry indicated that the Line B crossing of Bayou Lafourche upstream of Leeville and the crossing at Leeville assumed the same vertical clearance as the existing Leeville Bridge. The vertical clearance is 73 feet and the clear channel width is 175 feet per discussions with the DOTD Bridge Section.
  - b) Station 450±00 Lines A&C utilize a navigation clearance of approximately 40 feet to accommodate vessels at Bollinger's Marina. Barry indicated that the clearance requirements were discussed with Bollinger's.

P [REDACTED] ort Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes

- c) Station 510±00 Lines A&C have a [REDACTED] 50' clearance for light vessels. The Sheriff's Office indicated that the depth is insufficient for larger vessels.
- d) David questioned a vessel's turning ability from the Southwest Louisiana Canal to Bayou Lafourche. The 175-foot clear channel width may [REDACTED] need to increase.
- e) David noted that navigation studies [REDACTED] would be required. It was noted that navigation studies were inappropriate at this point in the project but would be performed as the project advanced.
- 7. David inquired as to how fendering was going to be accomplished. It was noted that the decision to use impact-resistant piers or fenders would be addressed in final design.
- 8. David concurred with the alignment work presented to date and noted that navigation issues should be addressed in the document. It was noted that commitments to conduct further studies would be noted in the document.
- 9. Meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

*A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation*

May 22, 2000

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Agency»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«City» «State» «Zip»

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LaFourche Parish  
***Purpose and Need Statement***

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, we are enclosing a copy of the Purpose and Need Statement for the LA 1 Improvements project. In accordance with the merged NEPA/404 process, we are requesting your review and concurrence.

Thank you for taking the time to review this document. We request any written comments by June 26, 2000 in order to maintain our project schedule. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at the above address.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD  
Ted Falgout – Greater Lafourche Port Commission  
Roy Francis – LA 1 Coalition





**FOURCHON  
COOPERATING AGENCIES  
MAILING LIST**

Name_1	Name_2	Title	Attn:	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State	Zip
William L. Conner	Commander	Commander	Mr. Ronald J. Ventola Chief, Regulatory Functions Branch	Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P. O. Box 60267	New Orleans	LA	70160-0267
Michael P. Jansky	6ENXP	6ENXP		Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Gregory Miller				National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division Engineers	Louisiana State University	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7535
Marcus N. Redford, P.E.	Chief Bridge Administration Branch	Chief Bridge Administration Branch		Eight Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans	LA	70130-3396



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Habitat Conservation Division

c/o Louisiana State University

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70803-7535

June 14, 2000

F/SER44/GM:jk

225/389-0508

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker Jr., Incorporated  
420 Rouser Road  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
Coraopolis, Pennsylvania 15108

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received your May 22, 2000, letter transmitting a Purpose and Need Statement for the proposed improvements to Louisiana Highway 1 in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. The highway improvements have been identified as Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development State Project Number **700-29-0112**.

We have reviewed the report and offer the following comments:

Section 1.1, page 1. The project description states that the proposed improved highway will be approximately 15 miles in length. However, information distributed at a recent interagency meeting indicates that the three alternative routes under consideration range in length from 16.2 miles to 17 miles. To be more accurate, the estimated length of highway should reflect the range of the alternatives under consideration.

Section 1.2.2, page 2. A fact bullet summarizing the Insight Research Report indicates that seafood production in the area has been in a down cycle since 1986. However, a review of National Marine Fisheries Service commercial landings statistics indicates that the economic value of marine fisheries landed in the Leeville-Golden Meadow area generally increased between 1986 and 1995. In addition, this section indicates that a growing aquaculture industry was expected to stabilize decreases in seafood production. We are unaware of any commercial aquaculture operations in this area. In view of the above, we recommend this sentence be deleted or supporting evidence be provided for the comments.

Section 1.3, page 6. A stated purpose of the project is to "improve oil and hazardous materials spill response." We believe that spill response equipment should be pre-positioned at the port to prevent traffic associated delays in response times. The pre-positioning of response equipment is required under Oil Pollution Act planning regulations and thus should not be used as a justification for the proposed improvements to Louisiana Highway 1.



Section 1.3, page 6. A stated purpose of the project is to "support the revitalization of shellfish and finfish industries." It is unclear to the NMFS how the destruction of essential marine fishery habitat for the construction of a highway will support the revitalization of the fishing industry. We recommend this sentence be deleted or clarification be provided.

Section 1.5.1, page 6. The projected opening year of the improved highway is 2010. However, deep water oil drilling activity, the support of which is touted as a major justification for the proposed project, is expected to peak and begin declining after 2006. This document should identify and discuss the projected transportation needs after the opening of the new highway.

Section 1.5.5, page 11. The LSU report contained forecasts of oil production between 1996 and 2000. Since the forecast time period has passed, these numbers should be verified against actual production levels and the true production numbers should be included in the Purpose and Need statement.

Section 1.6.4, page 15. A fact bullet in this section states that LA1 is the only transportation route for workers and supplies entering and exiting Port Fourchon. While Louisiana Highway 1 is the only ground transportation route servicing the port, it should be noted that air and sea routes also provide access to the port for workers and supplies.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed project. If you wish to discuss this project further, please contact Gregory Miller at 225/389-0508.

Sincerely,



Richard Hartman  
Chief, Baton Rouge Office



16591A  
June 7, 2000

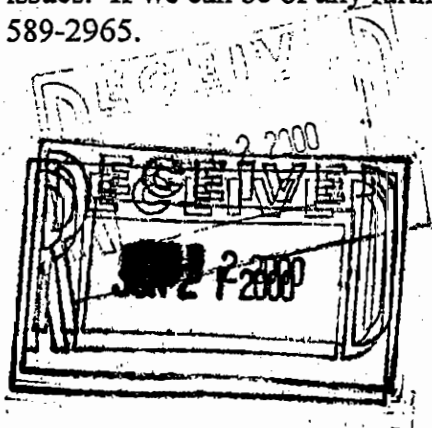
Ms. Michelle Deshotels  
Louisiana Department of Transportation  
and Development  
P.O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245

Dear Ms. Deshotels:

This refers to the Michael Baker, Jr., Inc. letter of May 22, 2000, requesting comments and concurrence on the Purpose and Need Statement for the LA 1 improvement project. The proposed project will include a least one new waterway crossing over Bayou Lafourche that will require a Coast Guard Bridge Permit. This is your Federal Aid Project No. HP-NH-T021(002).

The Coast Guard concurs that the Purpose and Need Statement for the proposed project is sufficient and has no objections to this document. At this time, we have no additional comments on the project. However, we remind you that the EIS should include information relative to navigation and the effects the bridge will have on navigation interests using the waterway. Location of the bridge piers, the horizontal clearance provided, the vertical clearance, the proximity to any existing bridges, and alignment of the navigational openings are issues that should be addressed in the EIS.

Should you plan a scoping meeting for the project we would be happy to attend and discuss these issues. If we can be of any further assistance, please contact Mr. David Frank of my staff at 504-589-2965.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marcus N. Redford".

MARCUS N. REDFORD, P.E.  
Chief, Bridge Administration Branch  
By direction of the Commander  
Eighth Coast Guard District

Copy: Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E., Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
Mr. Bob Mahoney, FHWA  
Mr. Thomas W. Aymond, LDOTD

**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

*A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation*

May 22, 2000

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»

«Title»

«Agency»

«Address\_1»

«Address\_2»

«City» «State» «Zip»

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
*Airport Office Park, Building 3*  
*420 Rouser Road*  
*Coraopolis, PA 15108*

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LaFourche Parish  
***Purpose and Need Statement***


Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, we are enclosing for your information, a copy of the Purpose and Need Statement for the LA 1 Improvements. Under the merged NEPA/404 process, we are required to obtain concurrence on this statement from certain Federal agencies.

If you have any questions on the purpose and need statement, please contact me at the above address.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD  
Ted Falgout – Greater Lafourche Port Commission  
Roy Francis – LA 1 Coalition



**FOURCHON  
AGENCY MAILING LIST**

Name_1	Name_2	Title	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State	Zip
Greg	Solvey		FEMA Region VI	600 North Loop 288		Denton	TX	76201
Ted M.	Falgout	Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 480		Galliano	LA	70354
Tim	Landreneau	District Conservationist	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria	LA	71302
Patii	Holland		U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	646 Cajun Dome Boulevard		Lafayette	LA	70506
Gary	Lester	Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program	Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898
Manice	Watson		Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Brenda	Dardar	Louisiana Natural Heritage Program	Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Kirby	Verret	Chairperson	United Houma Nation	20988 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Mona	Kogel	Chairman	United Houma Nation	Star Route Box 95-A		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
		Director	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive	Suite B-1	Baton Rouge	LA	70816
Morton	Wakeland Jr.	Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism	Division of Archaeology	P.O. Box 44274	Capitol Annex 3rd.	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
		Marine & Wetlands Section (BWQ-EM)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Chris	Melton		U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Office of Groundwater		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
		Superintendent	Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44467	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
			National Park Service	365 Canal Street	Suite 3080	New Orleans	LA	70130
		Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Office of Conservation	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge	LA	70804-9275
			Rivers Trails & Conservation Asst.	National Park Service	6857 B Sullivan Road	Baton Rouge	LA	70803
Lisa	Miller		U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe	NM	87504-0728
Kerry	St. Pe		Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70894-2231
			Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2863 NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
		Office of State Parks	Department of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge	LA	70821-3554
Roy	Francis		Dept. of Culture Recreation & Tourism	P.O. Box 44426-CAP Ann 3rd.		Baton Rouge	LA	70804
			LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
			Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation Dist. Of LA	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux	LA	70301-2941



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

646 Cajundome Blvd.  
Suite 400  
Lafayette, Louisiana 70506

June 15, 2000



Mr. Christopher Gesing  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15231-0259

Dear Mr. Gesing:

Please reference your May 22, 2000, letter on behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation. That letter requested U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurrence with regard to the Purpose and Need Statement for the proposed Louisiana Highway 1 Improvement project located between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon, in Lafourche Parish, Louisiana [Federal Project No. HP-NH-T021(002) and State Project No. 700-29-0112]. The Service has reviewed the attached Purpose and Need Statement and offers the following comments in accordance with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (83 Stat. 2; 42 U.S.C. 4321-4347) and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

The Service agrees with your findings that current and future growth of Port Fourchon coupled with safety considerations (i.e., hurricane evacuation and daily traffic safety concerns) warrant improvement of the existing highway. Accordingly, we concur that there is a need to improve Louisiana Highway 1.

We look forward to working with you and your staff in the review of project alternatives and the development of mitigating features to minimize and compensate for unavoidable impacts to fish and wildlife resources. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. If you need further information, please contact Patti Hollan (337-291-3121) of this office.

Sincerely,

Russell C. Watson  
Acting Field Supervisor

- Federal Highway Admin., Baton Rouge, LA
- LDOTD, Baton Rouge, LA
- Corps of Engineers, New Orleans, LA
- Environmental Protection Agency, Dallas, TX
- LA Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries, Baton Rouge, LA
- LA Dept. of Environmental Quality, Baton Rouge, LA
- NMFS, Baton Rouge, LA

cc: Michele Deshotels



# Federal Emergency Management Agency

Region VI  
Federal Regional Center  
800 North Loop 288  
Denton, TX 76201-3698

May 30, 2000

Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15231-0259

Attention: Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.

Dear Mr. Gesing:

We have received your Purpose and Need Statement for the LA 1 Improvements in LaFourche Parish. At this time we do not have any comments with regard to the proposed project. However, we suggest that Janet Griffin, Floodplain Management Coordinator for the State of Louisiana, be consulted with regard to floodplain management criteria in the project site areas. Mrs. Griffin can be reached at (225) 274-4316 or you may write her at P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245.

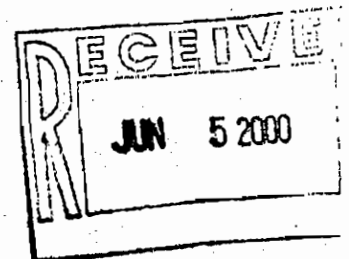
Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this project. If I can be of further assistance, please contact this office at (940) 898-5283.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Jennings".

Lisa Jennings  
Natural Hazards  
Program Specialist

cc: Michele Deshotels







# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

JUN 02 2000

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P. E., Project Manager  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

RE: Project No. 700-29-0112; proposed LA 1 improvements; Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.;  
LaFourche Parish

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Office of Environmental Services (OES), has received your request for comments dated May 22, 2000, regarding the above referenced project. Based on an in-house review of the information you have submitted to this Department, the OES has no objection to the implementation of the proposed project, provided that the issues listed below are satisfied if required. Please note that no field investigation was conducted on this project.

Please note that any project that results in a discharge to waters of the state may require submittal of a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit application.

This Office recommends that you investigate the following requirements that may impact your proposed project:

1. if any of the proposed work is located in wetlands or other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, you should contact the Corps in order to apply for any necessary permits;
2. if a permit is required from the Corps, a Water Quality Certification from OES may also be required;
3. all precautions should be observed to protect the groundwater of the region (SEE ATTACHMENT);
4. all precautions should be observed to control nonpoint source pollution from construction activities (SEE ATTACHMENT); and
5. the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), has a stormwater general permit for construction areas equal to or greater than five acres. It is recommended that you contact Jan Cedars at (225) 765-2784 to determine if your proposed improvements are covered under that general permit.



Mr. Gesing  
Page Two (2)

If you have any questions, please contact the Contracts and Grants Section at (225) 765-0723.

Sincerely,



Jim Delahoussaye, Program Manager  
Permits Division

JD\ar  
Attachment

c:

Southeast Regional Office  
Surveillance Division



State of Louisiana  
 Department of Environmental Quality

"MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
 GOVERNOR

J. DALE GIVENS  
 SECRETARY

June 8, 2000

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
 Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
 P. O. Box 12259  
 Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

RE: SOV 700-29-0112; Lafourche Parish  
 Proposed LA 1 improvements

Dear Mr. Gesing:

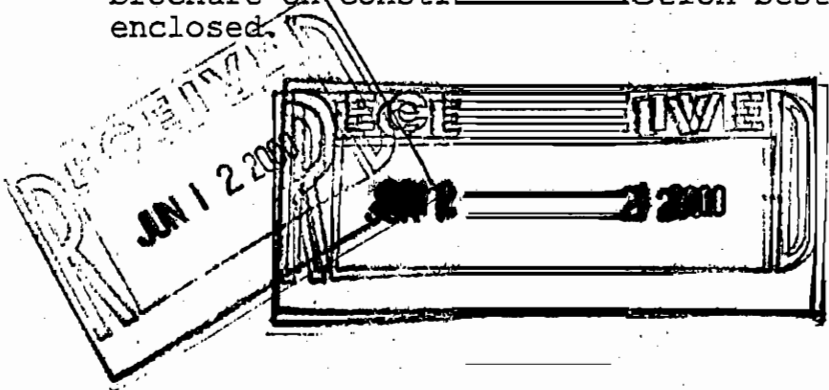
The Department of Environmental Quality has received your request for comments on the above referenced project.

There were no objections based on the limited information submitted to us. Should you encounter a problem during the implementation of this project, please make the appropriate notification to this Department.

The Office of Environmental Services has made the following comments:

Please see the letter from the Office of Environmental Services, Permits Division.

"Any approval, or letter of no objection, granted by LDEQ is relevant only to the granting of funds for the proposed project. This does not relieve the applicant of his responsibility for obtaining any other permits or approvals necessary from LDEQ or other State, Local, or Federal agencies, nor does it influence the Department's ultimate decision on those permits or approvals. A copy of our brochure on construction best management practices is enclosed.



cc: Michele Deshotels

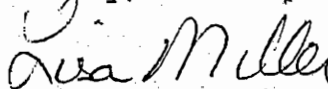
June 8, 2000  
Page 2

Please submit any future SOV's to the following address and we will expedite it as quickly as possible.

Mrs. Lisa Miller  
Department of Environmental Quality  
P. O. Box 82231  
Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2231

Should you need any additional information please call me at (225) 765-0723.

Sincerely,



Lisa L. Miller  
Contracts & Grants

llm  
Enclosures

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LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & FORESTRY

BOB ODOM, COMMISSIONER

W.G. "BUD" COURSON, DEPUTY COMMISSIONER



June 12, 2000

ASSISTANT  
COMMISSIONERS

Agricultural &  
Environmental Sciences  
Matthew Keppinger, III  
P. O. Box 3596  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
(25) 925-3770  
x: 925-3760

Pro-Consumer  
Services  
Dwight Broussard  
P. O. Box 3098  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
(25) 922-1341  
x: 922-0477

Animal Health  
Services  
Carmel Delphin  
P. O. Box 1951  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
(25) 925-3962  
x: 925-4103

Forestry  
Paul D. Frey  
P. O. Box 1628  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
(25) 925-4500  
x: 922-1356

Management  
Finance  
Chip Rhorer  
P. O. Box 3481  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
(25) 922-1255  
x: 925-6012

Marketing  
Nancy Malone  
P. O. Box 3334  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
(25) 922-1277  
x: 922-1289

Soil & Water  
Conservation  
Bradley E. Spicer  
P. O. Box 3554  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
(25) 922-1269  
x: 922-2577

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburg, PA 15231-0259

cc: Michele Deshotels

RE: Solicitation of Views

State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F. A. P. No. HP-NH-T021 (002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow  
LaFourche Parish

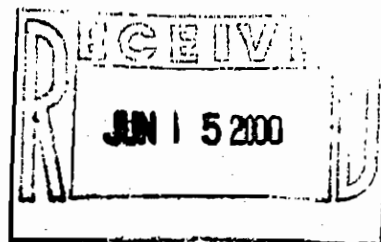
Dear Mr. Gesing:

I have no comment at this time regarding the above referenced project.

Sincerely,

Bradley E. Spicer  
Assistant Commissioner

BES:le



**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Wetland Delineation Meeting

**Attendees:** Doug LaBar, C-K Associates  
Daniel Bollich, C-K Associates  
Rob Heffner, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Michael Farraby, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Time & Place:** June 9, 2000 9:00 a.m.  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District Office (COE)  
New Orleans, LA

**Purpose:** To discuss the wetland delineation methodology

**Discussions:**

1. The three preliminary highway alignments were reviewed and discussed. The alignments were displayed on color infrared photography.
2. The proposed wetland delineation methodology was discussed. C-K Associates wanted to confirm/clarify the methodology that was discussed in a previous meeting on May 10, 2000. The proposed methodology would include identifying habitat types from National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) data and reducing the number of habitat types to 4 or 5. The extent of each habitat type would be overlaid on the three preliminary highway alignments on the color infrared photography. C-K Associates will prepare a base map with each habitat type. Field verification will then be performed (one sampling point will be selected for each habitat type).
3. Rob Heffner concurred that this approach was acceptable to the COE and that an additional sampling effort was not necessary after the preferred alternative was selected if adequate data was collected for each alignment. Michael Farraby concurred with this approach and suggested collecting salinity and tidal data if historical data was not available.
4. Meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Wetland Delineation/Section 404 Permit Meeting

**Attendees:** See Attached List

**Time and Place:** May 10, 2000: 9:30 a.m.  
US Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District Office (COE)  
New Orleans, LA

**Purpose:** To discuss the wetland delineation methodology and timing of the Section 404 Permit Application

**Discussions:**

1. The preparation and timing of the Section 404 permit application were discussed. James Barlow indicated that the EIS process through the Record of Decision (ROD) would have to be accepted prior to submittal of the 404 permit application. The COE indicated that including a draft permit application in the EIS would be premature as they would not review it at this time.
2. The preliminary highway alignments were reviewed and discussed. The preliminary alignments were displayed on 1"=600' black and white aerial mosaics. The majority of the project would be on structure. Interchange locations were also reviewed.
3. The proposed wetland delineation methodology was discussed. Tim Smith stated that the proposed methodology would include sampling of representative habitat types in the project area that would be impacted by the preliminary alignments. Habitat types would be identified using color infrared photography and site locations would be field investigated to collect relevant wetland information. Field data sheets would be completed for each habitat type at several different sampling locations. Habitat types and sampling locations would be identified in conjunction with the COE and will use COE color infrared (CIR) photography. Baker will send the COE a 1"=2000' scale overlay of the alignments to initiate this process. Rob Heffner will be the COE contact for the delineation process and will be available the week of May 22<sup>nd</sup> to meet with C-K Associates, Inc. and finalize the sampling points. Rob may also participate in the initial field activities.
4. Project funding and lead agency were discussed. FHWA is the lead agency and is the lead sponsor of this project. Construction funding for this project is undetermined at this time.
5. Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

LA 1 Improvements, Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow  
 State Project No. 700-29-0112  
 F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)

COE Coordination Meeting  
 May 10, 2000

	NAME	DIVISION/DEPT.	PHONE NUMBER
1	Tim Smith	Baker	318 222 8111
2	Patrick Gneifo	C-K ASSOCIATES	225 755 1000
3	KERRY BEALE	C-K ASSOCIATES	" " "
4	Rob Higgins	COE	504-862-2274
5	James Barlow	COE - OD-5E	504-862-2250
6	John Bruza	COE - OD-55	504-862-1288
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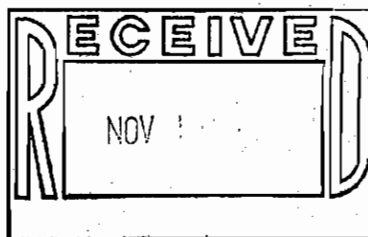
State of Louisiana  
Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

November 13, 2000



Mr. David Bednar, Jr.  
Geologist  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
Petroleum Square II  
1324 North Hearne Avenue, Suite 255  
Shreveport, LA 70884

RE: Lafourche Parish - Wellhead Protection Area Proximity

Dear Mr. Bednar:

I have researched the location you provided to me in LaFourche Parish. As of this date, there are no Wellhead Protection Areas located in LaFourche Parish. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality is continuously bringing in new communities and water systems into the Wellhead Protection Program and Source Water Protection Program; however, at this time, there are no Wellhead Protection Areas or Source Water Protection Areas planned for the study area.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact me at 225-765-0578.

Sincerely,

Don Haydel, Geologist  
Environmental Evaluation Division  
Aquifer Evaluation and Protection Section



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OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

P.O. BOX 82178 • BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70884-2178 • TELEPHONE (225) 765-0355 • FAX (225) 765-0617

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

March 6, 2001

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»

«Title»

«Attn»

«Agency»

«Address\_1»

«Address\_2»

«City», «State» «Zip»

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) ~~269-4660~~ 269-6300  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

Office Location:  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LaFourche Parish  
***“Work in Progress” Preliminary Draft EIS Coordination Meeting***

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker) is requesting your continued participation in the LA 1 Improvements project from Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary environmental documentation.

As part of this study, Baker will be investigating the environmental, socioeconomic, and engineering issues related to the proposed highway facility. A ***“Work in Progress”*** Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Coordination Meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. on March 14, 2001 in the second floor conference room of the Department of Transportation and Development Headquarters Building, 1201 Capital Access Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The purpose of this meeting is to review the in-progress document and to solicit resource agency input in advance of completing and distributing the Preliminary Draft EIS for cooperating agency review.

We have enclosed the Summary, Alternatives, Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences sections of the ***“work in progress”*** Preliminary Draft EIS so you can become familiar with these sections prior to the meeting. This is a ***“work in progress”*** document, and as such, should not be distributed to the public at this time. A meeting agenda is also enclosed.

Your participation will insure the development of a comprehensive EIS. We look forward to meeting with you and to your continued input throughout the duration of this project. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (412) 269-4636.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mcw

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD  
Ted Falgout – Greater Lafourche Port Commission  
Roy Francis – LA 1 Coalition

**FOURCHON  
AGENCY MAILING LIST**

Name_1	Name_2	Attn:	Title	Agency	Address_1	Address_2	City	State	Zip
Greg	Solvey			FEMA Region VI	800 North Loop 288		Denton	TX	76201
Ted M.	Falgout		Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 480		Galliano	LA	70354
Tim	Landreneau		District Conservatorist	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria	LA	71302
Marcus N.	Redford, P.E.	Attn: Mr. Ronald J. Ventola Chief, Regulatory Functions Branch	Chief Bridge Administration Branch	Eight Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans	LA	70130-3396
William L.	Conner		Commander	Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans	LA	70160-0267
Patti	Holland			U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	648 Calum Dome Boulevard	Suite 400	Lafayette	LA	70506
Gary	Lester		Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program	Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898
Mance	Walson			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Brenda	Dardar		Louisiana Natural Heritage Program	Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Kirby	Verrel		Chairperson	Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Mona	Kogel		Chairmen	United Houma Nation	20886 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Duke	Rivet		Director	United Houma Nation	Star Route Box 95-A	Suite B-1	Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Michael P.	Jansky		Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive		Baton Rouge	LA	70816
Morton	Wakeland Jr.		6ENXP	Division of Archaeology	P.O. Box 44274	Capitol Annex 3rd.	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
Chris	Melton		Superintendent	Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Office of Conservation	Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Office of Natural Resources	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Office of Groundwater	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Superintendent	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	National Park Service	385 Canal Street	Suite 3080	New Orleans	LA	70130
			Office of Conservation	Rivers Trails & Conservation Asst.	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge	LA	70804-9275
			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	8857 B Sullivan Road	Baton Rouge	LA	70818
			Superintendent	National Marine Fisheries Service	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe	NM	87504-0728
Gregory	Miller		Air Quality	Department of Environmental Quality	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7535
Ron	Rebouche			Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70884-2231
Lisa	Miller			Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70884-2231
Kerry	St. Pe			Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
			Office of State Parks	Department of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge	LA	70821-3554
Roy	Francis			LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 44426-CAP Ann 3rd.		Baton Rouge	LA	70804
				Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation D	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
				Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation D	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux	LA	70301-2941

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Preliminary Draft EIS Coordination Meeting

**Attendees:** See Attached List

**Time and Place:** March 14, 2001: 10:00 a.m.  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Baton Rouge, LA

**Purpose:** To present and discuss the "Work in Progress" Draft EIS

**Discussions:**

1. Chris Gesing opened the meeting and asked that everyone in attendance briefly identify themselves and their agency/affiliation. A summary of the project progress to date was provided including the development of the project Purpose and Need, Alignment Alternatives development, alignment public meetings, and wetland delineation and preliminary geoarchaeology investigations.
2. The "Work in Progress" DEIS was discussed. Richard Hartman, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA - NMFS), stated that a letter was required from FHWA identifying DOTD as the state agency responsible for preparing the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) assessment per the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The NMFS needs to be advised, in writing, of this agreement between FHWA and DOTD.
3. The NMFS indicated that the species accounts presented in the document were adequate, but discussions specifically referencing the categories of EFH (i.e. estuarine emergent wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), mud, sand and shell substrates, and estuarine water column) need to be developed. Information developed should present species/life stage information related to these categories.
4. Potential shading impacts were discussed. The NMFS stated that shading impacts on smooth cord grass should be documented in the DEIS. Smooth cord grass is the dominant wetland plant in the project area. If the facility is oriented in an east-west direction, the NMFS will assume that any marsh under the structure will be lost and appropriate mitigation should be developed. Wetland impact tables should be expanded to include the linear length of marsh crossed by each alignment and, of that crossed length, the length that is in an east-west or north-south orientation.

Richard also suggested that a simplified analysis be performed to determine the length of time an area would be shaded based on a north-south oriented typical section.

The NMFS suggested that some research be conducted to identify any studies that may document the shading effects on the health of smooth cord grass. Richard discussed an East Coast report that investigated primarily east-west oriented structures. In absence of literature on shading, Richard suggested monitoring the effect on the vegetation once the structure is constructed and compensating for any impacts if appropriate. This could be added to the Environmental Commitments section of the DEIS.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

5. James Barlow, US Corps of Engineers (COE), expressed concern that the Summary Section did not provide a discussion of adverse impacts. In addition, secondary and cumulative impacts need to be addressed. The proposed facility would increase access to the area and would result in additional land development pressures that should be discussed. James indicated that he would provide DOTD with permit information with respect to recent development activities at Elmer's Island (approx. 1,300 acres) and other locations on Grand Isle if DOTD formally requested this information. James also suggested that the DEIS contain some information on the current rate of land loss in the project area.
6. Richard Hartman stated that discussions should begin regarding a conceptual mitigation plan for wetland impacts. These discussion should be referenced in Section 4.10.3 of the DEIS.
7. The Environmental Commitments Section should state that DOTD will minimize non-point discharge under water quality. Wording should also be changed to state that DOTD will use/employ environmentally sensitive construction techniques.
8. Existing LA 1 was discussed as an alternative. James indicated that the discussion as to why the improved roadway alternative is not viable should be strengthened.
9. Use of the ROW beneath the structure for wetland mitigation was discussed. DOTD stated that there should be no objections to using this area provided that it did not compromise the bridge structure. Wetland creation sites have been proposed and approved for the project area, but the proposed alignments will not preclude the full development of these sites.
10. The Coast Guard had no comments on the document at this time. Coordination with this agency will continue.
11. Kevin Billiot, Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, and Brenda Dardar Robichaux, United Houma Nation, expressed concern with potential impacts to residents in Golden Meadow near the northern terminus of the project. Many Houma people live in this area just south of the incorporated limits of Golden Meadow. No residential impacts would occur in this area.
12. Tim Robertson, LA DNR, suggested that Grand Isle should be included in discussions of the project area. In addition, concerns were raised regarding the remaining two-lane road from Port Fourchon to Grand Isle. Why is the project stopping at Port Fourchon?
13. Duke Rivet stated that the SHPO had received the Geoarchaeology Report and was preparing a response. Duke indicated that this was a good first step, but that a detailed Phase I survey would need to be conducted in the future.
14. Richard Hartman asked if a Section 7 consultation with the USFWS was underway. Information received from the USFWS has indicated that no federally threatened or endangered species would be impacted by this project and that no formal consultation was necessary. Richard indicated that the NMFS should be contacted regarding endangered sea turtles.
15. Identification of a Preferred Alignment was discussed. Richard Hartman stated that without the shading information, he could not make a decision at his time. He indicated that Line C appeared to be the least favorable based on its impact to the marsh near LA 1. The shading information will be calculated and provided to the participating agencies. Feedback from the agencies will aid in the identification of a Preferred Alignment.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

16. James Barlow stated that the interchange locations should be examined to determine if marsh impacts could be minimized by moving the connections closer to the proposed highway. DOTD emphasized that engineering factors as well as community impacts also play a role in the location of the interchanges. This issue will be examined in more detail.
17. Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Agency Meeting  
"Work in Progress" Preliminary Draft EIS Coordination  
March 14, 2001

	NAME	AGENCY / DIVISION	PHONE NUMBER
1.	CHRIS GESINK	BAKER	412-269-467
2.	Barry Brupbacher	DMJM + Harris	504-529-4533
3.	Rick Hartman	NMFS	(225) 389-0508
4.	James A. Barlow Jr.	USACE	504/862-2250
5.	ROGER SWINDLER	"	" " - 2278
6.	Lewis Billiot	Inter-Tribal Council of La	225-292-2474
7.	Michelle Deshotel's	DOTD	225-248-4192
8.	Marcus Redford	US Coast Guard Bridges	504 589 2965
9.	Richard L. Savore	DOTD - Road Design	225-379-1384
10.	Brenda Warden Probihaup	United Home Nation	504-475-6674
11.	DUKE RIVET	LA DIV. OF ARCHAEOLOGY	225-342-8170
12.	MAX NASSAR	DMJM + HARRIS	(504) 529-4533
13.	BOB MAHONEY	FHWA	225-757-7624
14.	LOULAN PITRE, Jr	State Rep Dist 54	985-632-200
15.	Tim R. Robertson	DWR / CMD	225-342-7472
16.	Jim Smith	Baker - Shreveport	318-222-8110
17.	Roy Francis	LA Coalition	504-448-448
18.			
19.			
20.			



State of Louisiana  
Department of Environmental Quality

L.I. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

April 16, 2001

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

cc: Michele Deshotels

RE: SOV 700-29-0112; F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002); LaFourche Parish  
Proposed Improvement of LA 1 From Port Fourchon to Golden  
Meadow

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Department of Environmental Quality has received your  
request for comments on the above referenced project.

There were no objections based on the limited information  
submitted to us. Should you encounter a problem during the  
implementation of this project, please make the appropriate  
notification to this Department.

The Office of Environmental Services has made the following  
comments:

Please see the letter from the Office of Environmental  
Services, Permits Division.

"Any approval, or letter of no objection, granted by LDEQ is  
relevant only to the granting of funds for the proposed  
project. This does not relieve the applicant of his  
responsibility for obtaining any other permits or approvals  
necessary from LDEQ or other State, Local, or Federal  
agencies, nor does it influence the Department's ultimate  
decision on those permits or approvals. A copy of our  
brochure on construction best management practices is  
enclosed."



recycled paper

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE • P.O. BOX 82231 • BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70884-2231

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER





April 16, 2001  
Page 2

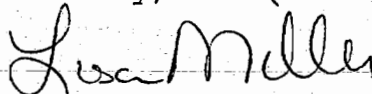
Also, please see attached letter from Teri F. Lanoue of the Office of Environmental Assessment, Environmental Planning Division.

Please forward all future SOV's to the following address and we will expedite it as quickly as possible. When submitting large proposals please provide triplicate copies.

Mrs. Lisa Miller  
Department of Environmental Quality  
P. O. Box 82231  
Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2231

Should you need any additional information please call me at (225) 765-0723.

Sincerely,



Lisa L. Miller  
Contracts & Grants

LLM/nos  
Enclosures



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

APR 04 2001

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E., Project Manager  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
P. O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

RE: Project No. 700-29-0112; proposed improvement of LA 1 from Port Fouchon to Golden Meadow; Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.; F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002); Lafourche Parish

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Office of Environmental Services (OES), has received your request for comments dated March 6, 2001, regarding the above referenced project. Based on an in-house review of the information you have submitted to this Department, the OES has no objection to the implementation of the proposed project, provided that the issues listed below are satisfied if required. Please note that no field investigation was conducted on this project.

Please note that any project that results in a discharge to waters of the state may require submittal of a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit application.

This Office recommends that you investigate the following requirements that may impact your proposed project:

1. if any of the proposed work is located in wetlands or other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, you should contact the Corps in order to apply for any necessary permits;
2. if a permit is required from the Corps, a Water Quality Certification from OES may also be required;
3. all precautions should be observed to protect the groundwater of the region (SEE ATTACHMENT);
4. all precautions should be observed to control nonpoint source pollution from construction activities (SEE ATTACHMENT); and
5. the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), has a stormwater general permit for construction areas equal to or greater than five acres. It is recommended that you contact Jan Cedars at (225) 765-2784 to determine if your proposed improvements are covered under that general permit.



Mr. Gesing  
Page Two (2)

If you have any questions, please contact the Contracts and Grants Section at (225) 765-0723.

Sincerely,



Jim Delahoussaye  
Environmental Scientist Manager  
Permits Division

JD\ar  
Attachment

c:

Southeast Regional Office  
Surveillance Division



State of Louisiana  
Department of Environmental Quality



M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

March 12, 2001

J. DALE GIVENS  
SECRETARY

Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager  
Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

RE: "Work in Progress" Preliminary Draft EIS:

State Project No. 700-29-0112  
FAP No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
La 1 Improvements  
Port Fourchon - Golden Meadow  
Lafourche Parish

Dear Mr. Gesing:

The Environmental Planning Division of the Office of Environmental Assessment has reviewed the "Work in Progress" Preliminary Draft EIS transmitted by letter dated March 6, 2001, for the captioned highway construction project in Lafourche Parish. Our comments below address certain air quality issues and possible transportation conformity implications associated with the proposed action.

In Section 3.13, *Air Quality*, you have correctly stated that Lafourche Parish is currently designated by EPA as an "Incomplete Data" ozone nonattainment parish. Its status was officially changed by EPA to "Nonattainment-Incomplete Data" on December 5, 1997 (62 FR 64284, with an effective date of January 5, 1998). Under its current nonattainment status, nonexempt highway projects in Lafourche Parish that are funded or approved under Title 23 U.S.C. are subject to state and federal transportation-conformity requirements (LAC 33:III.14.B and 40 CFR Part 93, respectively).

Our review of the information submitted indicates that this project is potentially a regionally significant action and therefore might be subject to the cited conformity regulations. If through established interagency consultation procedures the project is: 1) deemed to be regionally significant, and; 2) federal funding is used for project development purposes, the project sponsor must eventually satisfy all pertinent requirements of section 93.109(g) of the federal conformity rule. That is, assuming those two criteria apply, then the project would have to come from a conforming statewide transportation plan or statewide transportation improvement program (STIP).

We trust our comments have clarified the potential conformity implications of the proposed action, but should you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Ron Rebouche of my staff at (225) 765-0245. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed action.

Sincerely,

Teri F. Lanoue  
Environmental Manager  
Environmental Planning Division

TFL:RR:rr  
c: Ron Rebouche





## State of Louisiana

**ATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO**  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM  
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
DIVISION OF ARCHAEOLOGY

**PHILLIP J. JONE**  
SECRETARY

**GERRI HOBDY**  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

March 15, 2001

Mr. Vincent G. Russo, Jr.  
Environmental Engineer Administrator  
Louisiana Department of  
Transportation and Development  
P.O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245

Re: Draft CRM Report (DOA #22-2381)  
*Assessment of Archaeological Potential,*  
*LA 1 Improvements, Golden Meadow to*  
*Port Fourchon, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana*  
Stephen J. Hinks and Paul V. Heinrich

Dear Mr. Russo:

Receipt is acknowledged of Ms. Elizabeth L. Davoli's letter dated February 9, 2001, transmitting a copy of the above-referenced report. We have completed our review of the document and have the following comments to offer.

The report presents solid background data for assessing the potential for archaeological site occurrence in the study area, based on past geomorphological and archaeological studies conducted in and around the proposed project area. The conclusions reached concerning site potential are valid and we are looking forward to reviewing the results of the Phase I field investigations once a preferred alignment has been selected.

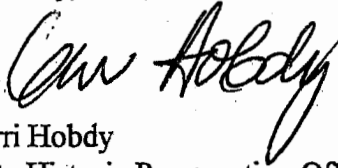
Comments/corrections are noted on the enclosed photocopied pages of the report. Please have these addressed and transmit two copies of the final report for our files. If you have any questions concerning our comments, do not hesitate to contact Duke Rivet in the Division of Archaeology at (225) 342-8170.

Mr. Vincent G. Russo, Jr.

March 15, 2001

Page 2

Sincerely,



Gerri Hobdy  
State Historic Preservation Officer

GH:PR:s

Enclosure: as stated

c: Mr. Christopher G. Gesing ✓

Michael Baker Jr., Inc.

P.O. Box 12259

Pittsburg, PA 15231-0259



Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

Office Location:  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

March 21, 2001

James Barlow  
Department of the Army  
New Orleans District Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 60267  
New Orleans, LA 70160-0267

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
*Request for Corps of Engineers Permit Information*

Dear Mr. Barlow:

At the March 14, 2001 agency coordination meeting to review the "work in progress" preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the LA 1 Improvements project, you indicated that a number of permit applications had been filed with the Corps of Engineers for development activities at Elmer's Island and other locations at Grand Isle.

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, we are requesting copies of the permit information applicable to the LA 1 Improvements project for our review and inclusion, as appropriate, in the project EIS.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.

Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD  
Bill Farr - FHWA



**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**  
A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

July 3, 2001

James Barlow  
Department of the Army  
New Orleans District Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 60267  
New Orleans, LA 70160-0267

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
*Request for Corps of Engineers Permit Information*

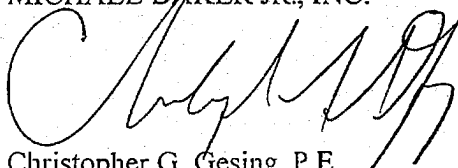
Dear Mr. Barlow:

Reference is made to our March 21, 2001 letter requesting permit information and our July 2, 2001 conference call regarding the discussion of secondary development in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) being prepared for the subject project. In our March 21, 2001 letter (attached), we requested copies of the permit information applicable to the project for our review and inclusion, as appropriate, in the development of the DEIS.

We are completing the document and incorporating references for the agreed upon Preferred Alignment. This work is to be completed by July 31, 2001. We request that you provided us with any applicable permit information by July 13, 2001 so that we will have sufficient time to evaluate and incorporate the information into the DEIS while maintaining our July 31, 2001 completion schedule.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD (w/a)  
Bill Farr – FHWA (w/a)





**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**  
A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

June 15, 2001

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«Address3»  
«City» «State» «Zip»

*Office Location:*  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
***Shading Analysis and Preferred Alignment Conference Call***

Dear «Salutation»

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), we are enclosing the Shading Analysis prepared for the LA 1 Improvements project.

At the March 14, 2001 agency coordination meeting to discuss the “*work in progress*” preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recommended that research be conducted to identify any published studies that document the shading effects on the health of smooth cord grass (*Spartina alternifolia*). Smooth cord grass is the dominant coastal wetland plant in the Study Area. NMFS also suggested that two simplified studies be performed to determine shading duration and to evaluate roadway mainline and ramp length by orientation. The enclosed Shading Analysis documents these efforts. The NMFS indicated that this information would be important for discussions regarding a Preferred Alignment recommendation.

During the March 14, 2001 agency coordination meeting, it was agreed that a conference call would be held with the Federal cooperating agencies to discuss the preliminary alignments, the Shading Analysis and the designation of a Preferred Alignment in the DEIS. We will contact you shortly to arrange a mutually agreeable day and time for the conference call, which will be held the week of July 2, 2001.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.

Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD

SHADING ANALYSIS MAILING LIST

Name_1	Name_2	Title	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	City	State	Zip
Marcus N.	Redford, P.E.	Chief Bridge Administration Branch	Eight Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans	LA	70130-3396
Michael P.	Jarsky	GENXP	Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Rick	Hartman		National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7535
James A.	Barlow, Jr.		Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P. O. Box 60267	New Orleans	LA	70160-0267

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Preferred Alignment Designation Meeting

**Attendees:**

Wayne Aymond – DOTD	James Barlow – COE
Michele Deshotels – DOTD	Roger Swindler – COE
Richard Savoie – DOTD	John Ettinger – EPA
Bill Farr – FHWA	Mike Jansky – EPA
Bob Mahoney – FHWA	Chris Gesing – Baker
Jerry Pitts – FHWA	Tim Smith – Baker
Richard Hartman – NMFS	

**Time and Place:** July 2, 2001: 10:00 a.m.  
Via Conference Call

**Purpose:** To review the Shading Analysis; review the Preliminary Alignments Impact Summary; and discuss a Preferred Alignment designation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

**Discussions:**

1. Chris Gesing opened the meeting and asked that everyone in attendance briefly identify themselves and their agency/affiliation. A summary of the agenda was provided, including the development of additional studies in advance of this meeting to discuss a Preferred Alignment designation in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).
2. Chris summarized the Shading Analysis, which the NMFS requested be performed in advance of discussion regarding a Preferred Alignment designation. The analysis focused on 1) a published literature search of shading effects on smooth cord grass, the dominant coastal wetland plant in the Study Area, 2) Length by Orientation (N/S, E/W) of the mainline and ramps; and 3) shade duration based on an assumed typical section. The findings and the recommendations made were as follows:

**Published Literature Review**

- A comprehensive literature review did not identify any studies documenting the shading effect on the health of smooth cord grass
- A shading study provided by NMFS attributed vegetation losses to bottom elevation changes, shading, or a combination of the two effects. Several of the bridge locations sited used dredging or matting construction techniques. Less than desirable recolonization resulted. The study is not directly applicable to the LA 1 Improvement project because the project would utilize "end-on" construction techniques to minimize bottom elevation changes. The NMFS study findings were inconclusive and acknowledged the lack of other studies on shading effects.
- A horticultural reference indicated that smooth cord grass preferred partial shade or partial sun to full sun.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Length by Orientation**

- The mainline and ramps were categorized as North-South or East-West oriented. North-South oriented was assumed to be  $\pm 45^\circ$  from North. East-West oriented was assumed to be  $\pm 45^\circ$  from East.
- Line A had least mainline length through emergent wetland
- Line A had the least East-West oriented mainline and ramp length combined, through emergent marsh
- Overall, Line A and its associated ramps had the least length through wetlands while Line B had the most.

**Shading Duration**

- An assumed typical section with a North-South orientation and a bottom chord elevation 13-feet above the water (FEMA 100-year elevation) was used
- Of the Approximately 250 feet of shadow cast during a 12-hour day:
  - Nearly 50% of the length is shaded for 2 hours or less
  - Approximately 25% of this length is shaded for 8 to 9 hours
- A comprehensive literature review did not produce any information quantifying the amount of sunlight necessary to maintain smooth cord grass health.

**Recommendations**

- Due to the lack of adequate research on the effects of shading on the health of smooth cord grass, it was recommended that the EIS include a commitment to:
  - Provide post-construction monitoring of the vegetation beneath and adjacent to the structure
  - Provide appropriate mitigation/compensation once loss, if any are quantified.

Richard Hartman indicated that the analysis was what he had requested and he agreed with the recommendations. Richard added that the monitoring plan should include pre-construction monitoring and should establish a control area because of the high rate of marsh losses in the area. The monitoring should be performed for 3 years. Richard also indicated that LADNR has estimated marsh replacement costs at \$7,000 to \$12,000 per acre.

3. Chris presented the comparative analysis of impacts for the preliminary alignments developed. These impacts are summarized as follows:
  - Line B has least relocations (1)
  - Line A has least wetland impacts (5.3 ac). Line B has the most (6.8 ac).
  - Line A has the least length through areas of high probability for cultural resources. Line B has the most.
  - Line A has the least length through areas of both high and medium probability for cultural resources. Line B has the most.
  - Lines A & Line C impact the fewest oil & gas wells
  - Line A has the least cost. Line B has the highest cost.
4. A Preferred Alignment designation in the DEIS was discussed. Mike Jansky indicated that based on the information presented, that EPA was in favor of Line A as the Preferred Alignment.
5. James Barlow reiterated his concerns regarding secondary development and project mitigation. He sighted an increase in development activities and COE permits at and near Grand Isle due to a new waterline serving the barrier island. After some discussion, and it was noted that secondary development could not be discussed quantitatively, but a qualitative discussion would be included in the DEIS. Baker's March 21, 2001 letter to the COE requesting permit application information in the Study Area was discussed. The COE has received the request and is working towards providing the information. This information is needed by July 13, 2001 if it is to be used in the Draft EIS.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

6. John Ettinger inquired as to the effect of the project on the marsh creation project south of Leeville (a CWPPRA priority project). Chris indicated that a project description was previously provided to Baker to document Other Major Federal Actions in the area. Following this meeting, Chris spoke with Jeanene Peckham, EPA's Project Manager for the project. The following summarizes the discussion.
  - The project boundary encompasses an Oyster Lease Area with an identified potential borrow area northeast of the site.
  - Phase 1 of the project, which includes property owner identification and initial discussions is underway but is not advancing as rapidly as had been hoped due to the large number of property owners involved. Phase 2 of the project, which includes site design, has not yet begun. EPA has not yet retained an engineering & design consultant for the design.
  - The preliminary alignments developed would traverse the marsh creation project but should not preclude full development of the site because the elevated highway would be between 25 feet and 50 feet above the water at this location.
  - Baker will provide EPA with drawings showing the locations of the preliminary alignments. The project's involvement with the marsh creation project will be discussed in the Draft EIS.
7. The connections to LA 1 north and south of Leeville were discussed. It was noted that the project would be constructed in stages, with the portion of the project that included the Bayou Lafourche bridge crossing at Leeville and its associated mainline and connector roads being constructed first. The ramps north and south of Leeville were located as close as feasible to the bridge crossing in order to minimize the first stage construction costs and current funding initiatives. The existing Leeville lift bridge is the weakest link in the transportation system due to travel interruptions for bayou traffic and scheduled and unscheduled repairs. This first stage of construction would eliminate the need for the existing bridge. Wayne Aymond indicated that the bridge is not on DOTD's priority list.
8. At the conclusion of the meeting it was agreed that Line A would be the Preferred Alternative designated in the DEIS. The DEIS would include discussions on secondary development, on-going mitigation initiatives and construction staging.
9. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

# Phone Memo — 05-3820-01

cc:



**Call To:** David Frank, USCG  
Bridge Permits

**Subject:** Initial Discussion, LA-1

**Call From:** Barry Brupbacher

**Date:** February 4, 2000

Initial Discussion with David Frank regarding LA 1 project. David confirmed Justin's 73' vertical clearance for the Leesville bridge. Justin indicated a channel width of 175' would be required. David, however was not committal on that issue — "wide as possible" was his comment. He also went on to say that separate permits may be required for all waterway crossings and he wanted to see the conceptual alignments as soon as they were developed.

cc: Chris Geising, Michael Baker

# Phone Memo — 05-3820-01

cc:



**Call To:** Brian Clements, GNOEC

**Subject:** Discussion, Causeway Safety

**Call From:** Barry Brupbacher

**Date:** February 13, 2000

The Lake Pontchartrain Causeway is a 4-lane capacity 24-mile long roadway on structure, which crosses Lake Pontchartrain between Metairie, Louisiana in Jefferson Parish and Mandeville, Louisiana in St. Tammany Parish. The toll roadway is administered by the Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission. The Commission maintains its own police force, which is instrumental in assuring bridge safety.

The initial 2-lane structure, which currently serves as the southbound travel lanes, was opened for traffic in August 1956. The second 2-lane structure, which serves as the northbound travel lanes, was completed in May 1969. Both structures are deficient in that they provide only 2' shoulders. The northbound and southbound structures are separated by 84'8". Approximately every 4 miles a crossing between the two structures is provided. The vertical bridge profile includes minor navigation clearances at the 4-mile, 12-mile and 20-mile marks. Major navigation clearances are provided at the 8-mile mark and the 16-mile mark. Also, double leaf bascule spans are provided in association with the 16-mile marine crossing.

The periodic crossings between the northbound and southbound structures perform a number of functions. They allow bridge police nearly continuous access from both traffic flow directions to the entire dual span bridge. This minimizes incident response times. Also, because the 2' shoulders do not provide sufficient space for inoperable vehicles to be removed from active travel lanes, the crossings also serve as the initial location to which such vehicles can be moved.

Brian Clements serves as the public works director for the Causeway Commission. He is responsible for the engineering, design and construction programs undertaken by the Commission. His views were solicited regarding the bridge operations as related to overall bridge geometry and hazards mitigation. His comments follow:

1. Four-mile crossover interval functionally works well. However, access to crossovers should include AASHTO compliant acceleration /deceleration lanes. As a cost-effective alternative to acceleration / deceleration lanes, he advocates reversing shoulder widths to provide a 10' inside shoulder.
2. Mechanical failure associated with the operation of the bascule spans is a problem. When one of the bascule spans fail, traffic is routed to the remaining operational span. Crossover geometry for the crossovers serving the twin bascule spans needs to be improved regarding tractor/trailer turning movements. The existing longitudinal dimension of crossovers is 86"; To provide a smooth flow from one bridge to the other, Brian believes that the longitudinal dimension of the crossover should be at least 150'.
3. The Commission public safety force does not have a written plan for controlling hazardous materials spills, although they do have the capability to provide minimal equipment for controlling minor spills.

cc: Chris Geising, Michael Baker

# Phone Memo — 05-3820-01

cc:



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**Call To:** Brett Herr, USACOE

**Subject:** Navigation Data

**Call From:** Barry Brupbacher

**Date:** February 15, 2000

---

COE is investigating conversion of Golden Meadow Floodgate to lock closure by addition of an upstream closure structure with integral levee connecting existing & new structure. As part of COE planning they have developed data set of vessels trafficking Bayou Lafourche. I have requested their data as a starting point in the analysis of Bayou Lafourche bridge crossing.

cc: Chris Gesing, Michael Baker



# Phone Memo — 05-3820-01

cc:



---

**Call To:** : Barry Brupbacher

**Subject:** Plans for the Protection Levee

**Call From:** Brett Herr, USACOE

**Date:** February 28, 2000

---

Brett called in response to my request for information regarding the latest construction plans for the Larose to Golden Meadow Hurricane Protection Levee. Brett will be forwarding the plans to Frederic R. Harris. I utilized the phone conversation to discuss the vertical clearance requirements the COE would place on a bridge crossing over the levee. Brett checked and indicated that at least 15' vertical clearance should be provided above the existing levee section.

cc: Chris Gesing, Michael Baker Brett Herr, USACOE

**HARRIS** Field Trip Memo — 05-3820-01**Visit With:** as indicated**Subject:** Discussion, LA-1**By:** Barry Brupbacher**Date:** March 30, 2000

3/29/00

**Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office (Haz Mat and Emergency Evacuation)**

Met with Lt. Jerry Monier and Major Bud Dill of the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's office to discuss LA 1.

I briefly presented the project status, including the reason for the development of multiple alignments in compliance with the NEPA process. They were very supportive of the project. In particular, they are concerned that the existing movable span bridge over Bayou Lafource at Leesville be replaced with a fixed span structure ASAP. The bridge has a history of mechanical failures. A mechanical failure during a hurricane evacuation would place great numbers of persons at risk.

**Other issues included:**

- Crossovers between bridges - Their concern related to the placement of crossover structures between the spans. They believed that such structures were very important to the safe operation of the bridge. They were concerned that the crossovers should be able to be accessed quickly without the use of special equipment, and that their design should accommodate large truck turning movements. They did not object to the placement of a single crossing location between Golden Meadow and Leesville and the placement of a single crossover between Leesville and Golden Meadow.
- Hazards – Sheriff's office is typically the first respondent to accidents involving hazardous spills. They contain the site and notify appropriate response agencies. These potentially include:
  - The Lafourche Parish Emergency Preparedness Director, Gregory Serigny (504) 446-8427.
  - State Police Troop C, Sgt. A.S. Clark, (504) 857-3680.
  - State Police Haz Mat / DEQ hotline at (225) 925-6595.
  - The National Response Center (800) 424-8802.
  - U.S. Coast Guard MSO Morgan City (504) 380-5320.

- 911 Dispatcher (504) 537-3580.

The Sheriff's office noted that there are substantial numbers of businesses in place at Port Fourchon, which respond to offshore Haz Mat incidents. This response capability is geographically positioned to assist with the clean-up of Haz Mat incidents on LA-1.

- Operational Concerns – The Sheriff's office also expressed concern that additional planning needs to be accomplished relating to the management of the bridge covering issues such as hurricane evacuation, Haz Mat incident management, as well as control of the bridge during fog, high winds, and other adverse weather conditions. They suggested that the planning for the bridge incorporate message board technology.

Major Dill also volunteered access to Sgt. Brent Constrantisch, who heads the Sheriff's water patrol activities. Sgt. Constrantisch is very familiar with Bayou Lafourche and adjacent waterways and he will serve as an advisor on how the roadway alignments might affect local navigation.

#### **Town of Golden Meadow**

Met with Joey Bouziga, Mayor of Golden Meadow. I provided an overview of the project status. Mayor Bouziga is very supportive of the proposed improvement program. He pointed out that the project is outside the corporate limits of the Town. He had no other comments.

3/30/00

#### **Lafourche Parish Emergency Preparedness**

Met with Gregory Serigny, Emergency Preparedness Director for Lafourche Parish. I provided an overview of the project status and the comments of the Sheriff's office. Greg indicated similar concerns as the Sheriff's office relating to crossovers and Haz Mat incidents. He reiterated the importance of replacing the existing bridge ASAP. He provided me with a copy of the Parish's Haz Mat Incident Management Form.

#### **State Police Troop C**

Met with Sgt. A.S. Clark. I provided an overview of the project status and comments of the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office and Office of Emergency Preparedness. Sgt. Clark concurred with the response agencies as identified by the Sheriff's office and Office of Emergency Preparedness. Sgt. Clark commented on the need to proceed with Leesville bridge replacement. He also was concerned that crossovers be included in the design of the bridge.

#### **Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office (Marine Navigation)**

Met with Brent Constransitch of the Sheriff's Water Patrol. Brent is very knowledgeable of Lafourche Parish waterways and the use of waterways by fisherman and other commercial marine interests. He provided a tour of the Leesville area by air boat. His comments regarding proposed alignments are as follows:

#### **Golden Meadow to Leesville**

- Alignments A and C (west bank of Bayou Lafourche) – There are a number of facilities fronting existing LA-1 in the vicinity of the bridge at Leesville, which are accessed on the rear side by water. These businesses serve a variety of recreational and inland commercial fisheries marine interest. During the inland shrimping season, 30-40 inland fishing vessels may be serviced from this area. The access channel to the area connects with the Southwestern Louisiana Canal. However, the access channel depth is not sufficient to support larger offshore fisheries or oil support vessels.

The west bank approach to the new high level bridge over Bayou Lafourche cross over the access channel to this area. It is important to provide sufficient vertical navigation clearance above the access channel. Brent suggests that inland fishing vessels require approximately 50' clearance.

This is the only waterway between Golden Meadow and Bayou Lafourche at Leesville that is used by commercial marine traffic.

- Alignment B (east bank of Bayou Lafourche) – Alignment B crosses Bayou Lafourche north of Leesville. Its route, which parallels Bayou Lafourche to the east, crosses a number of waterways. Except for the Southwest Canal, Brent indicates that none of the waterways are utilized by commercial marine traffic. Furthermore, he indicates that marsh areas east of the Alignment B bridge structure can be access either from the Tidewater Canal or the Southwest Canal. He indicated that the navigation clearance over the Southwest Canal should be maintained at same height as that provided for main crossing of Bayou Lafourche.

#### **Leesville to Port Fourchon**

Brent reviewed all three alignments. He did not believe that any waterways crossed by any of the 3 alignments are utilized by commercial marine traffic. Consequently none of the proposed corridors should pose any restriction to navigation.

# Phone Call Report

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Project/Location:	<u>LA 1 Improvements</u> <u>Port Fourchon-Golden</u> <u>Meadow, LA</u>	Proj. No.	<u>State Proj. No. 700-29-112</u> <u>C-K Associates' Proj. No. 075-315</u>
		Date:	<u>March 9, 2000</u>
To:	<u>Clarence Meyers</u>	From:	<u>John Evers</u>
Repres:	<u>Louisiana Dept. Of Wildlife &amp;</u> <u>Fisheries, Survey Section</u>	Repres:	<u>C-K Associates, Inc.</u>
Phone No.:	<u>(504) 568-5680</u>	Phone No.:	<u>(225) 755-1000</u>

---

**Subject:** I contacted Mr. Clarence Meyers, Supervisor, Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries (LDWF), Survey Section, New Orleans, LA to obtain oyster lease information within the LA 1 project area. Mr. Meyers said he would compile the geographic locations of the oyster leases within the project area. I had a staff member travel to New Orleans, meet with Mr. Meyers, and pick up the data in person the next day.

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Prepared by: John Evers Title: GIS Manager Page: 1 of 1  
bcc:

**MICHAEL BAKER, JR., INC.**  
**PHONE CALL REPORT**

PROJECT/LOCATION: LA 1 Improvements S.O.No.: 24203-000-0000  
Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow DATE: April 20, 2000  
State Job No.: 700-29-0112

---

To: Lyle LeBlanc From: Chris Gesing  
Repres.: DOTD Asst. Maint. Engr. - Lafourche Parish Repres.: Baker  
Phone No.: (504) 876-8811 Phone No.: (412) 269-4636  
Subject: LA 1 Storm Inundation & Maintenance

---

Mr. LeBlanc and I discussed the frequency of inundation of LA 1 between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon. Mr. LeBlanc offered the following information for this stretch of roadway, which he considered a typical occurrence.

- Typically, twice a year the DOTD has to remove debris from the roadway due to high water conditions.
- Roughly once every two years the roadway inundation is deep enough to wash out the shoulders.
- There are roughly three to four storm events per year where the water is at the edge of the travel lane. When this occurs, it is most often along the eastern side of the roadway due to southeasterly winds bringing the tide up. These are summer storm events.
- The roadway has been closed in the past due to inundation. During Hurricane Juan the roadway was closed trapping people on Grand Isle.
- The shoulders have washed out twice since Hurricane Juan.

---

Prepared by CGGesing Title Project Manager Page 1 of 1

cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD

**MICHAEL BAKER, JR., INC.**  
**PHONE CALL REPORT**

PROJECT/LOCATION: <u>LA 1 Improvements</u>	S.O.No.: <u>24203-000-0000</u>
<u>Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow</u>	DATE: <u>July 3, 2001</u>
	State Job No.: <u>700-29-0112</u>
To: <u>Jeanene Peckham</u>	From: <u>Chris Gesing</u>
Repres.: <u>US EPA – Baton Rouge</u>	Repres.: <u>Baker</u>
Phone No.: <u>(225) 389-0736</u>	Phone No.: <u>(412) 269-4636</u>
Subject: <u>Marsh Creation Project South of Leeville</u>	

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources are implementing the "Marsh Creation South of Leeville" Project (BA-29/BA-32a, CWPPRA Priority Project List 9). The project is part of Region 3 of the Coast 2050 Plan and is funded and authorized in accordance with the provisions of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) (16 USCA, Section 3951-3956) and has been approved by the PL 101-646 Task Force.

Following the July 2, 2001 resource agency coordination meeting conference call, John Ettinger of EPA – New Orleans suggested that I call Jeanene Peckham to discuss EPA's Marsh Creation Project south of Leeville. Ms. Peckham is EPA's Project Manager in Baton Rouge. The following summarizes our discussions.

- The marsh creation project is located southeast of Leeville. The project boundary encompasses an Oyster Lease Area with an identified potential borrow area northeast of the site. A project description was previously provided to Baker to document other Major Federal Actions in the Draft EIS.
- Phase 1 of the project, which includes property owner identification and initial discussions is underway but is not advancing as rapidly as had been hoped due to the large number of property owners involved. Phase 2 of the project, which includes site design, has not yet begun. EPA has not yet retained an engineering & design consultant for the design.
- The preliminary alignments developed would traverse the marsh creation project but should not preclude full development of the site because the elevated highway would be between 25 feet and 50 feet above the water at this location.
- Baker will provide EPA with drawings showing the locations of the preliminary alignments. The project's involvement with the marsh creation project will be discussed in the Draft EIS.

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Prepared by <u>CGGesing</u>	Title <u>Project Manager</u>	Page <u>1</u> of <u>  </u>
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cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD



**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**  
A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

July 5, 2001

Jeanene Peckham  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
707 Florida Blvd.  
Suite B21  
Baton Rouge, LA 70801

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
*Airport Office Park, Building 3*  
*420 Rouser Road*  
*Coraopolis, PA 15108*

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
*Marsh Creation Project south of Leeville, LA*

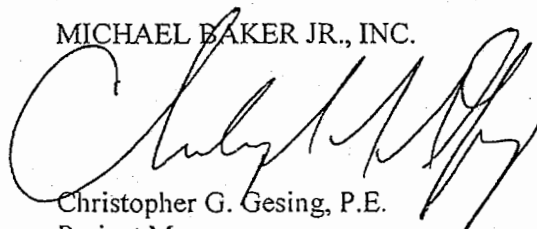
Dear Ms. Peckham:

As a follow-up to our discussion regarding USEPA/LaDNR's Marsh Creation project south of Leeville, Louisiana (BA-29/BA-32a, CWPPRA Priority Project List 9), enclosed is Exhibit 4-1 from the "work in progress" Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) being prepared for the subject project. The "work in progress" document was distributed to federal and state agencies, including LaDNR, on March 6, 2001 as part of our on-going coordination initiatives. No comments were received with respect to this creation site.

Exhibit 4-1, Sheet 3 of 4 shows the oyster lease areas south of Leeville in relation to the preliminary alignments under consideration. This should aid you in locating your marsh creation project with respect to the preliminary alignments. The DEIS is scheduled for circulation in October 2001.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD (letter only)



**MICHAEL BAKER, JR., INC.**  
**PHONE CALL REPORT**

PROJECT/LOCATION: Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow S.O.No.: 24203-000-0001-00000  
LA 1 Improvements DATE: October 8, 2001  
State Job No.: 700-29-0112

To: Gary Lester From: Tim Smith  
Repres.: Natural Heritage Program Repres.: Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
Phone No.: 225-765-2821 Phone No.:  
Subject: Potential for manatees in Project Area

I spoke with Gary Lester, Coordinator for the Natural Heritage Program, regarding the potential for the west Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) in the Port Fourchon/Golden Meadow/Bayou Lafourche area. Gary stated that manatees have been sporadically observed in coastal rivers throughout Louisiana from the Mississippi west to the Lake Charles area and could use the Bayou Lafourche waterway and surrounding coastal habitat. Gary stated that it is likely that manatees found in Louisiana are seasonal migrants from Florida and that no year round residents have been identified.

Prepared by Timothy J. Smith Title Environmental Manager Page 1 of

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD

LA Dept. of Transportation and Development  
P. O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245

January 7, 2002

Attn: Vincent G. Russo, Jr.  
Environmental Engineer Administrator

RE: Public input, Fourchon 4-Lane Highway Project

Dear Mr. Russo:

To comment first on the environmental and ecological damage that will be incurred by the citizens of this country and state to install this proposed 4-lane highway, would be understated no matter how we address the subject.

The many square miles of estuary that would be impacted is really ecologically (imprudent). This area is one of only a few estuaries left world wide. This would definitely impact the estuary and our entire fishing and wildlife industries as well as other industries that depend on the scenic beauty of our landscape to attract out of state visitors. As you must know, tourism is now the second largest industry in the state, behind health care, and well ahead of the oil industry.

To impact this area to advance the interest of one industry at the expense of many of the states other industries is unquestionably wrong.

Economically, lets face the facts, the oil industry is only in Fourchon for one reason, and that is because at one time, it could save the oil companies money because of Fourchon's close proximity to the Gulf of Mexico. The oil companies have yet to figure out that the ever increasing waiting time, that is incurred in Fourchon because of the congested use of the port, is now actually costing them money. As far as the oil industry leaving Fourchon, that will not happen as long as they feel they can save money by being there, 4-lane highway or not. It's not about a 4-lane highway, it's about how much money the oil industry can save.

Another fact is that Louisiana's last major hurricane was hurricane Andrew in 1992. Do you think that Fourchon will be at the end of the proposed, estimated \$670 million 4-lane highway, if a major hurricane would impact that area directly? Everything at Fourchon is built on pumped sand, and it already has an erosion problem without a 25 to 30 foot storm surge. I believe that Fourchon would look like a beach after a major hurricane impacts this area, and that probability increases with each passing hurricane season.

Another question is, if we are building this 4-lane highway to Fourchon, how many hundreds of millions of dollars more are the taxpayers going to be asked to spend to protect Fourchon from hurricanes and erosion?

Another thing we hear from the Port Fourchon Director; Ted Falgout, and Wendell Curole from the Lafourche Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness, is the threat to life because of the existing highway and the Leeville Bridge. Why have we never heard of this threat before Fourchon came into existence? Were the citizens below the Leeville bridge not important then? If the bridge is the major problem, is it not cheaper to build a 20 or 30 million dollar bridge than 670 million dollar 4-lane highway?

With today's technology, the oil companies know well in advance of potential weather threats to an area, they will be to blame if people are not evacuated from Fourchon well in advance of storms. But as we all know, it cost money to shut down rigs for weather, and the oil industry is famous for waiting to the last minute to evacuate. Ask people who work in the industry if this true or not. Threat to life should not even be a consideration in this decision. This threat can be completely eliminated by better planning.

The emergence of Fourchon has been economically detrimental to many other ports along the Louisiana coast, you are now asking these same citizens to spend an estimated 670 million tax dollars for an industry that has abandoned them for Fourchon. These ports were viable ports for the oil industry when Fourchon was estuary marshes and are still viable now.

You are asking the taxpayers of this state to spend money for an industry that has seen unprecedented profits over the last few years, an industry that could well afford to spend the money themselves if Fourchon is that important to them.

I have seen some statements that the oil industry would move to other states if something is not done with this highway. Give me a break! The reason the oil industry is in Fourchon is logistics and money saved. To think that they could run their operations from Texas or Mississippi more economically than another Louisiana port is a scare tactic used for the development of this highway and that alone. The oil industry will not run their Louisiana offshore operations out of Fourchon from another state because it would cost them too much money.

I will be watching to see how the state will justify spending this kind of money when some of our highways, already in place, are in deplorable condition, when hundreds of state bridges both large and small are in need of repair.

Please find enclosed a copy of a letter in reference to the Millennium Port that may have additional information.

Sincerely,

*Ralph E. Guidry, Jr.*

Ralph E. Guidry, Jr.

Councilmen - Berwick Town Council

November 5, 2001

Honorable D.A. "Butch" Gautreaux  
State Senator  
1015 Clothilde Street  
Morgan City, LA 70380

RE: Millennium Port

Dear Senator Gautreaux:

This letter will serve as our complete support of your proposal for the Port of Morgan City to be included as a contender, as a component to the Millennium Port.

All the advantages of Morgan City's location (that you have already mentioned), are but a few that we could offer as advantages for Morgan City's selection.

One of the biggest disadvantages that Fourchon has is that every acre of development, done in the marshes surrounding Fourchon, is one less acre of one of the last estuaries in the world. This estuary is essential to the well being of our fishing industry as well as the tourism industry that is now our state's second largest and growing producer of income. Land available around the Morgan City/Berwick/Patterson area would not be in this classification.

Another area that would need to be addressed, for an endeavor this large, is available utilities, such as water, sewerage, gas and electricity. Note, The Associated Press article, "that development would encompass 1,400 acres". These services are readily available in the Morgan City area.

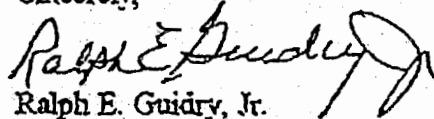
The selection of Fourchon that would present another problem is available areas for workers to live. The available workforce in itself, from what we know, is a problem the oil service industry has in Fourchon at present. Service companies must house employees that work in Fourchon because there is no place for them to live. The Morgan City/Berwick/Patterson area has hundreds of available home sites, and land available for additional sites if needed. All of this additional acreage that would be needed for the workforce may not have been included in the estimate of 1,400 acres required for development of the port. With this in mind, what kind of ecological impact would this have on the marshes that surround Fourchon?

Another point of consideration is Hurricane protection. The fact that Morgan City is a few miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico than Fourchon, will be an advantage. This can be witnessed by how many vessels from other ports along the Louisiana coast, Fourchon included, seek safe harbor in the Port of Morgan City during hurricanes. This safe harbor is well worth the additional distance from the Gulf when you consider the hundreds of millions of dollars of damages and lost revenue that a hurricane could impact on an area. How many hundreds of millions of dollars will need to be spent on hurricane protection for the Port of Fourchon that would not be needed in Morgan City. I believe that a major hurricane, such as Hurricane Andrew, could completely wash Fourchon's sand-based improvements out into the Gulf. Where would this leave a 375 million dollar four-lane highway? I would suspect, this highway might be dumping into the Gulf of Mexico. Has any thought been given to this eventual problem?

When you add it all up, the Morgan City area indeed has the most advantages to consider. It would be the safest, most economically and ecologically prudent decision to locate the new port in Morgan City.

We agree that we must speak out for the advantages that Morgan City has to offer. If we can be of any assistance in furthering this proposal, please contact us, at anytime.

Sincerely,



Ralph E. Guidry, Jr.

Secretary / Treasurer

Councilmen - Berwick Town Council

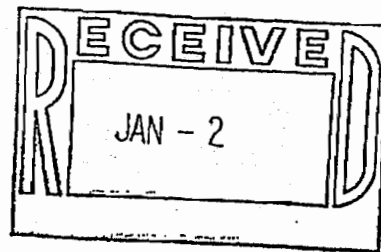
cc: Mr. M.I. "Mike" Foster, Governor-State of Louisiana  
Mr. Tim Tregle, Mayor of Morgan City  
Mr. Emmett Hardaway, Mayor of Berwick  
Mr. Jerry Hoffpauir, Morgan City Harbor & Terminal District  
Mrs. Carla B. Darte, Representative-State of Louisiana  
Mr. Billy Colye, Millennium Port Authority-President  
Honorable John J. Hainkel, Jr., Senate Select Comm. on the Millen. Port-Chairman  
Mr. Jack Smith, Senator-State of Louisiana

Orleans Audubon Society

2134 Mehlc Avenue

Arabi, LA 70032

(504) 279-8549



Michael Baker Jr., Inc.  
Petroleum Square II  
1324 North Hearne Avenue, Suite 255  
Shreveport, LA 71107

27 December 2001

Dear Sir:

I understand that a public hearing was held on Tuesday, December 18, 2001, at the Bayou Civic Club in Larose, Louisiana, and that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement was presented for the Louisiana I Improvements project between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. I would like to know if a written Draft EIS is available for inspection and commentary. If so, would you please mail it to the above address.

On another note, this highway improvement strikes me as a unique opportunity to plan for cultural and recreational uses of this roadway. The improvement plan might include a scenic pullover at a site that is known for its diversity of wildlife. This route is well traveled by birdwatchers from all over the country coming to bird the Fourchon Road and Grand Isle areas. There is a plan underway to start a Great Louisiana Birding Trail much like the trail developed in Texas. The State of Louisiana might get a head start on this ecotourism-friendly trail system if the Louisiana DOTD started incorporating scenic overlooks and pullover sites to observe wildlife now. If you know of anyone in LaDOTD who might be interested in pursuing this idea, please send me his or her contact information.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer O. Coulson  
President,  
Chair, Conservation Committee



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6

1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200  
DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

January 4, 2002

Mr. Vincent G. Russo, Jr., P.E.  
Environmental Engineer  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
P.O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245

Dear Mr. Russo:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations for Implementing NEPA, the Region 6 Office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has completed the review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed construction of a four-lane, divided, fully controlled access elevated highway facility on new alignment between Louisiana 3225 west of Golden Meadow, Louisiana and Louisiana 3090 at its intersection with Louisiana 1, north of Port Fourchon. The project would be on elevated structure and would be built using the end on end bridge construction method.

The following comments are now offered for your consideration in the development of the Final EIS (FEIS).

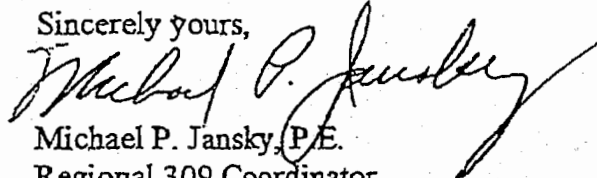
**1 Affected Environment, Section 3.9, Wetlands:** This section of the DEIS should be strengthened by providing more information on historic and ongoing wetland losses in the general area of the proposed project. The potential consequences of these losses (e.g., reduced productivity, greater risks of storm-related flooding in coastal areas) should be described. Specifically, the DEIS should provided the historic and ongoing wetland loss rates in the Barataria Basin, while describing the economic and ecological importance of the area's wetlands. The DEIS should also provide information on historic and ongoing losses of forested ridge habitat in the Barataria Basin, while describing the importance of such habitat to migratory bird species. This information should be provided in the FEIS.

**2. Environmental Consequences, 4.8, Wetlands:** This section on "secondary development" should be strengthened by providing more discussion on whether the road project is likely to facilitate further development in Port Fourchon and Grand Isle. The potential consequences of such additional development should be described, regardless of whether a Section 404 permit would be required. While it would be difficult to quantify the change in development rates that could be attributed to the new road, the DEIS should have at a minimum qualitatively discussed the extent of change that could be expected. Similarly, the potential environmental consequences of such growth should be described qualitatively. This information would strengthen the NEPA document. Please discuss in the FEIS.

EPA classifies your DEIS and proposed action as "LO," i.e., EPA has "Lack of Objections" to the selection of the preferred alternative. However to strengthen the document, EPA is requesting additional information on secondary growth and potential wetland impacts be more fully discussed in the FEIS. Our classification will be published in the Federal Register according to our responsibility under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, to inform the public of our views on proposed Federal actions.

We appreciate the opportunity to review the DEIS. We request that you send our office two (2) copies of the FEIS at the same time that it is sent to the Office of Federal Activities (2251A), EPA, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20044.

Sincerely yours,



Michael P. Jansky, P.E.  
Regional 309 Coordinator



SUMMARY PARAGRAPH FORM

ERP NUMBER

D-FHW-G40167-LA

TITLE: LOUISIANA IMPROVEMENT PROJECT,

RATING ASSIGNED TO PROJECT

LO

NAME OF EPA OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE

MIKE JANSKY  
309 COORDINATOR

SUMMARY OF COMMENT LETTER

EPA has lack of objections to the selection of the preferred alternative. However, EPA is requesting additional information on secondary growth and potential wetland impacts to be more fully discussed in the Final EIS.

PARAGRAPH APPROVED FOR PUBLICATION

                      
(Initials of  
Approving Official)



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Southeast Regional Office

9721 Executive Center Drive North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702

November 30, 2001

F/SER44/RH:jk  
225/389-0508

Mr. Vincent G. Russo, Jr.  
Environmental Engineer Administrator  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Post Office Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245

Dear Mr. Russo:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has received the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) entitled "Louisiana 1 Improvements; Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon; Lafourche Parish, Louisiana". The Federal Highway Administration and Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development are considering the construction of a four-lane, divided, elevated highway between Louisiana Highway 3235 near Golden Meadow and Louisiana Highway 3090 north of Port Fourchon.

By letter dated August 9, 2001, (attached) the NMFS provided comments on a preliminary DEIS for this highway construction work. Based on our review of the DEIS and the file for the project, we believe the majority of our comments were adequately addressed. As such, we have only the following comments to provide:

#### SECTION 4: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

##### 4.1 SOCIAL IMPACTS

##### 4.1.1 Land Use/Land Cover Conversion

##### Secondary Development

Page 4-2, paragraphs 2 and 5. Portions of these paragraphs indicate that development would not be expected south of the Golden Meadow hurricane protection levee due to the lack of developable uplands and the area's susceptibility to inundation during hurricanes. Based on our review of recent building proposals for projects to be sited in wetlands along Louisiana Highway 1 between Golden Meadow and Grand Isle, we disagree with these statements. Development of wetlands in this area for the purposes of camps, homes, marinas and other commercial enterprises has been proposed frequently within the past year. As such, we recommend these paragraphs be rewritten to correctly indicate that most of the secondary development that would occur as a result of the construction of this four lane elevated highway would be sited in wetlands.

#### 4.10 ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT

##### 4.10.4 Mitigation Measures



Page 4-31, paragraph 1. The last potential conservation and enhancement measure listed consists of creating new habitat by converting non-EFH to EFH. As indicated at various portions of the document, there is little developable uplands in the project area. As such, it is extremely unlikely that conversion of those uplands to wetlands or water bottoms would be a prioritized use of those limited land resources. We recommend this mitigative measure be deleted.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS.

Sincerely,



*for* Andreas Mager, Jr.  
Assistant Regional Director  
Habitat Conservation Division

Enclosure

c:  
FWS, Lafayette  
EPA, Dallas  
LA DWF  
LA DNR, CMD, Consistency  
COE, Regulatory - Barlow  
F/SER4  
Files



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance  
Post Office Box 649  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103

IN REPLY REFER TO:

January 2, 2002

Via Overnight Mail

ER 01/1005

Vincent G. Russo, Jr., P.E.  
Environmental Engineer Administrator  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
5040 Florida Boulevard, Room 204A  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Dear Mr. Russo:

The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Louisiana 1 (LA 1) Improvements, Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana. In this regard, the following comments are provided for your consideration as you develop the final document.

### General Comments

As stated through previous correspondence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), no Federally-listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species presently occur within the proposed highway corridor. Therefore, no further consultation will be required unless there are changes in the scope or location of the project, or project construction has not been initiated within one year. If the project is not initiated within one year, follow-up consultation should be conducted with the FWS's Ecological Services Office in Lafayette, Louisiana, prior to making expenditures for construction. If the scope or location of the proposed work is changed, consultation should occur as soon as such changes are made.

The FWS has been actively involved in the scoping process for the subject proposal and, as a result, many of DOI's concerns have been identified and addressed in the DEIS. We remain concerned, however, that the proposed project could adversely affect estuarine resources via storm water runoff contamination from the elevated roadway.

## Specific Comments

Section 4.6.1, Surface Water Resources - The subsection on storm water runoff states that a literature review was conducted to research the effects of highway runoff on tidally-influenced marine environments and that the search only identified studies addressing the impact of highway runoff associated with high-traffic roadways in freshwater systems. The DEIS concludes that such studies are not applicable to the proposed project because the highway is considered to be a rural, low-volume facility located in a tidally-influenced environment and, therefore, storm water runoff will not be a significant environmental concern. Although portions of LA 1 will traverse rural areas, we do not consider it to be a typical roadway. Section 1 of the DEIS states that Port Fourchon has experienced a phenomenal growth rate, with an expansion from 2 to 150 businesses and an increase in acreage from 25 to 600 acres over the last two decades. Those changes have been largely influenced by a major increase in oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico. Also according to the DEIS, there has been a 500 percent increase in deepwater drilling activity yielding a 30 percent increase in oil production over the last decade. Gas production has also shown marked increases since 1985. Reports from the Louisiana State University (LSU) forecast significant increases in future deep-water exploration activities in the Gulf of Mexico. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' study projects that almost 60 percent of Louisiana's offshore drilling over the next 30 years will occur within the service area of Port Fourchon. In addition, LA 1 is designated as a National Highway System principal arterial connection to Interstate 10. Currently, approximately 17 percent of the traffic volume on LA 1 is comprised of trucks, many of which are commercial vehicles that transport a variety of chemical and petroleum products. Moreover, the Louisiana Offshore Oil Port at the Port Fourchon facility is estimated to handle 13 percent of the Nation's imported crude oil. Much of the overall project need is justified on the projected increase of truck traffic as the port facilities continue to expand. Due to the expected increase in commercial truck traffic on LA 1 and the fact that many of those vehicles are expected to carry products that could be harmful to the marine environment, we do not believe that LA 1 should be evaluated as a typical rural highway and cannot concur that the roadway runoff will not significantly affect the surrounding tidal wetlands. Accordingly, measures to substantially reduce the potential effects of storm water runoff into the Nationally significant coastal wetlands surrounding the proposed highway should be fully considered.

While tidal flushing may serve to minimize the concentrations of some pollutants, heavy metals released into the environment are a chronic source of contamination, and certain heavy metals react with saltwater to form other toxic compounds. According to a recent study conducted by the LSU Civil and Environmental Engineering Department, roadway runoff was cited as the most significant source of heavy metal pollution in the environment. To address that problem, researchers at LSU have used funding from the Louisiana Transportation Research Institute, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and others to develop a bio-filter which uses a floating bead clarifier to absorb pollutants from roadway runoff. That system was tested in the Baton Rouge area and has been utilized in estuarine areas in other parts of the country. Dr. John Sansalone, the lead LSU professor for the bio-filtration research, has indicated an interest in briefing the State and Federal Highway agencies on this storm water pollution abatement

technique. Accordingly, we recommend that the final Environmental Impact Statement be revised to fully consider the issue of project-associated storm water pollution and potential solutions for abatement of the adverse impacts on the Barataria Estuary and its important wetland habitats.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed project. We trust the above comments will be of assistance during development of subsequent documentation.

Sincerely,

*Stephen M. Spencer*  
for Glenn B. Sekavec  
Regional Environmental Officer



Operations Division  
Eastern Evaluation Section

Subject: LA-1 Port Fourchon to Golden Meadow  
LA DOTD SP 700-29-0112\  
FAP HP-NH-T021 (002)

Mr. Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager  
Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15231-0259

Dear Mr. Gesing:

This is in regard to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the relocation of Louisiana Highway 1, between Port Fourchon, Louisiana and Golden Meadow, Louisiana in Lafourche Parish.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS but, because of current workload, we are unable to thoroughly review the document. We previously provided comments on the pre-DEIS by letter dated September 25, 2001. A precursory review of the DEIS indicates that some of those comments have been incorporated into the DEIS. However, many of recommended changes were not incorporated into the document. We recommend that you review the comments previously submitted and revise the document as suggested.

Two issues of concern were the inadequacy of identification and discussion of secondary and cumulative adverse impacts that could be expected from the implementation of the proposed project and full disclosure of all direct impacts (i.e. temporary construction areas). An environmental impact statement is a full disclosure of impacts, both beneficial and adverse, associated with implementation of a proposed action and possible alternatives to the proposed action. These documents should provide an unbiased review of project related impacts pointing out the beneficial aspects of the action while clearly identifying all direct and foreseeable secondary adverse impacts associated with each alternative. The review of direct and secondary impacts assists in determining regional cumulative

effects. The final document should be a tool to assist regulatory agencies in making a permit decision. Our review indicates that the Final EIS would be much improved if you were to take a realistic look at the potential secondary impacts associated with the proposed action. Although highways are intended for transportation, other interest takes advantage of these newly created corridors via providing facilities to them to service the users; cause and effect. Regulatory programs must eventually deal with the problem but initially the highway spurs the development.

All direct impacts associated with the proposed action should be identified in the discussion for each alternative. Only in this way can alternatives be accurately evaluated. According to the information in the DEIS, approximately 5.3 acres of wetlands would be directly impacted by the proposed action. This acreage only includes those impacts associated with fill placement required for construction of the roadway embankment. It doesn't address impacts resulting from other work areas. Additional work associated with access to the structure will be required but there is no indication of what impact may occur to wetland areas. In our previous letter to you, we recommended that you provide information on temporary work areas. No estimation of the impact extent associated with these temporary work areas is provided in the discussion of direct impacts. We would also want discussed whether or not such areas would be restored or left as filled. These temporary work areas are difficult to restore to pre-project conditions. Additionally, there was mention at the public hearing of the necessity of relocating oil wells. What impacts would be associated with the relocation of an oil well; new slips and or access canals, dredging and the disposal of dredged material for access to new sites, etc.?

Again, we appreciate the opportunity to participate in the process and apologize for our late comment submittal. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Roger Swindler and/or Dr. James Barlow of my staff at (504) 862-2278 and -2250 respectively.

Sincerely,

Ronald J. Ventola  
Chief, Regulatory Branch



# CHITIMACHA

TRIBE OF LOUISIANA

CULTURAL DEPARTMENT

January 14, 2002

LA DOTD  
Environmental Engineer Administrator  
Attn: Vincent G. Russo  
P.O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245

Dear Mr. Russo,

RE: EIS Comments on State Project # 700-29-0112; FAP # Hp-NH-T021 (002); LA 3235 West to Golden Meadow and LA 3090 at Intersection LA 1, North of Port Fourchon; Lafourche Parish

I am in receipt of the Draft EIS in which you summarize the above-mentioned project, and provide completed findings based on researched data and on-site visits and preliminary testing.

The information provided in the Draft EIS has been reviewed, and we would like to respond with a few comments and statements about the project, and the area in which it is to be located.

- Page 2-6, *Right of Way Requirements South of the Hurricane Protection Levee, paragraph 2, sentence 4* states "one prehistoric archaeological site eligible for listing in the National Register..." The third paragraph states that due to potential impact of community, residential and businesses, as well as the inability to avoid and minimize adjacent environmental resources, reconstruction of LA 1 was not considered feasible and was eliminated from further consideration. The avoidance of the eligible prehistoric archaeological site is well appreciated by the Chitimacha Tribe.
- Page 2-37, under *2.5.3 Alignment Revisions, third paragraph* informs that "no other alignment adjustments to improve service or ...to further minimize impacts to sensitive environmental areas were identified." This gives us the understanding that all traditional cultural properties were properly identified and will be avoided.
- Section 3: *Affected Environment, page 3-1, 3.1.1 Demographics, paragraph two* gives a brief overview of percentage of Native American populations, stating that most area communities have a higher population rate than that in Lafourche Parish and statewide. It is also stated that the *current* Native American population is mainly composed of individuals of Houma Indian descent, and gives a brief outline of the Houma migrating from Mississippi and Alabama, settling near Baton Rouge, and moving southward via Bayou Lafourche. It is further stated that the move was to escape conflicts with other tribes and white settlers, with the majority of Houmas residing in nearby Terrebonne Parish, but with some settling in Lafourche Parish because of the isolated geographic location and fertile land. The Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana is the only federally

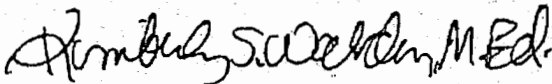
recognized Native American Tribe aboriginal to the State of Louisiana. Any prehistoric or early historic mounds in the Lafourche Parish area are the concern of the Chitimacha Tribe, as the Lafourche area is part of the aboriginal homelands of our Tribe. For instance, Bayou Lafourche is originally known as River of the Chitimacha. While recognizing that your study was on the current Native American population for this time period, by going into an early history of the Houma, it gives a false sense of original occupation which could possibly cause consultation problems, should any traditional properties be discovered during earth moving operations of the project. Please note in your records that consultation on a government-to-government basis is with federally recognized Native American Tribes.

- Section 4: 4.15 *Cultural Resources, paragraph two* gives the background on how the determination of recorded archaeological and historic sites within the study area was conducted, as well as a geo-archaeological study to identify areas of high probability for the occurrence of prehistoric cultural resources within the landforms mapped in the study area. Paragraph four states that terrestrial and underwater archaeological and historic structure surveys will be conducted within the selected alignment to be identified in the final EIS and Record of Decision. We are requesting a copy of this final report.

The Lafourche Parish area is all part of the aboriginal homelands of the Chitimacha. As such, large village sites, cultural/sacred sites, and traditional cultural properties were in place in that entire area. We request that if at any time during the course of your work, any traditional cultural properties were to be discovered, that you contact the Chitimacha Tribe as soon as possible so that consultation may begin.

The Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana appreciates your compliance with federal and state laws of notification and consultation.

Sincerely,



Kimberly S. Walden, M.Ed.  
Cultural Director

KW/MA

**Baker**

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

*A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation*

December 11, 2001

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»

«Title»

«Attn»

«Address\_1»

«Address\_2»

«Address3»

«City» «State» «Zip»

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
*Airport Office Park, Building 3*  
*420 Rouser Road*  
*Coraopolis, PA 15108*

RE: State Job No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LA 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
*Agency Coordination Meeting*

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker) is requesting your continued participation in the environmental and location study for the LA 1 Improvements project. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary environmental documentation for a proposed highway facility between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon.

An agency coordination meeting will be held at **10:00 a.m. on January 15, 2002 in the second floor conference room of the DOTD Headquarters Building**, 1201 Capital Access Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The purpose of the meeting is to jointly develop an Emergent Marsh Vegetation Monitoring Plan, to discuss commitment letters for certain continuing study efforts, and to review the status of agency actions (e.g. permits, exceptions, consistency determinations) identified in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A meeting agenda is enclosed.

We look forward to meeting with you to discuss these issues. Your participation will insure the timely development of the Final EIS. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (412) 269-4636.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD



A Total Quality Corporation

**FOURCHON  
AGENCY MAILING LIST**

Name_1	Name_2	Attn:	Title	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	City	State	Zip
Greg	Solvey			FEMA Region VI	800 North Loop 288		Denton	TX	76201
Ted M.	Falgout		Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 490		Galliano	LA	70354
Tim	Landreneau		District Conservatlonist	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria	LA	71302
Marcus N.	Redford, P.E.		Chief Bridge Administration Branch	Eight Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans	LA	70130-3396
William L.	Conner	Attn: Mr. Ronald J. Ventola Chief, Regulatory Functions Branch	Commander	Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans	LA	70160-0267
Patti	Holland		Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	646 Cajum Dome Boulevard	Suite 400	Lafayette	LA	70506
Gary	Lester			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898
Marice	Watson			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898
				Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Brenda	Dardar		Louisiana Natural Heritage Program	Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge	LA	70898-9000
Mona	Kogel		Chairperson	United Houma Nation	20986 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow	LA	70357
Duke	Rivet		Director	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive	Suite B-1	Baton Rouge	LA	70816
Michael P.	Jansky		Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism	Division of Archaeology	P.O. Box 44274	Capitol Annex 3rd.	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
Morton	Wakeland Jr.		BENXP	Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
			Marine & Wetlands Section (6VQ-EM)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas	TX	75202-2733
				Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Chris	Melton		Superintendent	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Office of Groundwater	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas	TX	75202-2733
Bill	Pitman		Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge	LA	70804
				National Park Service	365 Canal Street	Suite 3080	New Orleans	LA	70130
				Office of Conservation	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge	LA	70804-9275
Rick	Hartman			U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe	NM	87504-0728
Ron	Rebouche		Air Quality	National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge	LA	70803-7635
Lisa	Miller			Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70884-2231
Kerry	St. Pe			Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge	LA	70884-2231
				Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
				Department of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge	LA	70821-3554
Roy	Francis		Office of State Parks	Dept. of Culture Recreation & Tourism	P.O. Box 44426-CAP Ann 3rd.		Baton Rouge	LA	70804
				LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux	LA	70310
				Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation D	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux	LA	70301-2941

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Agency Coordination Meeting

**Attendees:** See Attached List

**Time and Place:** January 15, 2002; 10:00 a.m.  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Baton Rouge, LA

**Purpose:** To discuss the emergent marsh vegetation monitoring plan, Draft EIS commitments, and status of agency actions for the Final EIS.

**Discussions:**

1. Chris Gesing opened the meeting and asked that everyone in attendance briefly identify themselves and their agency/affiliation. A summary of the agenda was provided.
2. The emergent marsh vegetation monitoring plan was discussed. This plan will be developed to assess potential shading impacts of the highway bridge structure on wetland vegetation. Richard Hartman stated that he had spoken with Irv Mendelssohn at LSU, who specializes in coastal plant ecology, regarding monitoring plans. Dr. Mendelssohn suggested two monitoring scenarios: 1) Use transects to monitor vegetation after the bridge is constructed for up to 3 years and document the condition of the smooth cordgrass including stem density, stem count, biomass, % cover, etc. A control area would also need to be identified and monitored. Some soil chemistry analysis would also need to be conducted. An increase in the level of sulfides would indicate a decrease in plant health. 2) Conduct a laboratory study prior to construction that uses a combination of greenhouse and field samples to mimic the light intensity found around existing bridges and document the results. Either plan is acceptable to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The advantage of scenario 2 is that the results would be known prior to construction, which would allow early implementation of mitigation efforts.
3. Bill Farr commented that scenario 2 may be preferred because it would allow the up-front mitigation efforts. In addition, Bill was concerned that scenario 1 may not yield conclusive information after 3 years and may require further study. This would delay the implementation of any mitigation plan until some conclusive findings were obtained and presented.
4. Richard Hartman indicated that LADNR has a small dredge program that would provide plenty of opportunities for mitigation. Richard stated that NMFS will require a 1:1 wetland creation ratio with vegetative plantings.
5. The COE stated that they will require mitigation for all direct impacts and secondary impacts to vegetated wetlands (composed primarily of smooth cordgrass) due to shading. The NMFS suggested that the required mitigation acreage be determined by adding the direct wetland impacts to the amount of marsh that would be shaded for 4 hours or greater. This would allow up-front mitigation without additional field or laboratory shading studies. The COE agreed to this approach. FHWA and DOTD were also in agreement that this would be the most effective approach and would allow mitigation to be in place prior to construction and prior to the vegetated wetland impacts. This will be documented in Final EIS. The total direct wetland impacts and that wetland area shaded for 4 hours or greater will be calculated and reported in the Final EIS.

**Port Fourchon – Golden Meadow  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

6. Commitment letters were discussed. The SHPO was not present, but coordination with this agency is on-going. Compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act was discussed. Richard stated that compliance with the Act requires developing alternatives that first avoid, then minimize, and if necessary mitigate impacts to Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). Richard stated that EFH impacts can not be avoided and that minimization efforts have been employed, primarily through end-on construction. Mitigation will be required through 1:1 marsh creation with vegetative plantings. Creation of EFH marsh habitat will comply with all requirements and coordination with the Magnuson-Stevens Act.
7. The COE requested a time extension to prepare comments on the Draft EIS.
8. The Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) exception was discussed. FWS was not aware of this issue, but will check on the status of a CBRA exception. FWS stated that highway runoff was still a concern and an issue that needs to be addressed.
9. Secondary and cumulative development impacts were discussed. The Final EIS should indicate that residential/industrial development will take place as a result of the highway.
10. Meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

LA 1 IMPROVEMENTS  
AGENCY COORDINATION MTG.  
JANUARY 15, 2002

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
CHRIS GESING	BAKER	412-269-46
RICHARD L. SAVOIE	LADOTD	225-379-138
Tim Smith	Baker	318-222-84
Bill Farr	FINA	225-757-76
Brigette Firmin	US FWS	337-291-3108
Rick Hartman	NMFS	(225) 389-05
Roy Francis	LA coalition	985-448-4

VIA CONFERENCE CALL:

JAMES BARLOW	COE
ROGER SWINDLER	COE
RONNIE DUKE	COE

**MICHAEL BAKER, JR., INC.**  
**PHONE CALL REPORT**

PROJECT/LOCATION:	<u>Louisiana 1 Improvements</u> <u>Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon</u>	S.O.No.: <u>24203-000-0000</u>
		DATE: <u>January 25, 2002</u>
		State Job No.: <u>700-29-0112</u>
<hr/>		
To: <u>Duke Rivet</u>	From: <u>Chris Gesing</u>	
Repres.: <u>LA Dept of Culture, Recreation &amp; Tourism,</u> <u>Division of Archaeology</u>	Repres.: <u>Baker</u>	
Phone No.: <u>(225) 342-8170</u>	Phone No.: <u>(412) 269-4636</u>	
Subject: <u>Section 106 Coordination</u>		
<hr/>		

I called Duke Rivet to discuss the method of documenting continuing Section 106 coordination for the Louisiana 1 Improvements project from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. Duke was unable to attend the January 15, 2002 agency coordination meeting to discuss mitigation and ongoing agency coordination efforts.

Duke indicated that a simple letter agreement, documenting the continuing Section 106 efforts, signed by both the DOTD and the SHPO, would be satisfactory. A letter agreement similar to that discussed was executed and included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the North-South Expressway project.

I indicated that a draft letter agreement would be prepared and forwarded to the SHPO for review.

cc: MRP/JD/GJK/Cfile, CGG/Pfile, TJS,  
AGC/DND  
24203 - Port Fourchon

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Prepared by <u>CGGesing</u>	Title <u>Project Manager</u>	Page <u>1</u> of <u>  </u>
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cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD





STATE OF LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
P. O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245



"MIKE" FOSYER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

May 17, 2002  
(225) 248-4190

KAM K. MOVASSARI  
SECRETARY

STATE PROJECT NO. 700-29-0112  
FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. HP-NH-T021(002)  
LOUISIANA 1 IMPROVMENTS  
GOLDEN MEADOW TO PORT FOURCHON  
LAFOURCHE PARISH

Ms. Laurel Wyckoff  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism  
Post Office Box 44247  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-4247

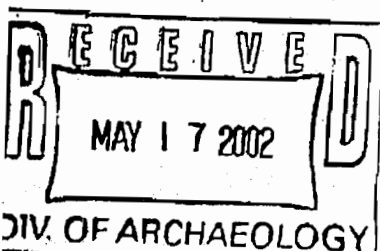
RE: National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106  
Commitment for Continued Compliance

Dear Ms. Wyckoff:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that the construction of the Louisiana 1 Improvements between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon in Lafourche Parish, hereafter referred to as the project, is necessary to serve the transportation needs of southeastern Louisiana. The project is the southernmost portion of the National Highway System designated principal arterial between I-10 at Port Allen to LA 3090 at Port Fourchon, and is an intermodal link to the nation's energy supply.

A Preferred Alignment for the project was identified in the October 2001 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). That document assessed the potential for important cultural resources along the alignment based on the review of records of archaeological sites and historic structures, and a geoarchaeological analysis of areas of high probability for the occurrence of prehistoric archaeological remains. Four recorded prehistoric archaeological sites and one historic cemetery were located in the project area. The Preferred Alignment would not impact any of these recorded cultural resources and has the least involvement with high probability areas. The Selected Alignment identified in the Final EIS is identical to the Draft EIS Preferred Alignment.

Continued . . . .



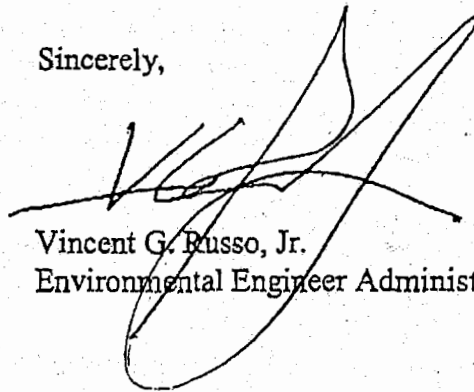
Ms. Laurel Wyckoff  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
February xx, 2002  
Page 2

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) and the FHWA are committed to continuing the Section 106 compliance process and propose to conduct terrestrial and underwater (magnetometer) archaeological and historic structure surveys of the Selected Alignment once project right-of-way has been acquired. All sites located will be recorded and evaluated for their eligibility for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. The surveys will be conducted and the findings submitted for SHPO evaluation and concurrence as the project is advanced and funding is available.

The DOTD and the FHWA will continue using the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process and required documentation to satisfy the Section 106 process. The commitment to complete coordination of the Section 106 process will be included in the Record of Decision (ROD), which will satisfy the requirements of NEPA for this project. The DOTD and FHWA will enter into further agreements to ensure the successful completion of the Section 106 process should the findings of further studies warrant such action.

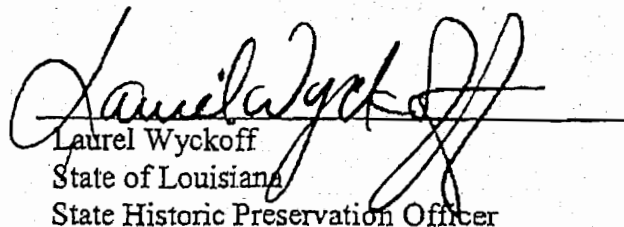
Should this commitment, as written, meet with your approval, please signify by signing, dating and returning one (1) executed original to this office.

Sincerely,



Vincent G. Russo, Jr.  
Environmental Engineer Administrator

Agreed to and accepted this 4 day of June, 2002.



Laurel Wyckoff  
State of Louisiana  
State Historic Preservation Officer



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

March 20, 2002

IN REPLY REFER TO  
FAP HP-NH-T021(002)  
SP 700-29-0112  
Louisiana 1 Improvements  
Study Golden Meadow to  
Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
RE: Coastal Barrier  
Resources Act Consultation

Mr. Sam D. Hamilton  
Southeast Regional Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1875 Century Blvd., Suite 400  
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

Dear Mr. Hamilton:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that the construction of the LA 1 Improvements project between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon in Lafourche Parish is necessary to serve the transportation needs of southeastern Louisiana. The project is the southernmost portion of the National Highway System (NHS) designated principal arterial between I-10 at Port Allen to Louisiana 3090 at Port Fourchon, and is an intermodal link to the nation's energy supply. LA 1 from Grand Isle, Louisiana, to US 90 was designated as a High Priority Corridor on the NHS in the Conference Report accompanying the FY 2002 Transportation Appropriation Bill.

Comprehensive environmental and engineering studies commenced in September 1999 to assess the beneficial and adverse social, economic, and environmental effects that may result from the construction of the LA 1 Improvements project. The southeastern most portion of the Study Area lies within the Coastal Barrier Resources Unit - Caminada S03. Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Lafayette, LA office (FWS) has occurred throughout the project development process.

A Preferred Alignment for the project was identified in the October 2001 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The document assessed the length of coastal barrier encroachment by the preliminary alignments developed. The Preferred Alignment had the least encroachment. The Selected Alignment identified in the Final EIS is identical to the Draft EIS Preferred Alignment. Copies of the Draft EIS were distributed to the FWS for their review. Comments were received from the FWS on the Draft EIS, but an exception to the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) was not addressed.

LA 1 from I-10 at Port Allen to LA 3090 at Port Fourchon is designated as a principal arterial of the National Highway System (NHS) because of its intermodal link to the nation's energy supply. We are requesting an exception to the CBRA because the LA 1 Improvements project is critical to the exploration, extraction and transportation of energy resources. Furthermore, the proposed facility would replace an existing roadway that is subject to periodic and unscheduled interruptions of traffic at the existing Leeville Lift-Bridge and periodic roadway inundation, with a facility that is an essential link in the NHS. As the only area highway, LA 1 services both local and through traffic, provides access to Grand Isle (Louisiana's only inhabited barrier island), and is the only surface transportation route for workers and supplies entering and exiting Port Fourchon, en route to Gulf of Mexico oil production facilities.

We look forward to your response to our request for a CBRA exception for the LA 1 Improvements project. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. William Farr at (225) 757-7615.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ William A. Sussmann

William A. Sussmann  
Division Administrator

cc:

Ms. Michele Deshotels - LDOTD

✓ Mr. Chris Gesing, P.E.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

May 28, 2002

IN REPLY REFER TO  
FAP HP-NH-T021(002)  
SP 700-29-0112  
Louisiana 1 Improvement  
Study Golden Meadow to  
Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
RE: Coastal Barrier  
Resources Act Consultation

Dr. Kam Movassaghi, P.E., Ph.D.  
Secretary  
Louisiana Department of Transportation  
and Development  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Attention: Ms. Michele Deshotels

Dear Dr. Movassaghi,

This letter is to inform you of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's response to our March 20, 2002 letter concerning the Coastal Barrier Resource Act (CBRA) restrictions on Federal expenditures for the subject project.

As indicated in the enclosed May 1, 2002 letter, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has granted an exemption to the CBRA for this project under 16 U.S.C. Section 3505 (a)(1).

If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Mr. Jerry Pitts at 225-757-7618.

Sincerely yours,

William C. Farr  
Program Operation Manager

Enclosure

cc: Mr. Chris Gesing



# United States Department of the Interior

## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

1875 Century Boulevard  
Atlanta, Georgia 30345

In Reply Refer To:  
FWS/R4/ES

MAY - 1 2002

A	I		DATE
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Mr. William A. Sussmann  
Division Administrator  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
5304 Flanders Drive, Suite A  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808

Dear Mr. Sussmann:

Reference Letter  
Attached

Thank you for your March 20, 2002, letter regarding the proposed Louisiana Highway 1 (LA 1) Improvements project, Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon, Lafourche Parish, Louisiana [Federal Aid Project No: HP-NH-T021(002) and State Project No: 700-29-0112]. Your letter requested the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) concurrence with your determination that the proposed project is exempt from the Coastal Barrier Resource Act (CBRA) of 1982 (96 Stat. 1653, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.). The CBRA generally prohibits the expenditure of Federal funds that would encourage development on coastal barriers.

The proposed LA 1 project would encroach within the Coastal Barrier Resource System boundaries (i.e., Caminada Unit SO3); however, the selected alignment would entail less encroachment on that unit than any other alternative evaluated. According to your letter, the requested CBRA exemption is justified "... because the LA 1 Improvements project is critical to the exploration, extraction and transportation of energy resources. Furthermore, the proposed facility would replace an existing roadway that is subject to periodic and unscheduled interruptions of traffic at the Leeville Lift-Bridge and periodic inundation, with a facility that is an essential link in the National Highway System."

Section 3505 (a)(1) exempts Federal expenditures for "Any use or facility necessary for the exploration, extraction, or transportation of energy resources which can be carried out only on, in, or adjacent to a coastal water area because the use or facility requires access to the coastal water body." We concur that the proposed LA 1 Improvement Project will serve as an essential inter-modal transportation link to a substantial portion of the Nation's domestic energy supply. Because the project will enhance access to Port Fourchon, which plays a key role in supporting the exploration, extraction, and transportation of energy resources which can be carried out only on, in, or adjacent to the northern Gulf of Mexico, the Service concurs that the LA 1 Improvement project is exempt from the CBRA restrictions on Federal expenditures.

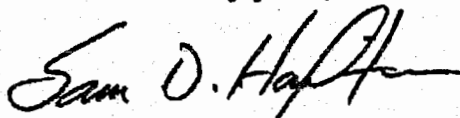
Mr. William A. Sussman

2

Section 3505 of CBRA provides exceptions to the prohibition of Federal expenditures that would have the effect of supporting coastal barrier development. Section 3505 (a)(6)(f) provides that such expenditures are exempt for "Maintenance, replacement, reconstruction, or repair, but not the expansion (except with respect to United States route 1 in the Florida Keys), of publicly owned or publicly operated roads, structures, and facilities." According to the October 2001 draft Environmental Impact Statement, the project "... is a proposal to construct a four-lane, divided, fully controlled access elevated highway facility on new alignment. ...". In our view, the proposed project is actually an expansion of the current, two-lane facility to a four-lane facility on a new alignment. Accordingly, the Service does not concur with your finding that the proposed project is a replacement project that would qualify for exemption under that part. However, the exemption based on Section 3505 (a)(1) would still apply.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide this determination. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact David Frugé, Supervisor, Lafayette Field Office at 337/291-3115, or Cynthia Bohn, Regional Coastal Program Coordinator, Atlanta Regional Office at 404/679-7122.

Sincerely yours,



Sam D. Hamilton  
Regional Director



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

April 9, 2002

IN REPLY REFER TO  
Lafourche Parish  
Conformity Determination

Kam K. Movassaghi, Ph.D., P.E.  
Secretary  
Department of Transportation  
And Development  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dear Dr. Movassaghi:

Lafourche Parish has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as an ozone attainment area with limited maintenance plan requirements, effective February 25, 2002. Since the transportation conformity rule (40 CFR Part 93 Subpart A) applies to maintenance areas, Lafourche Parish must demonstrate conformity.

Your letter of March 25, 2002 acknowledges that Lafourche parish demonstrates conformity of federal actions according to EPA's policy memorandum on limited maintenance plan options for non-classifiable areas dated November 16, 1994. Also, air quality monitors show no violations of current ozone standards.

Accordingly, pursuant to the federal transportation conformity rule (40 CFR Part 93), we concur with your determination and find that Lafourche Parish currently meets the criteria for making a conformity determination provided for by the Clean Air Act of 1990 and complies with all conformity provisions of the Louisiana State Implementation Plan (SIP). The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) now acts as executive agent for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for air quality conformity determinations. This letter therefore will serve as the joint FHWA/FTA conformity determination.

Sincerely yours,

William A. Sussmann  
Division Administrator

CC: Peggy Crist, FTA- Region 6  
Tom Diggs, EPA-Region 6  
Terri Lanoue, LDEQ  
Jim Joffrion, LDOTD





U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
5304 Flanders Dr. Suite A  
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70808

April 19, 2002

IN REPLY REFER TO  
FAP HP-NH-T021(002)  
SP 700-29-0112  
Louisiana 1 Improvements Study  
Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish

RE: Draft EIS  
Response to FWS Comments  
Highway Runoff Containment

Mr. Glenn B. Sekavec  
Regional Environmental Officer  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Office of the Secretary  
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance  
Post Office Box 649  
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has determined that the construction of the Louisiana 1 Improvements project between Golden Meadow and Port Fourchon in Lafourche Parish is necessary to serve the transportation needs of southeastern Louisiana. Louisiana 1 is the southernmost portion of the National Highway System that is designated as a principal arterial between I-10 at Port Allen to Louisiana 3090 at Port Fourchon. It is not only a vital hurricane evacuation route but also an intermodal link to the nation's energy supply.

A Preferred Alignment for the project was identified in the October 2001 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). That document assessed the beneficial and adverse social, economic, and environmental effects that may result from the construction of the LA 1 Improvements project.

In your letter of January 2, 2002 to LDOTD, you indicate that you cannot concur that the roadway runoff will not significantly affect the surrounding tidal wetlands and that storm water pollution abatement measures be fully considered. Reference was made to research being conducted by Dr. Sansalone at Louisiana State University regarding bio-filter research.

As part of the LA 1 Improvements environmental study, a comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify relevant studies that may document the affects of highway runoff on expansive, tidally induced marine environments. University libraries, conference proceedings,

other research and the Internet were searched for relevant literature. No studies were identified that addressed this issue. Several studies were conducted that investigated the affects of highway runoff, but these focused on the effects of urban highways with high average daily traffic volumes on freshwater systems.

Research indicates that highway runoff would generate few substantial impacts with average daily traffic (ADT) of less than 30,000 vehicles (Maestri et al. 1988). The Design Year (2030) ADT for the portion of the project between Golden Meadow and Leeville is 21,300, and between Leeville and Pointe Fourchon is 11,930. Based on these predicted ADTs of less than 30,000 for the proposed highway, no substantial impacts to water quality would be expected due to highway runoff.

A 1998 toll road feasibility study conducted for the Greater Lafourche Port Commission, which included traffic counts, time-delay studies and roadside travel surveys to document travel patterns, determined that trucks accounted for 17% of the traffic. Consequently, Design Year Truck ADTs between Golden Meadow and Leeville, and Leeville and Pointe Fourchon would be expected to be 3,621 and 2,028, respectively.

A review of national traffic data published by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics indicates that an average rural highway (interstate and arterial) is comprised of 13.7% trucks. Therefore, an average rural highway with 30,000 ADT would include 4,110 trucks. Although the project's percentage of truck traffic is higher than the average rural highway, the truck volume is less than the truck volume that would be expected from a typical 30,000 ADT rural highway. Consequently, according to Maestri's findings, no substantial impacts to water quality would be expected due to the project's predicted truck volume.

The DOTD, through the Louisiana Transportation Research Center (LTRC), has been a sponsor of Dr. John Sansalone's research with highway runoff collection systems and bio-filters. Representatives from DOTD, FHWA and Michael Baker Jr., Inc. met with Dr. Sansalone on February 17, 2000 to discuss his research, which includes characterizing and controlling urban storm water where ADTs approach 150,000 vehicles (15,000 trucks). Dr. Sansalone presented the bio-filter highway runoff collection system being used on I-10 over City Park Lake in Baton Rouge. I-10 over City Park Lake has an ADT of 122,300 vehicles (9,675 trucks) and has a bridge span of 887 feet.

The Louisiana 1 Improvements project would construct a four-lane, divided fully controlled access elevated highway approximately 17 miles in length. Drawbacks to implementing Dr. Sansalone's bio-filter highway runoff collection system on the Louisiana 1 Improvements project include the number of clarifiers required for the length of the project, the maintenance of the drainage system as well as treatment components, and the disposal of any hazardous material collected.

While we can appreciate your concern with minimizing adverse impacts to the Barataria Estuary and its wetland habitat, we have not identified any studies documenting the affects of highway runoff on expansive, tidally induced marine environments. Furthermore, research that has been conducted over freshwater systems indicate that the project's Design Year ADT and truck

volumes pose no substantial impacts to water quality due to highway runoff. We do not believe that the design, construction, maintenance and safety, and disposal issues and costs associated with a highway runoff collection system for a 17-mile elevated highway, in the absence of research supporting the need for such a system, is in the public's best interest.

Sincerely yours,

\s\ William A. Sussmann

William A. Sussmann  
Division Administrator

cc: Ms. Michele Deshotels -- DOTD  
✓ Mr. Chris Gesing -- Baker

# State of Louisiana



J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR.  
GOVERNOR

JACK C. CALDWELL  
SECRETARY

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

June 24, 2002

LA. DOTD  
ATTN: VINCENT G. RUSSO, JR.  
P. O. BOX 94245  
BATON ROUGE, LA 70804

RE: P20020779, La Department Of Transportation And Development, Coastal Use Permit Application

Description: CONSTRUCT LA HWY. 1 IMPROVEMENTS FROM GOLDEN MEADOW TO PORT FOURCHON (STATI PROJECT NO. 700-29-0112)

Dear Mr. Russo

You are hereby advised that your application for a Coastal Use Permit was received and it has been determined that your proposed activity is a use of state concern in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute 49:214.5.

The Coastal Management Division (CMD) has sent a copy of this permit application to the New Orleans District Corps of Engineers (NOD/COE). The NOD/COE and CMD will each process this application separately. All correspondence and calls regarding this application should reference the Coastal Use Permit Number indicated above. The analyst responsible for processing your application is Tim Robertson and should be the primary contact with CMD.

Please note that all information concerning your application is in our database and can be found on our webpage at <http://lamap.dnr.state.la.us/permit/index.htm>. The information in the database is updated throughout the day as changes to the status of the application are reported by the analyst.

Should you have any questions, please check the online database or contact Tim Robertson at 225-342-7472 or [timr@dnr.state.la.us](mailto:timr@dnr.state.la.us).

Sincerely,  
Permits Coordinator

**Baker**

April 12, 2002

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Attn»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«Address\_3»  
«City» «State» «Zip»

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Louisiana I Improvements  
Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
*Agency Coordination Meeting*  
*Construction and Temporary Construction Impacts*

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**  
A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

*Office Location:*  
*Airport Office Park, Building 3*  
*420 Rouser Road*  
*Coraopolis, PA 15108*

Dear «Salutation»:

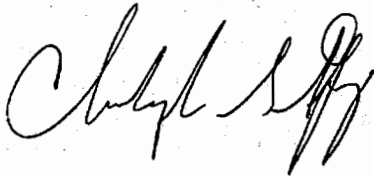
On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker) is requesting your continued participation in the Louisiana I Improvements project from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary environmental documentation.

An Agency Coordination Meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. on May 1, 2002 in the second floor conference room of the Department of Transportation and Development Headquarters Building, 1201 Capital Access Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss construction methods and the temporary construction impacts associated with those methods. This meeting is in response to comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A meeting agenda is enclosed.

Your participation will insure the development of a comprehensive Final EIS. We look forward to meeting with you and to your continued input throughout the duration of this project. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (412) 269-4636.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD  
Ted Falgout – Greater Lafourche Port Commission  
Roy Francis – LA I Coalition  
Ken Naquin - AGC

AGENCY MAILING LIST

Name_1	Name_2	Attn:	Title	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	City
Greg	Solvey			FEMA Region VI	800 North Loop 288		Denon
Ted M.	Falgout		Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 490		Galliano
Tim	Landreneau		District Conservatorist	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria
Marcus N.	Redford, P.E.		Chief Bridge Administration Branch	Eight Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans
William L.	Conner	Attn: Mr. Ronald J. Ventola Chief Regulatory Functions Branch	Commander	Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans
Patti	Holland			U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	646 Cajum Dome Boulevard	Suite 400	Lafayette
Gary	Lester		Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program	Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge
Marice	Watson			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge
				Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge
Brenda	Dardar		Louisiana Natural Heritage Program	Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge
Mona	Kogel		Chairperson	United Houma Nation	20986 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow
Kimberly	Walden		Director	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive	Suite B-1	Baton Rouge
Duke	Rivet		Chimacha Tribe of Louisiana	Mr. Alton LeBlanc, Chairman	P.O. Box 661		Charenton
Michael P.	Jansky		Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism	Division of Archaeology	P.O. Box 44274	Capitol Annex 3rd.	Baton Rouge
Wes	McQuiddy		6ENXP	Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas
			Marine & Wetlands Section (6WQ-EM)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas
				Federal Activities Br. (6E-F)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas
				U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Office of Groundwater	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas
Tim	Robertson			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge
Bill	Pittman			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge
			Superintendent	National Park Service	365 Canal Street	Suite 3080	New Orleans
			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Office of Conservation	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge
Rick	Hartman			U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe
Ron	Rebouche		Air Quality	National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge
Lisa	Miller			Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge
Kerry	St. Pe			Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge
			Office of State Parks	Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Thibodaux
				Dept. of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge
Roy	Francis			Dept. of Culture Recreation & Tourism	P.O. Box 4426-CAP Ann 3rd.		Baton Rouge
				LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux
				Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation D	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux
Other Meeting Attendees							
James A.	Barlow, Jr.			Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans
Roger	Swindler			Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans

**Baker**

April 22, 2002

«Name\_1» «Name\_2»  
«Title»  
«Attn»  
«Address\_1»  
«Address\_2»  
«Address\_3»  
«City» «State» «Zip»

RE: State Project No. 700-29-0112  
F.A.P. No. HP-NH-T021(002)  
Louisiana 1 Improvements  
Golden Meadow – Port Fourchon  
Lafourche Parish  
***Agency Coordination Meeting - Construction and Temporary Construction Impacts  
Meeting Location and Time Change***

**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation

P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259  
**412 269-6300**  
(412) 269-4600  
FAX (412) 269-2048 or  
FAX (412) 269-4647

Office Location:  
Airport Office Park, Building 3  
420 Rouser Road  
Coraopolis, PA 15108

Dear «Salutation»:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker) is requesting your continued participation in the Louisiana 1 Improvements project from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. Baker has been retained by DOTD to perform comprehensive environmental and engineering studies and to prepare the necessary environmental documentation.

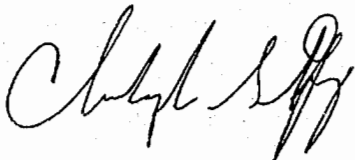
You recently received an April 12, 2002 letter inviting you to participate in an Agency Coordination Meeting being held at 10:00 a.m. on May 1, 2002 in the second floor conference room of the Department of Transportation and Development Headquarters Building, 1201 Capital Access Road, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss construction methods and the temporary construction impacts associated with those methods. This meeting is in response to comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

This letter is to inform you that the location and time of the meeting has changed. **The Agency Coordination Meeting will now be held at 12:30 p.m. on May 1, 2002 in Meeting Room B of the New Orleans District Corps of Engineers (COE) offices, 7400 Leake Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana.** A revised meeting agenda is enclosed.

Your participation will insure the development of a comprehensive Final EIS. We look forward to meeting with you at the New Orleans District COE offices and to your continued input throughout the duration of this project. If you would like to contact us in advance, please do so at (412) 269-4636.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.



Christopher G. Gesing, P.E.  
Project Manager

Attachment  
CGG/mew

cc: Michele Deshotels – DOTD  
Ted Falgout – Greater Lafourche Port Commission  
Roy Francis – LA 1 Coalition  
Ken Naquin – AGC



A Total Quality Corporation

## FOURCHON AGENCY MAILING LIST

Name 1	Name 2	Attn:	Title	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	City
Greg	Solvey			FEMA Region VI	800 North Loop 288		Denton
Ted M.	Falgout		Executive Director	Greater Lafourche Port Commission	P.O. Box 490		Galliano
Tim	Landreneau		District Conservationist	Natural Resources	Conservation Service	3737 Government Street	Alexandria
Marcus N.	Redford, P. E.		Chief Bridge Administration Branch	Eight Coast Guard District	Hale Boggs Federal Building	501 Magazine Street	New Orleans
William L.	Conner	Attn: Mr. Ronald J. Venolia Chief, Regulatory Functions Branch	Commander	Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans
Patii	Holland		Coordinator, Natural Heritage Program	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	646 Calum Dome Boulevard	Suite 400	Lafayette
Gary	Lester			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge
Marice	Watson			Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge
				Department of Wildlife & Fisheries	Ecological Studies Section	P.O. Box 98000	Baton Rouge
Brenda	Dardar		Louisiana Natural Heritage Program	Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fish	P.O. Box 98000		Baton Rouge
Moná	Kogel		Chairperson	United Houma Nation	20886 LA Hwy 1		Golden Meadow
Kimberly	Walden		Director	Inter-Tribal Council of Louisiana, Inc.	5723 Superior Drive	Suite B-1	Baton Rouge
Duke	Rivet		Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana	Mr. Alton LeBlanc, Chairman	P.O. Box 661		Charenton
Michael P.	Jansky		Department of Culture Recreation & Tourism	Division of Archaeology	P.O. Box 44274	Capitol Annex 3rd.	Baton Rouge
Wes	McQuiddy		6ENXP	Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas
			Marine & Wetlands Section (BWQ-EM)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue		Dallas
				Federal Activities Br (6E-F)	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas
				U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Office of Groundwater	1445 Ross Avenue	Dallas
Tim	Robertson			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge
Bill	Pittman			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Coastal Management Division	P.O. Box 44487	Baton Rouge
			Superintendent	National Park Service	365 Canal Street	Suite 3090	New Orleans
			Louisiana Dept. of Natural Resources	Office of Conservation	P.O. Box 94275	625 North 4th	Baton Rouge
				U.S. Dept. of the Interior	National Park Service	P.O. Box 728	Santa Fe
Rick	Hartman			National Marine Fisheries Service	Habitat Conservation Division	LSU Center for Wetland Res	Baton Rouge
Ron	Rebouche		Air Quality	Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge
Lisa	Miller			Department of Environmental Quality	P.O. Box 82231		Baton Rouge
Kerry	St. Pe			Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program	P.O. Box 2663 NSU		Thibodaux
				Department of Agriculture & Forestry	Office of Soil/Water Conservation	P.O. Box 3554	Baton Rouge
				Dept. of Culture Recreation & Tourism	P.O. Box 44426-CAP Ann 3rd.		Baton Rouge
Roy	Francis		Office of State Parks	LA 1 Coalition	P.O. Box 2048-NSU		Thibodaux
				Lafourche-Terrebonne Soil & Water Conservation D	204 East Bayou Road		Thibodaux
Other Meeting Attendees							
James A.	Barlow, Jr.			Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans
				Department of the Army	N O Dist. Corps of Engineers	P.O. Box 60267	New Orleans



**Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

**Subject:** Agency Coordination Meeting

**Attendees:** See Attached List

**Time and Place:** May 1, 2002, 12:30 PM  
New Orleans District Corps of Engineers  
Meeting Room B

**Purpose:** To discuss the Construction and Temporary Construction Impacts

**Discussions:**

1. Chris Gesing of Baker presented a brief history of the LA 1 Improvements project, an elevated highway on new location from Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon. The project was initiated in September 1999, with a DEIS circulated in November 2001. The DEIS comment period closed in January 2002.
2. Comments received from the COE on the DEIS suggested that the document contain a more detailed discussion of construction impacts. Construction impacts are dependent on the individual construction contractor and how they can construct the project. The DEIS contains a commitment for the contractors to meet all permit requirements and mitigate for construction impacts.
3. The majority of this project will use end on construction techniques (about 16 of 17 miles), with the exception of the Leeville Bridge (about 73' clearance) and the upland area in Golden Meadow. In response to COE comments, DOTD involved the Associated General Contractors (AGC) to get more information on bridge construction options and that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss these options with the resource agencies and determine what are acceptable/unacceptable construction options. A qualitative discussion of construction impacts would be included in the FEIS.
4. James Barlow of the COE stated that in order to issue a COE permit, the COE would have to know the impacts. David Miller of the DOTD indicated that DOTD is not applying for a permit at this time, but is trying to determine what construction options are acceptable by the resource agencies for construction of this project. Michelle Deshotels of the DOTD stated that through this meeting and discussion process on construction impacts that the resource agencies are partnering w/DOTD to determine acceptable bridge construction options and to insure that what is implemented in the future is within the framework that addresses agency concerns.
5. James Barlow indicated that the EIS is a decision document that needs to present positive and negative results of the proposed action.
6. Bob Mahoney of the FHWA stated that the FEIS should explore all construction possibilities. Richard Savoie of the DOTD suggested that the EIS should present the preferred construction options and compare to other options to determine the least damaging feasible options. DOTD stated that cost implications should be considered when discussing these options.

**Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

7. Chris Gesing presented an overview of the environmental inventory and the highway alternatives. The DEIS identified Line A as the Preferred Alignment. Line A has an estimated construction cost of \$550 million. The project could be constructed in 3 phases:

Leeville crossing – weakest transportation link  
Leeville – 3090 (end on construction)  
Leeville – Golden Meadow (end on construction).

8. The AGC identified 4 primary construction methods that could be implemented for this project, 1) Dredging construction canal, 2) Temporary barges, 3) Temporary bridges, 4) Haul road. The I-310 Bridge used end-on construction and techniques similar to this could be used for this project. The main bridge span over Bayou Lafourche could be built from barges working from Bayou Lafourche. Haul roads could be built and used as a base for bridge construction and then can be removed after construction. The haul road material could be used to fill in low elevations caused by construction activities. James Barlow stated that he would like to see the haul road material come from off site. Richard Savoie stated that a provision could be inserted into the contractors contract that stated that the haul roads would be graded out to the natural marsh elevation when construction is completed. Haul road material could be used for marsh creation after completion of construction. Patti Holland of the FWS suggested that movement of the haul road material could provide additional opportunities for marsh enhancement. David Miller stated that a temporary bridge or trestle had a prohibitive cost and was not a viable option. James Barlow stated that the COE did not favor the dredging canal option and recommended moving materials to the work site via existing canals when possible. The COE would require additional fill material to fill any newly dredged canals. Dredging in existing canals would be permitted. Any filter cloth used during construction would remain in place after construction.
9. Bob Mahoney suggested that all construction options be presented in the EIS and that ultimately the construction contractor will drive the actual construction techniques employed.
10. Richard Hartman of the NMFS stated that all wetland mitigation would have to be monitored.
11. James Barlow stated that the EIS should establish maximum and minimum amounts for construction impacts. Bob Mahoney suggested that the FEIS should state that the end result of the construction activities should result in the complete restoration of impacted wetlands with a full consideration of enhancement opportunities.
12. James Barlow suggested that the FEIS should contain wording that a certain construction option " appears to be the least damaging to use" and that dredging was not preferred. Richard Hartman stated that the EIS require pre- and post- construction monitoring and James Barlow stated that a wetland mitigation performance or success criteria should be established for DOTD/FHWA compliance. The EIS does commit to upfront wetland mitigation. Mitigation efforts could be tied into on-going CWPPRA projects or Port Fourchon mitigation projects.
13. Construction staging areas for batch plants and other operations could be located on any upland areas in close proximity to the construction activities.
14. Interchange ramps near Leeville were discussed. If the funding situation changes and more money becomes available, DOTD would investigate moving the ramps to further minimize marsh impacts.
15. Patti Holland reiterated that "end on" construction was the preferred construction technique.
16. Stormwater runoff was discussed. The bridge structure will be designed so that a runoff containment system could be added at a later date if warranted.

**Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon  
LA 1 Improvements  
Meeting Minutes**

17. Secondary and cumulative impacts were discussed. James Barlow stated that the Grand Isle waterline would increase the potential for bigger/better development and mentioned a potential 1,300-acre development at Elmers Island. It was agreed that the FEIS would acknowledge that secondary development would occur due to the highway.
18. Richard Hartman stated that all of the resource agencies supported the purpose and need for the project. The resource agencies in attendance did not disagree.
19. Meeting adjourned at 2:40pm.

Agency Coordination Meeting  
 Construction and Temporary Construction Impacts  
 May 1, 2002

NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE NUMBER
Tim Smith	Michael Baker Sr., Inc	318 222 8100
Richard L Savoie	LADOTD / Road Design	225 379-1384
KEVIN NAQUIN	LA AGC	225 344-0452
David S. Huvall	CECH & AGC	337. 234. 3792
Tony M. Dogote	LA DOTD Bridge Design	225-379-1325
B. TI Farr	FHWA	225-757-7615
Rick Hartman	NMFS	225 389-0508
Patti Holland	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Serv.	337-291-3121
PAUL LUONEY		504. 486. 6312
KYLE PARKER		504. 486. 6312
James Barlow	COE	504/862-2250
ROGER SWINWALD	COE	504/862-2278
Michele Deshotels	DOTD	225-379-1226
BOB MAHONEY	FHWA	225-757-7624
Jeanene Peckham	EPA	225-389-0736
Jim Altman	DNR/CRD	225-342-1934
Roy Francis	CAI Coalition	985-448-4485
Ted Falgout	Port Fourchon	985 632 6701
Dirk BARRIOS	La Fourche Parish Water Dist.	985 750-
Joe Picciola	Picciola & Associates	985 632-5784



**MICHAEL BAKER, JR., INC.**  
**PHONE CALL REPORT**

PROJECT/LOCATION: Louisiana I Improvements S.O.No.: 24203-000-0000  
Golden Meadow to Port Fourchon DATE: April 30, 2002  
State Job No.: 700-29-0112

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To: Chris Gesing From: Melanie Aymond – Research Coordinator  
Repres.: Baker Repres.: Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana  
Phone No.: (412) 269-4636 Phone No.: (337) 923-4395

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Subject: Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana Concerns

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Ms. Aymond called on behalf of Kimberly S. Walden, the Tribe's Cultural Director, to inform me that the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana would not be attending the May 1, 2002 Agency Coordination Meeting to discuss constructibility and temporary construction impacts.

Ms. Aymond also inquired as to whether the Tribe's previous correspondence regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) had been received and whether the Tribe should send a follow-up letter commenting on the Draft EIS. Ms. Aymond added that the Tribe was impressed with the document.

I told Ms. Aymond that their January 14, 2002 letter commenting on the Draft EIS had been received and that the Tribe's comments were being incorporated into the Final EIS. A follow-up letter was not necessary.

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Prepared by Chris Gesing Title Project Manager Page 1

cc: Michele Deshotels - DOTD

**CHITIMACHA**  
TRIBE OF LOUISIANA

CULTURAL DEPARTMENT

April 17, 2002

Christopher Gesing  
Baker Corp.  
P.O. Box 12259  
Pittsburgh, PA 15231-0259

Dear Mr. Gesing,

RE: State Project # 700-29-0112, FAP # HP-NH-T021 (002): Agency Coordinating Meeting on Golden Meadow - Port Fourchon Project, Lafourche Parish

I am in receipt of your letter of invitation for May 1, 2002 at 10:00 a.m., pertaining to the above referenced meeting. It is stated in your letter that your company has been retained by the DOTD to perform a comprehensive environmental and engineering study and prepare the environmental documentation.

In our previous letter to the DOTD, we expressed our concerns and comments. It is also stated in your letter that this meeting is in response to comments received on the Draft Environmental Statement. As we are unsure at this time if we will be able to attend the May 1<sup>st</sup> meeting, I would like to re-iterate our previous comments that had been provided based on the Draft EIS. The following comments and statements had been previously stated in our letter of response, dated January 14, 2002.

- Page 2-6, *Right of Way Requirements South of the Hurricane Protection Levee, paragraph 2, sentence 4* states "one prehistoric archaeological site eligible for listing in the National Register..." The third paragraph states that due to potential impact of community, residential and businesses, as well as the inability to avoid and minimize adjacent environmental resources, reconstruction of LA 1 was not considered feasible and was eliminated from further consideration. The avoidance of the eligible prehistoric archaeological site is well appreciated by the Chitimacha Tribe.
- Page 2-37, under *2.5.3 Alignment Revisions, third paragraph* informs that "no other alignment adjustments to improve service or ...to further minimize impacts to sensitive environmental areas were identified." This gives us the understanding that all traditional cultural properties were properly identified and will be avoided.
- Section 3: *Affected Environment, page 3-1, 3.1.1 Demographics, paragraph two* gives a brief overview of percentage of Native American populations, stating that most area communities have a higher population rate than that in Lafourche Parish and statewide. It is also stated that the *current* Native American population is mainly composed of individuals of Houma Indian descent, and gives a brief outline of the Houma migrating from Mississippi and Alabama, settling near Baton Rouge, and moving southward via Bayou Lafourche. It is further stated that the move was to escape conflicts with other

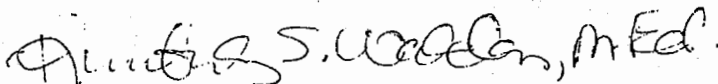
tribes and white settlers, with the majority of Houmas residing in nearby Terrebonne Parish, but with some settling in Lafourche Parish because of the isolated geographic location and fertile land. The Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana is the only federally recognized Native American Tribe aboriginal to the State of Louisiana. Any prehistoric or early historic mounds in the Lafourche Parish area are the concern of the Chitimacha Tribe, as the Lafourche area is part of the aboriginal homelands of our Tribe. For instance, Bayou Lafourche is originally known as River of the Chitimacha. While recognizing that your study was on the current Native American population for this time period, by going into an early history of the Houma, it gives a false sense of original occupation which could possibly cause consultation problems, should any traditional properties be discovered during earth moving operations of the project. Please note in your records that consultation on a government-to-government basis is with federally recognized Native American Tribes.

- Section 4: 4.15 *Cultural Resources*, paragraph two gives the background on how the determination of recorded archaeological and historic sites within the study area was conducted, as well as a geo-archaeological study to identify areas of high probability for the occurrence of prehistoric cultural resources within the landforms mapped in the study area. Paragraph four states that terrestrial and underwater archaeological and historic structure surveys will be conducted within the selected alignment to be identified in the final EIS and Record of Decision. We are requesting a copy of this final report.

Once again, we would like it placed in the record that the Lafourche Parish area is all part of the aboriginal homelands of the Chitimacha. As such, large village sites, cultural/sacred sites, and traditional cultural properties were in place in that entire area. We request that if at any time during the course of your work, any traditional cultural properties were to be discovered, that you contact the Chitimacha Tribe as soon as possible so that consultation may begin.

The Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana appreciates your compliance with federal and state laws of notification and consultation.

Sincerely,



Kimberly S. Walden, M.Ed.  
Cultural Director

KW/MA





# DOTD HIGHWAY TRAFFIC NOISE POLICY

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STATE OF LOUISIANA



DEPARTMENT OF  
TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT



HIGHWAY TRAFFIC NOISE  
POLICY

OCTOBER 1997

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# HIGHWAY TRAFFIC NOISE POLICY

## STATE OF LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this directive is to establish policy and procedures for noise studies and abatement measures to help protect the public health and welfare, to supply criteria for the identification of highway traffic noise impacts, and to provide local officials with information for use in the planning development adjacent to highways.
2. SCOPE. This directive applies to the development of Federal-Aid projects approved in accordance with Title 23, United States Code (U.S.C.) or as otherwise required by DOTD.
3. POLICY. It will be the policy of DOTD that highway traffic noise prediction requirements, noise analyses, noise abatement criteria, and requirements for informing local officials in this directive comply with the noise standards mandated by 23 U.S.C. 109(I).
4. DEFINITIONS.

Design Year - the future year used to estimate the probable traffic volume for which a highway is designed. The design year will normally be 20 years from the start of project construction.

Existing Noise Levels - the noise, resulting from the natural and mechanical-sources and human activity, considered being usually present in a particular area. In noise studies, this will be in the year of initial project construction.

Leq - the equivalent steady-state sound level which in a stated period of time contains the same acoustic energy as a time-varying sound level during the same period.

Leq(h) - the hourly value of Leq.

Traffic Noise Impacts - impacts which occur when the predicted traffic noise levels equal or exceed the DOTD Noise Abatement Criteria (Table 1), or when the predicted traffic noise levels exceed the existing noise levels by 10 dBA.

Type I Project - a proposed Federal or Federal-aid highway project for the construction of a highway on new location or the physical alteration of an existing highway which significantly changes either the horizontal or vertical alignment or increases the number of through-traffic lanes.

Type II Project - a proposed Federal or Federal-aid project to provide noise abatement on an existing highway.



**Table 1 - DOTD Noise Abatement Criteria \***  
**Hourly A-weighted Sound Level - decibels (dBA)**

Activity Category	Leq(h)	Description of Activity Category
A	56 (Exterior)	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.
B	66 (Exterior)	Picnic areas, recreation areas, playgrounds, active sports areas, parks, residences, motels, hotels, schools, churches, libraries, and hospitals.
C	71 (Exterior)	Developed lands, properties, or activities not included in Categories A or B above.
D	-----	Undeveloped lands.
E	51 (Interior)	Residences, motels, hotels, public meeting rooms, schools, churches, libraries, hospitals and auditoriums.

\* These criteria are consistent with the FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria (23 CFR 772) allowing for consideration of traffic noise impacts 1 dBA below the FHWA criteria.

5. APPLICABILITY. This directive applies to all Type I Projects. DOTD will not consider Type II Projects.

6. ANALYSIS OF TRAFFIC NOISE IMPACTS AND ABATEMENT MEASURES. DOTD will determine and analyze expected traffic noise impacts and alternative noise abatement measures to mitigate these impacts, giving weight to the benefits and cost of abatement, and to the overall social, economic and environmental impacts.

The traffic noise analysis will include the following for each alternative under detailed study:

a. Identification of existing activities, developed lands, and undeveloped lands for which development is planned, designed and programmed, which may be affected by noise from the highway. Development will be deemed to be planned, designed, and programmed if a noise-sensitive land, such as a residence, school, church, hospital, or library, has been issued a building permit from the local agency with proper jurisdiction at the time of the highway traffic noise analysis;

b. Determination of existing noise levels:





- c. Prediction of traffic noise levels;
- d. Determination of traffic noise impacts; and
- e. Examination and evaluation of alternative noise abatement measures for reducing or eliminating the noise impacts.

## 7. DETERMINATION OF EXISTING NOISE LEVELS.

### a. Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements:

The determination of existing noise levels will be made utilizing field measurements of actual noise levels. A log will be kept noting the time of day, meteorological conditions, calibration results and any unusual ambient sound sources experienced during each measurement.

Noise measurements will be taken utilizing ANSI Type 1 Sound Level Meters used in strict accordance with the manufacturer's operations manual. Meters are to be calibrated before and after each measurement.

Noise measurements will be taken in strict time intervals no shorter than 15 minutes and no longer than one hour unless alternate intervals are given prior approval by DOTD.

Actual traffic counts will be made during each field measurement. These traffic counts will be categorized according to the following vehicle classes:

Automobiles (A) - all vehicles with two axles and four wheels designed primarily for transportation of less than ten passengers or transportation of cargo.

Medium Trucks (MT) - all vehicles with two axles and six wheels designed for the transportation of cargo.

Heavy Trucks (HT) - all vehicles having three or more axles designed for the transportation of cargo.

Sites selected for field measurements will receive prior approval of DOTD. These sites will represent noise sensitive receptors in each Activity Category which are likely to be affected by the project. Sites outside of the immediate vicinity of the project may also be chosen to determine the ambient noise levels unaffected by the roadway. Unless specifically approved by DOTD, field measurements will be taken to represent exterior activities only.

Field measurements will be taken at approved sites at peak and off-peak times. Peak hour noise levels will be the hour with highest noise levels, not necessarily those with the highest traffic volumes.



Field noise studies will be as required to determine peak hour Leq. The measurement of other noise descriptors will only be done with prior approval of DOTD.

b. Categorical Exclusions

Existing noise levels may be determined by utilizing the methods described in Part (a) above, or other methodology, including computer models consistent with the current FHWA highway traffic noise prediction model. Traffic characteristic data, selection of receptor locations, and other input parameters utilized will be at the discretion of DOTD.

8. PREDICTION OF TRAFFIC NOISE LEVELS.

Any traffic noise prediction method is approved for use in any traffic noise analysis required by this policy if the methodology utilized at the time the noise study is performed is consistent with the current FHWA highway traffic noise prediction model and the prediction method uses current FHWA reference energy mean emission levels or such levels as measured by current FHWA measurement procedures.

In predicting noise levels and assessing noise impacts, traffic characteristics which will yield the worst hourly traffic noise impact on a regular basis for the design year will be used.

Future noise levels will be based on modeling results utilizing data for the design year. This data, including traffic volumes, composition and speed, other reasonably foreseeable development, and the implementation of other transportation projects, will be based on accepted engineering practice and local planning assumptions.

9. IDENTIFICATION OF TRAFFIC NOISE IMPACTS. Traffic noise impacts occur when the DOTD Noise Abatement Criteria (Table 1) are equaled or exceeded at any sensitive receptor under study, or the predicted noise levels exceed the existing noise levels at any sensitive receptor by 10 dBA.

10. NOISE ABATEMENT. In determining and abating traffic noise impacts, primary consideration is to be given to exterior areas. Abatement will usually be necessary only where frequent human use occurs and a lowered noise level would be of benefit.

In those situations where there are no exterior activities to be affected by the traffic noise, or where the exterior activities are far from or physically shielded from the roadway in a manner that prevents an impact on exterior activities, the interior criterion will be used as the basis of determining noise impacts.

If a noise impact is identified, the abatement measures listed herein must be considered. When noise abatement measures are being considered, every effort will be made to obtain noise reductions of at least 8 dBA.

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Before adoption of a Final Environmental Impact Statement, Finding of No Significant Impact, or Categorical Exclusion, the DOTD will identify both noise abatement measures which are reasonable and feasible and which are likely to be incorporated in the project and noise impacts for which no apparent solution is available. The date of adoption of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Record of Decision), Finding of No Significant Impact, or Categorical Exclusion will become the date of public knowledge. After the date of public knowledge, the DOTD will still be responsible for analyzing any changes in traffic noise impacts, when appropriate, but will no longer be responsible for providing noise abatement for new development which occurs adjacent to the proposed project. Provision of such abatement measures becomes the responsibility of the local communities or private developers.

The views of impacted residents will be a major consideration in reaching a decision on the reasonableness of abatement measures to be provided. When noise abatement measures are proposed for a project, proper public involvement procedures (i.e., Public Hearing, Public Meetings, etc.) will be implemented early in the environmental process to ascertain the views of the impacted residents in an initial determination of the reasonableness of noise abatement measures. Views of the impacted residents will be considered again when a final decision is made regarding the provision of abatement measures to determine the reasonableness of noise abatement measures prior to submittal of plans, specifications and estimates for FHWA approval.

In cases where FHWA does not approve the plans, specifications and estimates under its Stewardship Agreement with DOTD, DOTD will certify the status of any noise abatement measures adopted in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (Record of Decision), Finding of No Significant Impact or Categorical Exclusion in its submission to the FHWA of the Letter of Authorization (Form PR-1240).

Plans, specifications and estimates may not be approved by FHWA or DOTD unless provisions are made to provide the noise abatement measures which are reasonable and feasible, and reduce or eliminate the noise impact on existing activities, developed lands, or undeveloped lands for which development is planned, designed, and programmed.

Federal participation may be used for noise abatement measures where a traffic noise impact has been identified, the noise abatement measures will reduce the traffic noise impact, and the overall noise abatement benefits are determined to outweigh the overall adverse social, economic, and environmental effects and the costs of the noise abatement measures.

The noise abatement measures listed below may be incorporated into Type I Projects to reduce traffic noise impacts. The costs of such measures may be included in Federal-aid participating project costs with the Federal share being the same as that for the system on which the project is located.

(1) Traffic management measures (e.g., traffic control devices and signing for prohibition of certain vehicle types, time-use restrictions for certain vehicle types, modified speed limits and exclusive land designations),

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- (2) alteration of horizontal and vertical alignments,
- (3) acquisition of property rights (either in fee or lesser interest) for the construction of noise barriers,
- (4) construction of noise barriers (including landscaping for esthetic purposes) whether within or outside the highway right-of-way, and
- (5) noise insulation of public use or nonprofit institutional structures.

There may be situations where severe traffic noise impacts (i.e., traffic noise levels 20 dBA greater than the DOTD Noise Abatement Criteria (see Table 1) or noise levels 30 dBA greater than the existing noise levels) exist or are expected and the abatement measures listed above are physically infeasible or economically unreasonable. In these instances, noise abatement measures other than those listed above may be proposed by DOTD and approved by the Regional Administrator of FHWA on a case-by-case basis when preconditions for federal funding for noise abatement measures listed above have been met.

11. DETERMINATION OF REASONABLENESS AND FEASIBILITY. In determining the feasibility of providing noise abatement measures, DOTD will consider the engineering aspects of the project design features and abatement measures. Among those items to be considered are the topography of the project area, the ability of the noise abatement measures to provide a minimum of 5 dBA reduction in noise levels given access, drainage, safety or maintenance requirements, and other noise sources present in the project area. DOTD will incorporate design features that best accommodate noise abatement measures on Type I Projects where noise impacts occur.

In determining the feasibility of providing noise abatement measures, at least one receiver must receive a minimum of 8 dBA reduction. If no receivers receive this minimum noise reduction, the abatement measure is deemed not to provide substantial noise reductions and is not feasible.

In the determination of the reasonableness of providing noise abatement measures, DOTD will balance the interests of the overall public good with the social, economic and environmental impacts and the costs of the noise abatement measures. Additionally, on each project where noise impacts occur, DOTD will consider the following:

- (1) a sensitive receptor, whether or not impacted, must receive a 5 dBA reduction in noise levels to be counted as benefitted, and
- (2) the cost of the noise abatement measure (including the costs of real estate acquisition, construction servitude or utility relocation) must be equal to or less than \$ 15,000 per benefitted receptor.



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The following reasonableness considerations may be considered by DOTD, with the concurrence of the FHWA, during review of the Categorical Exclusion, Draft Environmental Assessment, or Draft Environmental Impact Statement:

- (1) feedback from the Public Hearing or Public Meeting to ascertain community desirability,
- (2) amount of development which occurred before and after, as indicated by the date of plat approval, the initial construction of the highway,
- (3) the age of development and the longevity of the noise impacts from the highway,
- (4) effects on the natural environment,
- (5) extent of zoning changes in development toward a less sensitive land use (Activity Category),
- (6) effectiveness of land use controls implemented by local officials to prevent incompatible development,
- (7) extent to which the predicted future build noise levels exceed the DOTD Noise Abatement Criteria (see Table 1) for the applicable Activity Category,
- (8) extent to which the predicted future build noise levels exceed the existing noise levels, and
- (9) extent to which the predicted future build noise levels exceed the future no-build noise levels.

There may be extenuating circumstances where unique or unusual conditions warrant special consideration of highway traffic noise impacts and/or implementation of noise abatement measures. These circumstances could involve areas such as (1) those that are extremely noise sensitive, (2) those where severe traffic noise impacts are anticipated, or (3) those containing resources protected under 49 U.S.C. 303 (Section 4(f)). Such extenuating circumstances will be considered on an individual project basis.

In determining the number of residences impacted/protected, the number will include all dwelling units (i.e., owner-occupied, rental units, mobile homes, etc.).

In multistory buildings, primary consideration will be given to protection of exterior activities on the ground floor.

12. INFORMATION FOR LOCAL OFFICIALS. In an effort to prevent future traffic noise impacts on currently undeveloped lands, DOTD will inform local officials, within whose jurisdiction the highway project is located, of the best estimation of future noise levels for both developed and undeveloped lands or properties in the immediate vicinity of the project and information that may be useful to local communities to protect future land development from becoming incompatible with anticipated highway noise levels.



A copy of the environmental document (with included noise study) and/or noise study report (if one is prepared) will be provided to local officials upon approval of the Categorical Exclusion, Finding of No Significant Impact, or Record of Decision.

Local officials or agencies which may have jurisdiction and must be provided this information will include the Mayor's office, city council, parish police jury, and metropolitan planning organization.

13. CONSTRUCTION NOISE. The following general steps are to be performed for all Type I Projects:

- a. Identify land uses or activities which may be affected by noise from the construction of the project. The identification is to be performed during the project development studies.
- b. Determine the measures which are needed in the plans and specifications to minimize or eliminate adverse construction noise impacts to the community. This determination will include a weighing of the benefits achieved and the overall adverse social, economic, and environmental effects and the costs of the abatement measures.
- c. Incorporate the needed abatement measures in the plans and specifications.

When practicable, DOTD will construct permanent traffic noise abatement measures prior to highway construction to abate construction noise impacts.

14. REVISION. DOTD may revise this policy as necessary to keep current with the state-of-the-art technology, legislation, regulation and guidance, as well as construction cost indices in the fields of highway traffic noise prediction, impact and abatement.

Revisions to this policy must be concurred with by the FHWA prior to adoption.

DOTD and FHWA are not responsible for notification of revisions to this policy. Inquiries as to the latest revision which may be applicable will be made in writing to:

Environmental Engineer Administrator  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Post Office Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245

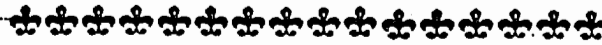
15. EFFECTIVE DATE. This directive will become effective upon the date of concurrence by the FHWA.



**DOTD ACQUISITION OF RIGHT OF WAY  
AND RELOCATION ASSISTANCE**

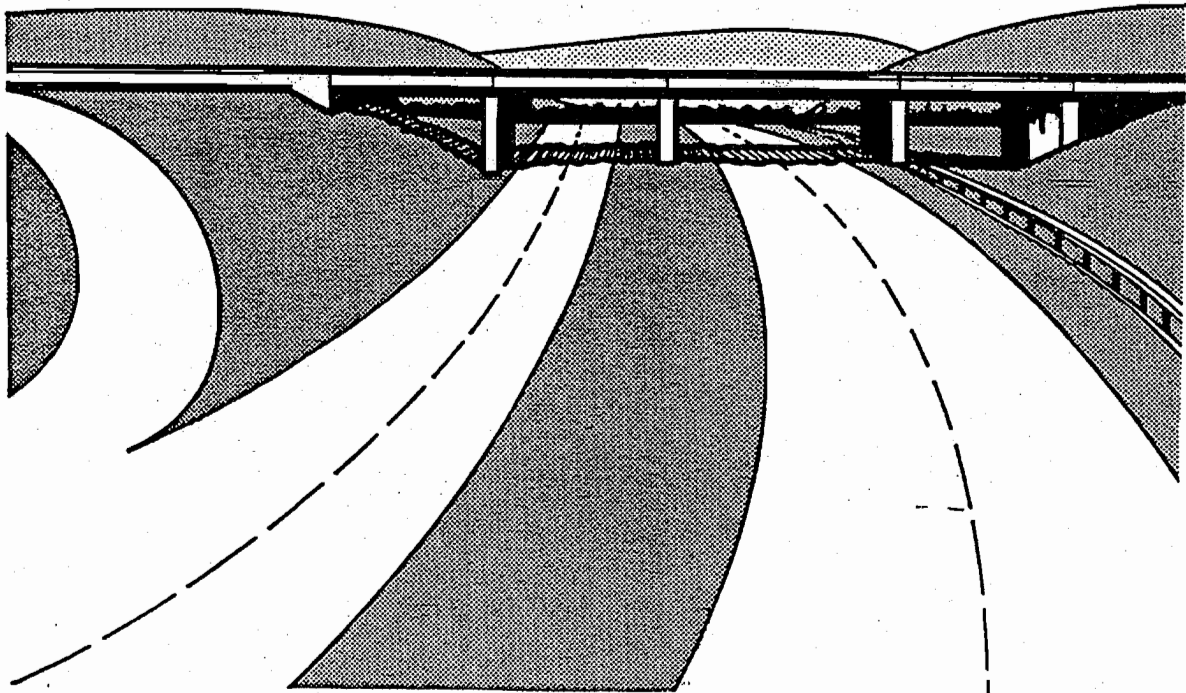
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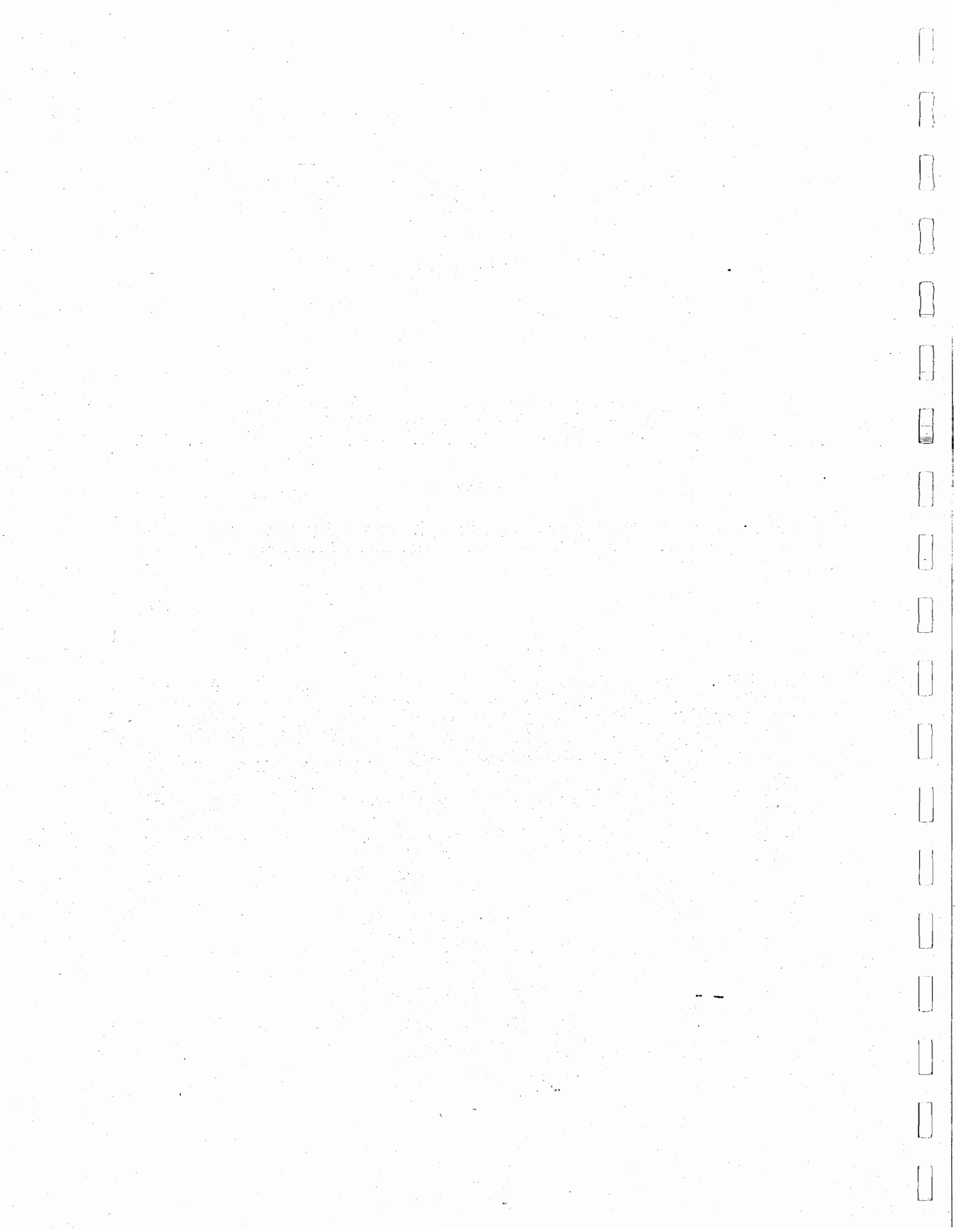


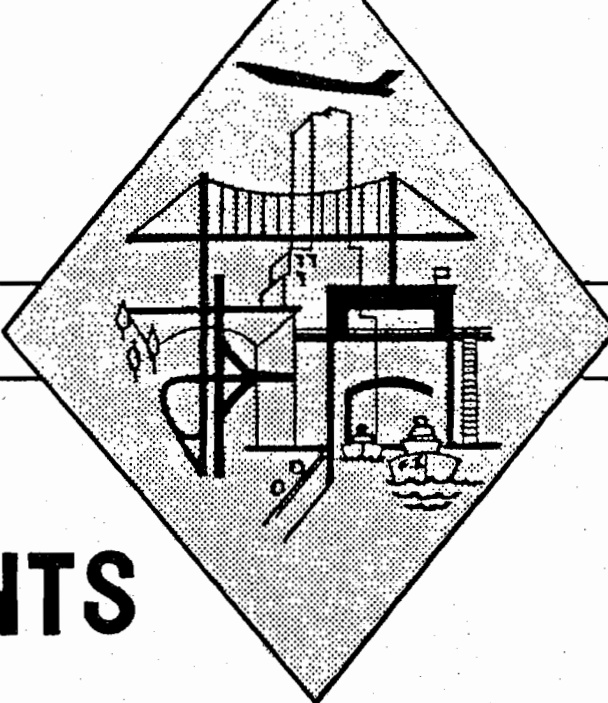
Louisiana  
Department of Transportation  
and  
Development

**ACQUISITION OF RIGHT OF WAY  
AND  
RELOCATION ASSISTANCE**





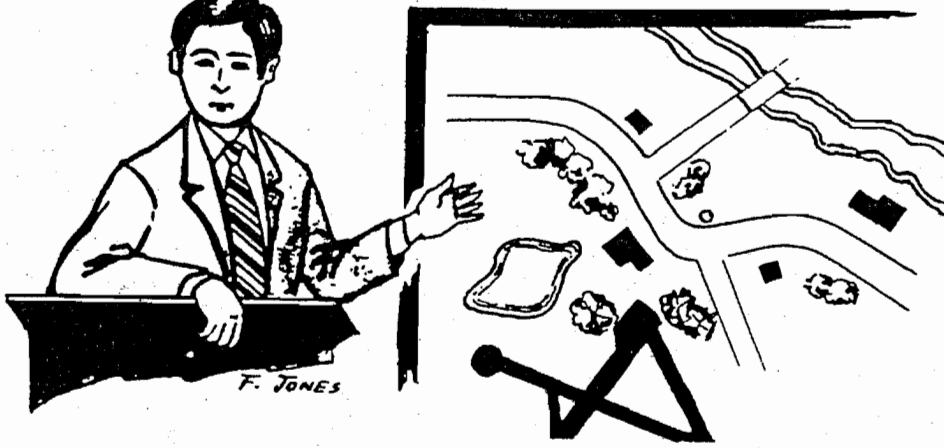




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## INTRODUCTION

Modern transportation requires much more than a route to get from one place to another. Modern highways eliminate the sources of accidents, such as sharp curves, intersecting grade crossings, dangerous grade crossings, dangerous shoulders, obstacles at the roadside, and most of all, the likelihood of head-on collisions. In addition to highway transportation, modern transportation operations include aviation, mass transit, and water navigations.

All transportation needs are determined by a continuing series of studies. As studies progress through the Environmental, Engineering Survey, Design and Public Hearing Phases, conclusions are drawn which materialize into right of way acquisition and construction. The studies, design, right of way acquisition, and construction of the modern transportation facility require five to nine years to complete.

Depending upon the type of transportation facility, the cost of construction is supported by general taxes, taxes on gasoline and petroleum products, and other sources related to transportation. The State of Louisiana, through the Department of Transportation and Development, provides funds for the cost of construction. Construction cost may be partially shared by the Federal Government on those projects approved for Federal Aid. The Federal Aid sharing funds vary from 50% to 100% depending on the class and type of facility constructed.



# NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Department of Transportation and Development to abide by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Title 23 USC, Section 324, which provides in part, that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, sex, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

Any person who feels that because of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, he or she has been excluded from participation in any federally-assisted program or activity being administered by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development or who feels that he or she has been denied any benefits provided by such program or activity, or who feels he or she has been unfairly treated in connection with such program or activity, is asked to contact:

Real Estate Directorate  
LA DOTD  
P.O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245  
Telephone: (504) 379-1749

or

The Civil Rights Section  
LA DOTD  
P. O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245  
Telephone: (504) 379-1382





The State of Louisiana through the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) acquires right of way by three (3) procedures:

1. Donation
2. Purchase
3. Expropriation

The need for right of way is established by the design of the project. The design is the result of extensive information developed by studies of traffic and land-use trends, aerial photographs, and engineering surveys coordinated by designers, traffic engineers and planning personnel to determine the route or the necessary improvement which will accomplish the greatest public good.

The final route selected or extent of improvement determined represents the meeting of many minds on (1) the public good, (2) the most feasible approach from engineering and economics standpoints and (3) the approach that causes the least amount of injury or inconvenience to the public and environment.

After the design has been approved, right of way plans are prepared showing the new or additional right of way required to construct the project.

The right of way plans show the name of each property owner whose property is affected by construction of the project. The plans also show the area required from each ownership.

## **DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY**

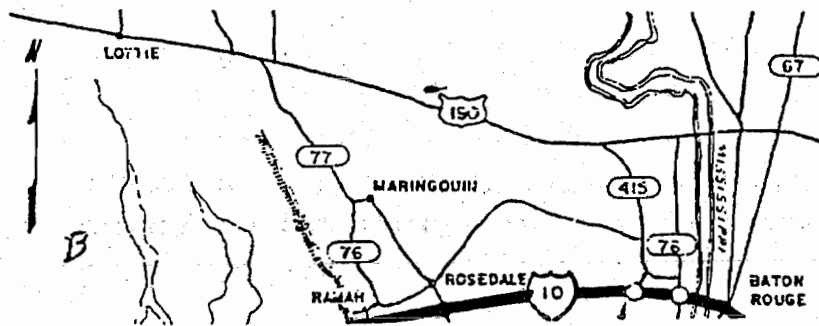
The description of the property to be purchased by the Department is made from the information on the project right of way plans. All descriptions must conform to the plans. The property to be purchased is known as the required area.



The names of the owners of the properties along the project as shown on the Right of Way Plans are researched in the land transfer records in each parish courthouse.

## PROPERTY VALUE OR APPRAISAL

The Real Estate Directorate includes an Appraisal Division staffed by qualified Real Estate Appraisers. The value of every parcel to be acquired for the right of way is established by one or more staff appraisers or by independent professional appraisers. Owners of properties to be appraised will be contacted by the appraiser(s) and afforded the opportunity to accompany them on the inspection of the property.



## DONATION OF LAND

The property owner has the right to receive full cash value for any property required by the Department. The property owner may, however, donate the property to the Department if he/she so chooses. The deed describes the project and the conditions under which the property is donated. The deed is a contract between the Department and the property owner. It describes the obligations of the Department, including the Department's obligations to construct the project according to the construction plans.

## IMPROVEMENTS ON DONATED LAND

Generally the Department constructs new barbed wire or mesh and barbed wire fences along the newly donated right

of way to replace existing barbed wire or mesh and barbed wire fences. The Department will offer to purchase ornamental fences such as wood fence, metal security fence, and electrical fence or, by agreement with the property owner, replace same.

Approaches, driveways, and cattle guards will also be constructed to replace those destroyed during construction.

Structures such as barns, residences, out buildings, foundations, and improvements such as water wells, headlands, rice sluices and canals, levees and any other man-made facility may either be purchased, or where feasible, relocated or replaced outside the right of way.

## **PURCHASE OF LAND**

If the property for the new right of way is to be purchased, the Department prepares, at no expense to the property owners, an Act of Sale for purchase of the property by the State of Louisiana.

The Act of Sale as prepared by the Department is in all respects consistent with the legal requirements for the conveyance of ownership of real property in Louisiana.

The ownership of the property is identified from the information in the public records kept in the respective parish courthouse for the parish in which the land is located. When it is determined that the ownership of a property is different from that described in the official records, the Department's Real Estate Agent visits all interested parties, and gathers information to confirm correct and current ownership of the property.

## **PURCHASE OF IMPROVEMENTS**

Based on design and construction features, the Department will construct new barbed wire or mesh and barbed wire fences along the new right of way line to replace

existing barbed wire, or mesh and barbed wire fences. The Department will offer to purchase ornamental fences such as wood fence, metal security fence, and electric fence, or by agreement with the property owner, replace same.

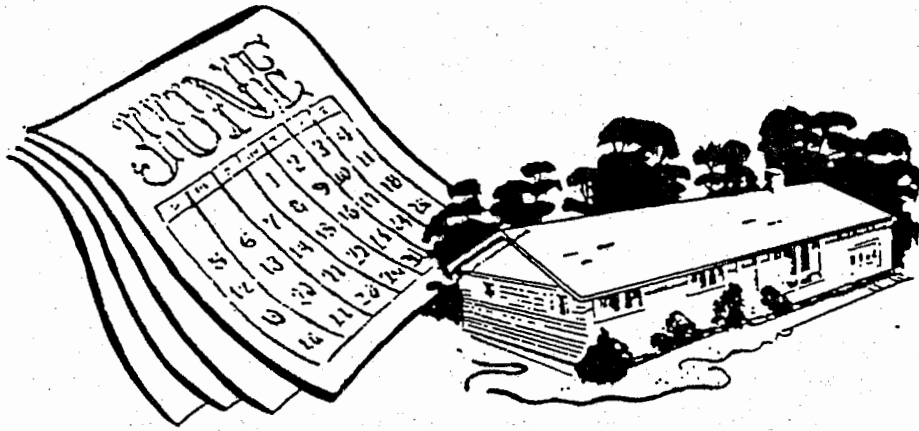
Approaches, driveways, and cattle guards will also be constructed to replace those destroyed during construction.

Structures such as barns, residences, outbuildings and foundations, and improvements such as roads, water wells, headlands, rice sluices and canals, levees and any other man-made facility are purchased or, if feasible, relocated or replaced outside the right of way by agreement with the property owner.

### **PAYMENT FOR DAMAGES**

Just as the Department is obligated to pay the full cash value for all property purchased, it is also obligated to pay any damages to the property owner's remaining property. The question of damages to a remainder property is considered by the Department during the appraisal process. Remainders which have little or no utility or value to the owner are appraised and may be acquired by the Department.

# PROPERTY OWNER'S NOTICE OF PROJECT



Probably the first direct notice of a proposed project to the property owner is the request by the Department for permission to make engineering surveys on his/her property.

Before a property owner is presented with the Department's offer to acquire his/her property, extensive engineering studies and surveys are made. When considered to be in the best interest of the public, open hearings are held and all interested parties invited. The public hearings are advertised in local newspapers.

After the property surveys are completed and the Right of Way Map is drawn, property owners will receive a notice from the Real Estate Appraisers that they are ready to appraise the property. The notice will give the date of the inspection and will offer the owner the opportunity to accompany the appraisers during their inspection.

On certain projects where the valuation problem is uncomplicated and the land value is estimated at \$2,500.00 or less, the Department may utilize the Federal appraisal waiver estimate of value. In that case property owners may not receive a notice from the Real Estate Appraisers.

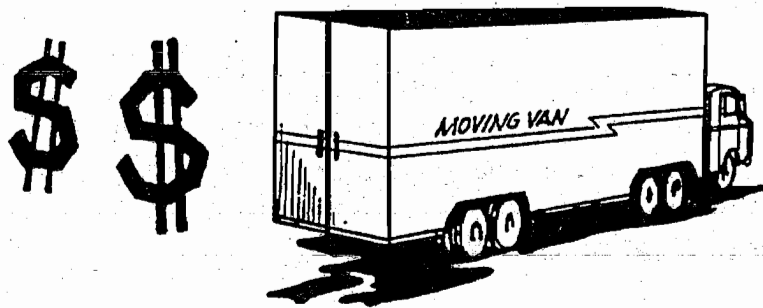
The Appraiser will not negotiate or discuss values with the property owner, and in fact, is specifically prohibited from doing so.

The completed appraisal is submitted to the Department for review. A separate appraisal is prepared for each parcel of land, and in some cases a second or third appraisal may be made. Using the appraisal or appraisals as a guide, the Department estimates the amount due the property owner then prepares the offer for presentation.

The Department's Real Estate Agent, who is familiar with the project, arranges to meet with the property owner, presents the Offer of Just Compensation and explains in detail the Department's offer to purchase. The Relocation Assistance benefits to which the property owner may be entitled will be discussed at this time.

## **COST OF RELOCATION AND MOVING**

The purpose of the Relocation Assistance Program is to provide the orderly, timely, and efficient relocation of persons and businesses within the required right of way and to supply information of services and payments that are available.



This assistance includes relocation services and payments for eligible costs incidental to relocation, as described in the portion of this brochure under the heading "Relocation Assistance". Relocation payments are in addition to the payment for land, damages, and improvements.

The Department has qualified Real Estate Representatives in nine District Offices throughout the State, as well as at the Headquarters Office Building in Baton Rouge who are available to discuss and provide relocation services and payments.

Each District Office has continuously updated lists of available replacement dwellings, lots, commercial locations, facilities and farms.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. **HOW MUCH TIME DO I HAVE TO CONSIDER THE OFFER BEFORE I MUST DECIDE TO SELL?**

The Real Estate Agent who presents the Department's offer will explain the proposed construction schedule. Except in emergencies, and consistent with the construction schedule, a reasonable time will be allowed for study of the proposal before a definite answer must be given. The Real Estate Agent can set a definite time for a reply. Generally, three (3) weeks is considered sufficient time.

2. **MAY I OBTAIN AND KEEP A DRAFT OF THE ACT OF SALE AND A COPY OF THE RIGHT OF WAY PLAN TO STUDY BEFORE I GIVE MY REPLY?**

Yes.

3. **WILL THE REQUIRED RIGHT OF WAY BE MARKED ACROSS MY PROPERTY?**

Temporary markers (stakes) are sometimes left in place by the surveyors before and during construction. If these temporary markers are identified satisfactorily as right of way markers, they may be considered as such. Should you wish the right of way marked across your property, this should be requested of the Department's Real Estate Agent.

4. **WILL I HAVE TIME TO SELECT ANOTHER HOME AFTER THE DEPARTMENT BUYS MY PROPERTY?**

The time necessary for vacating property, except in emergencies, is a major consideration for establishing the schedule of construction. Properties with improvements, including farms, are the first to receive notice of the intention to acquire the property.

At the time the Department's offer is presented, the Real Estate Agent will explain the construction schedule and advise when it is necessary for the Department to take possession of the property. Notice to vacate will include the 90-day notice and where circumstances permit, additional 30-day notices may be issued.

**5. WILL I RECEIVE ASSISTANCE IN FINDING A NEW LOCATION?**

Yes. The Department's Real Estate Agent will furnish all information available concerning available replacement housing. Please refer to the section "Relocation Assistance" for additional information.

**6. WILL I BE PAID MOVING COSTS?**

Actual moving costs can be approved. These payments are described in the Relocation Assistance Section of this brochure and allow costs of moving up to a distance of 50 miles.

**7. HOW SOON WILL I BE PAID?**

Payment for land, damages, and improvements is due when title to the property described in the Act of Sale is found to be free and clear of all debt.

**8. CAN I RECEIVE ANY PART OF THE VALUE OF MY PROPERTY IF I DISAGREE WITH THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER AND WISH TO GO TO COURT?**

The total amount of the offer is deposited in court for the use and benefit of the property owner. The property owner must apply to the Clerk of Court in order to withdraw these funds.

**9. WHAT HAPPENS IF I REFUSE TO ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?**

As a matter of practice the Department makes every reasonable effort to reach an agreement with the property owner so that court action is unnecessary; however, honest differences of opinion are bound to occur occasionally. When it is not possible for the Department and the property owner to agree on a settlement, the Department places the matter before the court in a legal proceeding by which the Department exercises its constitutional right to acquire the property. This legal proceeding is known as expropriation.

- a. The Department will prepare and file a Petition of Expropriation prescribed by law in the District Court of the parish in which the required property is located. Additionally filed is a Certificate of Estimate of Just Compensation signed by those appraisers who determined the full extent of the property owner's loss, showing the capacity in which they acted and the date on which the certificate was signed.

- b. When the money for the property is deposited in court, the owner has the right to claim the deposit after the Clerk of Court issues a notice to the property owner that the property described in the petition has been expropriated. This notice is delivered by the Clerk to the proper Sheriff for service on each defendant owner named in the suit.
- c. Under certain expropriation procedures, such as those for Highway purposes, the Department is entitled to enter upon and take possession of the property immediately after depositing the estimated value with the Clerk of Court unless occupied buildings are located wholly or partially upon the property described in the petition. Where occupied buildings are involved, the court postpones the right of the Department to enter upon the property for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days from the date on which the last of any defendants in the suit was served with notice.
- d. Where the entire lot, block, or tract of land is acquired through the courts, the property owner must answer the Department's petition within 90 days. Where only a portion of a lot, block, or tract of land is acquired through the courts, the property owner has one (1) year after the Department has notified the owner, in writing, of the completion of the project.
- e. Additional information regarding expropriation may be obtained from the Department's representative who contacts you.

**10. WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT MOVING IN CASE I DO NOT ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?**

After suit is filed, the court will inform you by means of the Order of Expropriation of the date by which you must vacate.

**11. WHAT ABOUT LIENS, MORTGAGES OR UNPAID TAXES ON MY PROPERTY?**

The title to property acquired by the Department must be clear of all debts. Payments for property is made after all debts have been cleared.

The Department will assist, as far as possible, in clearing titles. In some cases, the Department will pay certain costs to establish title to property.



**12. CAN I OR MY TENANTS CONTINUE TO OCCUPY THE PROPERTY AFTER THE DEPARTMENT TAKES TITLE?**

**All occupants are given notice that the property must be vacated within ninety (90) days from the date that the letter of eligibility is delivered. Owner-occupants and tenants who wish to continue to occupy the property following acquisition shall be required to sign a rental agreement with the Department effective the first day of the second month following the acquisition. In the case of expropriation, such date shall be the first day of the second month following the date of deposit of Just Compensation in the Court.**

# RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

The Relocation Assistance Program is administered under the provisions of Louisiana Rev. Statute 38:3101 - 3109, which allows compliance with Public Law 91 - 646, dated January 2, 1971, entitled "Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970".

The purpose of the Relocation Assistance Program is to provide the orderly, timely, and efficient relocation of persons and businesses within the required right of way and to supply information about services and payments that are available through the Department or other agencies.

The payments and services discussed in this section are in addition to payments made by the Department for the purchase of private property for project purposes. These payments and services will be available and provided on all state and federal-aid projects without regard to race, color, religion, sex or national origin. More detailed information may be obtained from the Department's District Offices, the addresses of which are shown on pages 54-55 of this brochure.



## RELOCATION NOTICES



**It is the policy of the Department that to the greatest extent practicable no person lawfully occupying real property shall be required to move from his/her home, farm, business, or nonprofit organization location without at least 90 days written notice. Replacement housing that is decent, safe, and sanitary shall be made available within the general area of the project, within a reasonable time prior to the scheduled move. Replacement housing must be within the occupant's financial means.**

**This replacement housing is FAIR and OPEN housing which means that it will be open to and will be offered to all persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.**

-----NOTICE-----

**IF YOU MOVE OR PURCHASE  
REPLACEMENT HOUSING BE-  
FORE YOU HAVE BEEN AU-  
THORIZED TO DO SO BY ONE  
OF THE DEPARTMENT'S DIS-  
TRICT OFFICES, YOU COULD  
LOSE ALL POSSIBLE BENE-  
FITS PROVIDED BY THE RE-  
LOCATION ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM. THE ADDRESSES  
AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS  
OF THESE DISTRICT OFFICES  
ARE SHOWN ON PAGES 54-55  
OF THIS BROCHURE.**

-----NOTICE-----

**EXPLANATION OF TERMS USED IN  
THE RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

1. **PERSON:** The term "person" means (a) any individual, partnership, corporation or association which is the owner of a business; (b) any owner, tenant or sharecropper operating a farm; (c) an individual who is the head of a family; or (d) an individual not otherwise defined.
2. **FAMILY:** The term "family" means two or more individuals, one of whom is the head of a household, plus all other individuals regardless of blood or legal ties who live with and are considered a part of the family unit. Where two or more individuals occupy the same dwelling with no identifiable head of a household, they shall be treated as one family for replacement housing payment purposes.
3. **DISPLACED PERSON:** A displaced person is anyone required to move from real property or move his personal property from real property because of the acquisition of real property for project purposes. Said person must be in occupancy either at the initiation of negotiations or at the time a written notice was given of the intent of the Department to acquire the property. If the move occurs after a written order to vacate is issued, the occupant is eligible even though the property is not acquired.
4. **DISPLACEE:** The term "displacee" means any person who meets the definition of a displaced person.
5. **BUSINESS:** "Business" shall mean any lawful activity, excepting a farm operation, conducted primarily (a) for the purchase, sale, lease and rental of personal or real property, and/or for the manufacture, processing, or marketing of products, commodities or any other personal property; (b) for the sale of services to the public; (c) by a nonprofit organization.
6. **FARM OPERATION:** The term "farm operation" shall mean any activity conducted solely or primarily for the

production of one or more agricultural products or commodities including timber, for sale or home use, and customarily producing such products or commodities in sufficient quantity to be capable of contributing materially to the operator's support, as identified by the Department.

7. **MADE AVAILABLE:** The term "made available" means that the displacee has either independently obtained and has the right of possession of replacement housing, or that the Department has offered the displacee safe, decent, and sanitary housing within his/her financial means which is available for purchase or rent.
8. **OWNER OF DWELLING:** A person is considered to have met the requirement to own a dwelling if the person purchases or holds any of the following interests in the property: (1) fee title, a life estate, a land contract, a 99-year lease, or a lease including any options for extension with at least 50 years to run from the date of acquisition; or (2) an interest in a cooperative housing project which includes the right to occupy a dwelling; or (3) a contract to purchase any of the interests or estates described in (1) and (2) above; or (4) any other interest, including a partial interest, which in the judgment of the Department warrants consideration as ownership.
9. **INITIATION OF NEGOTIATIONS:** The term "initiation of negotiations" for a parcel means the delivery of the initial written offer of just compensation by the Department to the owner or his/her representative to purchase the real property for the project. However, if the Department issues a notice of its intent to acquire the real property, and a person moves after that notice, but before delivery of the initial written purchase offer, the "initiation of negotiations" means the actual move of the person from the property.
10. **COMPARABLE REPLACEMENT DWELLING:** A "comparable replacement dwelling" is a dwelling which is:
  - a. decent, safe, and sanitary;
  - b. functionally equivalent to the displacement dwelling with particular attention to the number of rooms and living space. Functionally equivalent means that it must perform the same function, provide the same

utility, and be capable of contributing to a comparable style of living as the displacement dwelling.

- c. adequate in size to accommodate the occupants;
- d. in an area that is not subject to unreasonable adverse environmental conditions, is not generally less desirable than the location of the displaced person's dwelling with respect to public utilities and commercial and public facilities, and is reasonably accessible to the person's place of employment;
- e. on a site that is typical in size for residential development with normal site improvements, including customary landscaping. The site need not include special improvements such as outbuildings, swimming pools, and greenhouses;
- f. currently available to the displaced person on the private market. However, a comparable replacement dwelling for a person receiving government housing assistance before displacement may reflect similar government housing assistance;
- g. within the financial means of the displaced person;
  - 1) a replacement dwelling purchased by a homeowner in occupancy for at least 180 days prior to initiation of negotiations (180-day homeowner) is considered to be within the homeowner's financial means if the homeowner is paid the full differential, all increased mortgage interest costs, and all incidental expenses.
  - 2) a replacement dwelling rented by a displaced 90-Day Occupant (Owner of between 90 and 180 days or Tenant of at least 90 Days) is considered to be within his or her financial means if after receiving rental assistance under this part, the person's monthly rent and utility costs for the displacement dwelling do not exceed the person's base monthly rental for the displacement site. The base monthly rental for the displacement site is the lesser of:
    - a) the average monthly cost for rent and utilities at the displacement dwelling, as determined by the Department; or
    - b) thirty (30) percent of the person's average gross household income. (If the person refuses to provide appropriate evidence of income or is a dependent, the base monthly rental shall be established by the criteria in (a) above.)

- 3) For a displaced person who is not eligible to receive a replacement housing payment because of the person's failure to meet length-of-occupancy requirements, comparable replacement rental housing is considered to be within the person's financial means if the Department pays that portion of the monthly housing costs of a comparable dwelling which exceeds thirty (30) percent of such person's gross monthly household income, for a period of 42 months.
- h. To the extent feasible, comparable replacement dwellings shall be selected from the neighborhood in which the displacement dwelling is located or if that is not possible, in nearby or similar neighborhoods where housing costs are generally the same or higher.
11. **MORTGAGE:** "Mortgage" shall mean such classes of liens as are commonly given to secure advances on, or the unpaid purchase price of, real property, under the laws of the State of Louisiana, together with the credit instrument, if any, secured thereby.
12. **DWELLING:** The term "dwelling" means any single family house, a single family unit in a multi-family building, a unit of a condominium or cooperative housing project, a mobile home, or any other residential unit being the place of permanent or customary and usual abode.
13. **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION:** Any organization that is incorporated under the applicable laws of the state as a nonprofit organization and is exempt from paying Federal Income Taxes under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. 501).
14. **DECENT, SAFE, AND SANITARY STANDARDS:** All replacement housing considered and/or utilized in connection with the Relocation Assistance Program must be decent, safe, and sanitary. A decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling unit is one which conforms to all applicable provisions for existing structures that have been established under local codes, ordinances or regulations in the area of the given dwelling unit. If such codes, ordinances or regulations do not exist in the given area or are less restrictive than the standards set forth below, the following minimum standards shall apply:



## MINIMUM STANDARDS:

- a. Decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling. The term "decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling" means a dwelling which meets applicable housing and occupancy codes. However, if any of the following standards are not met by an applicable code, such following standards shall apply, unless waived for good cause by the Federal agency funding the project. The dwelling shall:
- 1) Be structurally sound, weathertight, and in good repair.
  - 2) Contain a safe electrical wiring system adequate for lighting and other electrical devices.
  - 3) Contain a heating system capable of sustaining a healthful temperature (of approximately 70 degrees) for a displaced person, except in those areas where local climatic conditions do not require such a system.
    - a) A space heating unit is acceptable provided that it conforms with the manufacturer's specifications and at a minimum has:
      - i. A fully enclosed burner preventing anyone from touching the flame.
      - ii. An automatic oxygen depletion cut-off valve.
      - iii. An automatic gas interruption cut-off valve.
      - iv. A self-contained electronic spark lighter.
      - v. Venting to the outside, unless the unit is designed to be unvented.
      - vi. Approval by the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) or the American Gas Association (AGA).
  - 4) Be adequate in size with respect to the number of rooms and area of living space needed to accommodate the displaced person(s). There shall be a separate well-lighted and ventilated bathroom that provides privacy to the user and contains a sink, bathtub or shower stall, and a toilet, all in good working order and properly connected to appropriate sources of water and to a sewage drainage system. In the case of a housekeeping dwelling, there shall be a kitchen area that contains a fully usable sink, properly connected to potable hot and cold water and to a sewage

drainage system, and adequate space and utility service connections for a stove and refrigerator.

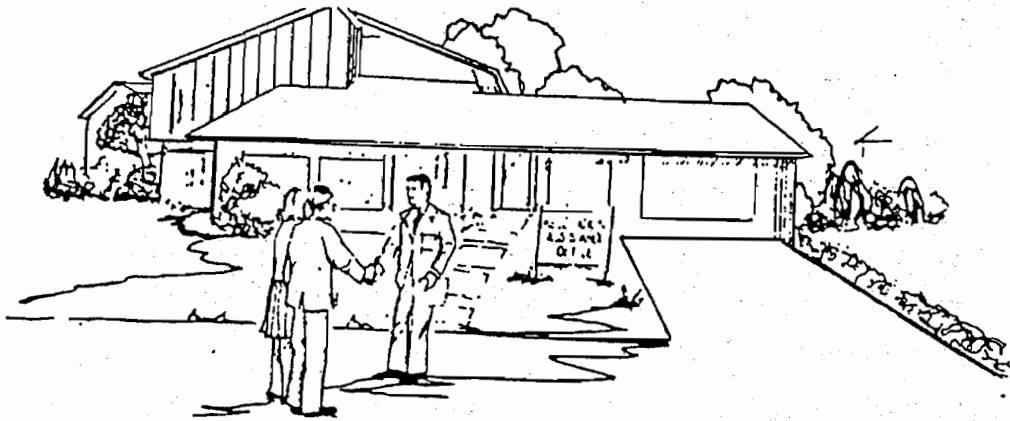
- 5) Contains unobstructed egress to safe open space at ground level. If the replacement dwelling unit is on the second story or above, with access directly from or through a common corridor, the common corridor must have at least two means of egress.
- 6) For a handicapped displacee, be free of any barriers which would preclude reasonable ingress, egress, or use of the dwelling by a displaced person who is handicapped.

**15. AVERAGE ANNUAL NET EARNINGS:** The term "average annual net earnings" means one-half (1/2) of any net earnings of the business before Federal, State, and local income taxes, during the two taxable years immediately preceding the taxable year in which the business is relocated. "Average annual net earnings" include any compensation paid by the business to the owner, his/her spouse, or his/her dependents during the two-year period. Such earnings and compensations may be established by Federal Income Tax Returns filed by the business and its owner, his/her spouse and his/her dependents during the two-year period. In the case of a corporate owner of a business, earnings shall include any compensation paid to the spouse or dependents of majority interest in the corporation. For the purpose of determining majority ownership, stock held by a husband, his wife, and their dependent children shall be treated as one unit.

**16. NOTICE OF INTENT TO ACQUIRE OR NOTICE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR RELOCATION BENEFITS:** Written notice furnished a person to be displaced that establishes eligibility for relocation benefits prior to the initiation of negotiations and/or prior to the commitment of Federal financial assistance.

**17. SMALL BUSINESS:** A small business is a business having no more than 500 employees working at the displacement site.

## RELOCATION ADVISORY ASSISTANCE



A Relocation Assistance Office will be designated and a representative of the Department will be assigned for each project. Through this office and representative, the Department will provide assistance to displacees.

This assistance consists of locating decent, safe and sanitary replacement housing for residential displacees which is within the financial means of the dislocated individual or family. Assistance as used here also includes help in securing loans, public housing accommodations, moving bids, etc. Assistance will also be given to businesses, farming operations and nonprofit organizations in finding and relocating into replacement quarters.

The two types of payments for which relocatees may be eligible are: (1) moving costs, and (2) replacement housing. Housing costs may also include incidental payments in buying replacement property and increased interest costs. Details about these payments and the eligibility requirements for each are outlined in this brochure.

Each District Relocation Assistance Office will maintain and provide current and continuously updated lists of replacement dwellings, lots, commercial locations and facilities, and farms. These lists shall include available information about the price, size and condition of properties on the market. Current data about costs such as security deposits for utilities, damages, and leases; closing costs; typical down payments; and interest rates and terms shall also be available. Maps showing the location of schools, parks, playgrounds, shopping and public transportation routes in the area; schedules and costs of public transportation; and other information about replacement housing will also be provided if available. The Department will maintain contact and exchange information with other

agencies rendering services useful to displaced persons, businesses, farms and nonprofit organizations. A representative of this office will assist you at every stage of your move and will remain in continual personal contact until your relocation has been successfully completed.

A displacee should plan his/her move with the Department's Real Estate Representative so as to avoid taking any action which might disqualify him for assistance or payment. At least one or more representatives whose primary responsibility will be to provide such assistance will be assigned to each project.

## **QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT RELOCATION ADVISORY SERVICES**

### **1. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE RELOCATION ADVISORY SERVICES?**

**Relocation Assistance Advisory Services shall be offered to:**

- a. All persons occupying property to be acquired.**
- b. All persons occupying property adjacent to the real property acquired when the Department determines that such persons are caused substantial economic injury because of the acquisition.**
- c. All persons who, because of the acquisition of real property used for a business or farm operation, move from other real property used for a dwelling or move their personal property from such other real property.**

### **2. AS A "DISPLACED PERSON", WHAT RELOCATION ASSISTANCE ADVISORY SERVICES WILL BE OFFERED ME?**

**The Department's Real Estate Representative assigned to the project will:**

- a. give you a Real Estate Brochure;**
- b. determine your need, if any, for relocation assistance;**
- c. discuss and explain the services available, relocation payments and the eligibility requirements, and assist you in completing any applications or other forms required;**
- d. provide current information on the availability, prices, and rentals of comparable, decent, safe, and sanitary housing, and of comparable commercial properties and locations for displaced businesses;**
- e. assist you, if your business or farm is displaced, in obtaining and becoming established in a suitable replacement location;**

- f. supply information concerning Federal and State housing programs, disaster loan programs, and other Federal or State programs offering assistance to displaced persons;
- g. provide other advisory services in order to minimize hardships in adjusting to a new location.

**3. AS A RESIDENTIAL "DISPLACED PERSON", WHAT WRITTEN NOTICES WILL I RECEIVE?**

Depending on your ownership and occupancy status, you will receive the following in writing:

- a. Owner-occupants of more than 180 days.
  - 1) At the initiation of negotiations for your property, you shall be furnished: A Real Estate Brochure which gives an explanation of the eligibility requirements to receive payments for replacement housing, increased interest cost, incidental expenses, and of your option to rent replacement housing. The brochure will also contain adequate explanation of relocation services available and where they may be obtained.
  - 2) The amount of the replacement housing payment, and the pertinent eligibility requirements. The replacement housing payment offer will normally be made to you at the initiation of negotiations, but may be made when you are actively searching for replacement housing or as soon as possible after you request the amount of the offer.
  - 3) A 90-day written notice to vacate is incorporated into the written notice of eligibility, which specifies the earliest date by which the property shall have to be vacated. If that date is fewer than 30 days from the date the Department acquires the property, you shall be issued an additional notice which specifies the new vacate date, which shall be 30 days from the acquisition date.
- b. Owner-occupants of less than 180 days but not less than 90 days.
  - 1) At the initiation of negotiations for your property, you shall be furnished: A Real Estate Brochure which gives an explanation of the eligibility requirements to receive payments for replacement housing and of the option either to receive a down-payment and incidental expenses to

**purchase replacement housing or to rent replacement housing. The brochure will also contain an explanation of relocation services available and where they may be obtained.**

- 2) The amount of the replacement housing payment based on such option as outlined in (a) (2) above.**
- 3) A 90-day written notice to vacate as outlined in (a) (3) (a) above.**

**c. Tenants**

- 1) Within ten (10) days of the initiation of negotiations for the purchase of the dwelling unit you occupy, you shall be furnished either by certified mail or personal contact the date of the initiation of negotiations for the parcel.**
- 2) You will be given a Real Estate Brochure which explains the eligibility requirements to receive a rental replacement housing payment, and of the option to receive a down-payment for the purchase of replacement housing including incidental expenses. The brochure will also contain an explanation of the relocation services available and where they may be obtained.**
- 3) The amount of the replacement housing payment based on such option as outlined in (a) (2) above.**
- 4) A 90-day written notice to vacate as outlined in (a) (3) (a) above.**

## MOVING EXPENSE PAYMENTS



Any individual, family, business, farm or nonprofit organization displaced by a project is entitled to a payment for actual reasonable moving expenses not to exceed 50 miles. Claims for moving expense must be supported by receipted bills. Moving expenses include the cost of dismantling, disconnecting, crating, loading, insuring, temporary storage (not to exceed 12 months), transporting, unloading, reconnection, and necessary temporary lodging and transportation of eligible persons. Moving expenses do not include any additions, improvements, alterations or other physical changes in or to any structure in connection with moving personal property. You are cautioned to not move from the property you now occupy, without first contacting the Department's District Office to determine your eligibility.

## RESIDENTIAL MOVING PAYMENTS

A displaced individual or family who moves is entitled to receive a payment for moving his personal property by (a) actual reasonable expense or (b) fixed rate schedule.



## **A. ACTUAL REASONABLE EXPENSE METHOD**

Any residential displaced person is entitled to payment of his actual reasonable moving and related expenses, as determined by the Department. An actual cost move may be performed either by a commercial mover or it may be a self-move.

Eligible actual expenses may include:

1. Transportation of personal property up to 50 miles. Reimbursement for travel in excess of 50 miles may be eligible if deemed necessary by the Department.
2. Packing, crating, unpacking and uncrating of personal property.
3. Disconnecting, dismantling, removing, reassembling, and reinstalling relocated household appliances, and other personal property.

The following costs may also be eligible:

1. Cost of transportation of individuals and families to the new location. Such costs may be on a mileage basis, not to exceed 20 cents per mile, or reasonable actual fees if commercial transportation is used, and may include special services, such as charges for an ambulance to transport invalid displacees. The actual reasonable costs of meals and lodging, when the Department determines that such costs are required because of practical necessities or unforeseen circumstances.
2. Storage of personal property when PRIOR AUTHORIZATION is obtained. Payment for storage on the property acquired or on other property owned by the displacee is not allowed. The amount paid for storage shall not exceed twelve (12) months.
3. Insurance premiums to cover loss and damage of personal property while in storage or in transit.

Before an actual cost move, the Department's agent must make an inventory of all property to be moved. Following the move, copies of receipted bills must be presented before payment will be made. Reimbursement under the actual cost option is limited only to costs actually incurred that are necessary and reasonable for the move.

### Commercial Moves

If the displacee wishes to move commercially, the Department's Agent will obtain two bids from commercial moving companies. The lower of the two bids shall establish the moving expense. The Department may contract with independent movers on a schedule basis and furnish the displaced person with a list of movers from which to choose. In such instances the Department will pay the mover directly.

### Mobile Homes

Reimbursement for moving mobile homes will be made on an actual cost basis. In addition to the payment for eligible actual costs, an owner-occupant of a mobile home is also eligible to receive payment for securing and packing personal property on the basis of \$25 for the first room and \$10 for each additional room.

## **B. FIXED RATE SCHEDULE METHOD**

Instead of an actual cost move, a displacee may choose a moving expense payment based on the Moving Expense Schedule shown on page 32. The Schedule payment is based on the number of rooms in the acquired dwelling. By using this method, the displacee may move by any means available to him with no accounting of expenses incurred.

### Displaces From One-Room Dormitory Units

The payment to a person sharing a one-room dormitory unit with two or more persons is limited to \$50.00.

#### LOUISIANA RESIDENTIAL EXPENSE & DISLOCATION ALLOWANCE SCHEDULE

##### A. UNFURNISHED UNITS (Furniture Owned by Occupant)

Number of Rooms								
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Each Extra
\$250	\$350	\$450	\$550	\$625	\$700	\$775	\$850	\$75

##### B. FURNISHED UNITS (Furniture Not Owned by Occupant)

First Room	Each Additional Room
\$200	\$25

##### EXCEPTIONS:

1. Move of Mobile Home: Actual costs, plus a payment for packing and securing personal property, on the basis for \$40 for the first room and \$15 for each additional room.
2. The occupant of a dormitory-style room shared by two or more other unrelated persons is limited to a moving payment of \$50.

## BUSINESS MOVING PAYMENTS

The owner of a displaced business is entitled to reimbursement for moving expenses by actual reasonable expense or in lieu payment.

### A. ACTUAL REASONABLE EXPENSE METHOD

Any business or farm operation which qualifies as displaced is entitled to payment for such actual moving and related expenses as the Department determines to be reasonable and necessary. There are four basic kinds of actual expense moves: commercial move, self-move based on the lower of two bids, self-move based on actual costs, and self-move based on an estimate (finding).

1. Commercial Move: If the business owner wishes to move commercially, the Agent will obtain two acceptable bids or estimates from moving companies. The lower of the two bids will set the amount of the payment. Following a commercial move, the business owner must supply copies of receipted bills from the mover, as well as an inventory of the items moved.
2. Self-Move Based On The Lower Of Two Bids: If the business owner wishes to move himself, the amount of the payment may be established as the lower of two acceptable bids or estimates from qualified moving firms and/or specialists. Following the move, the owner must supply a list of items actually moved.
3. Self-Move Based On Actual Costs: If the business owner wishes to move himself, he may be paid the actual reasonable expenses of moving the business, supported by receipted bills or other evidence of costs incurred. The Department's Agent will advise you about what expenses are eligible under this option.
4. Self-Move Based On Estimate (Finding): Estimates or "findings" for low-cost (less than \$5,000), uncomplicated self-moves may be prepared by Department Agent(s) familiar with moving costs in the area. The owner must submit an inventory of movables in advance, and following the move must submit a list of the items actually moved.

## **B. ACTUAL REASONABLE EXPENSES IN SEARCHING FOR A REPLACEMENT BUSINESS**

In addition, the owner of a displaced business can be reimbursed up to \$1,000.00 for actual reasonable expenses incurred in searching for a replacement site. Such expenses may include transportation expenses, meals, lodging away from home, and reasonable value of time actually spent in search, including the fees of real estate agents or real estate brokers, but excluding real estate commissions. All expenses claimed must be supported. Mileage and time must be documented by a log showing dates, purposes of trips, hours and mileage. Payment for the time actually spent in search shall be based on a reasonable hourly wage rate for the person conducting the search. A certified statement of the time spent in search and hourly wage rate shall accompany the claim. All other claims must be supported by receipts.

## **C. ACTUAL DIRECT LOSS OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Occasionally, the owner of a business may find that it is better to sell or otherwise dispose of obsolete equipment rather than to move it. The payment for the disposed equipment will be the lower of: (a) the fair market value for continued use of the equipment minus the proceeds of its sale, or (b) the cost of moving the equipment. The business owner will also be reimbursed the costs of advertising the sale of the item. The owner must make a good faith effort to sell the equipment unless the Department determines that it is unsellable.

## **D. PURCHASE OF SUBSTITUTE PERSONAL PROPERTY**

This item is similar to the actual direct loss provision, except that the item of personal property is not moved but instead is promptly replaced with a substitute item that performs a comparable function at the replacement site. The payment for the replaced item shall be the lesser of: (a) the cost of the substitute item (or a comparable item if the substitute represents a significant upgrade) plus installation costs, minus the proceeds

from the sales or trade-in of the replaced item; or (b) the cost of moving the item.

## **E. REESTABLISHMENT EXPENSES**

A small business, farm or nonprofit organization may also be eligible for a payment, not to exceed \$10,000, for expenses actually incurred in relocating and reestablishing itself.

### **1. Eligible Expenses**

Eligible expenses, as determined by the Department, include but are not limited to the following: repairs or improvements to the the replacement property as required by the Federal, State or local law, ordinance or code; modifications to the replacement property to accommodate the business operation or make replacement structures suitable for conducting the business; construction and installation costs for exterior signing to advertise the business; provision of utilities from right-of-way to improvements on the replacement site; redecoration or replacement of soiled or worn surfaces at the replacement site, such as paint, panelling or carpeting; licenses, fees and permits when not paid as part of moving expenses; feasibility surveys, soil testing and marketing studies; advertisement of replacement location; professional services in connection with the purchase or lease of a replacement site; estimated increased costs of operation during the first two years at the replacement site for such items as lease or rental charges, personal or real property taxes, insurance premiums and utility charges (excluding impact fees); impact fees or one-time assessments for anticipated heavy utility usage; and other items that the Department considers essential to the reestablishment of the business.

## 2. Ineligible Expenses

Items not eligible as reestablishment expenses include but are not limited to the following: purchase of capital assets, such as office furniture, filing cabinets, machinery or trade fixtures; purchase of manufacturing materials, production supplies, product inventory production supplies, product inventory or other items used in the normal course of the business operation; interior or exterior refurbishments at the replacement site which are for aesthetic purposes, except as described in the list of eligible expenses; interest on money borrowed to make the move or purchase the replacement property.

## 3. Businesses Excluded from Receiving Reestablishment Expenses

A part-time business in the home which does not contribute materially to the household income is excluded from receiving reestablishment expenses.

## F. IN LIEU OF ACTUAL MOVING EXPENSES PAYMENT METHOD

In lieu of the moving cost payments described in (A), (B), (C), (D) and (E) above, an owner of a discontinued or relocated business may be eligible for a payment equal to its average annual net earnings. This payment cannot be less than \$1,000 or more than \$20,000, and can only be made if the following requirements are met as determined by the Department:

1. The business owns or rents personal property which must be moved in connection with such displacement and for which an expense would be incurred in such move; and the business vacates or relocates from its displacement site.
2. The business cannot be relocated without substantial loss of its existing patronage; and the business is not part of a commercial enterprise having more than three other entities which are not being acquired by the Department, and which are under the same ownership and engaged in the same or similar business activities.

3. The business is not operated at a displacement dwelling/site solely for the purpose of renting such dwelling or site to others.
4. The business contributed materially to the income of the displaced person during the 2 taxable years prior to displacement.

#### **G. FARM MOVING PAYMENTS**

The owner of a displaced farm operation is eligible for moving costs as outlined for a business as follows:

##### **1. ACTUAL REASONABLE EXPENSE METHOD**

(Same as for Business)

##### **2. ACTUAL REASONABLE SEARCHING AND REESTABLISHMENT EXPENSES**

(Same as for Business)

##### **3. ACTUAL DIRECT LOSS OF TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY**

(Same as for Business)

##### **4. IN LIEU OF ACTUAL MOVING EXPENSE**

This move is the same as for business except that the farm must be either discontinued or relocated in its entirety from the present location, and in the case of a partial taking, the Department determines that:

- a. The acquisition of part of the land caused the operator to be displaced from the farm operation on the remaining land; or
- b. The partial acquisition caused a substantial change in the nature of the farm operation.

#### **H. NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION MOVING PAYMENTS**

This is computed in the same way as the business moving payment, except that when qualified for the in lieu of payment, the amount of the payment is the average of 2 years annual gross revenues less administrative expenses.





**QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED  
ABOUT MOVING EXPENSE PAYMENTS**

**1. IS THERE A TIME LIMIT ON FILING A CLAIM FOR MOVING EXPENSES?**

There is a time limit of 18 months after you move within which you must file a claim for moving expense payments. However, you should file your claim as soon as possible after you have moved.

**2. HOW SOON WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT?**

As soon as your fully executed claim is received by the Department, it will be processed and a check will be issued to you, normally within thirty (30) days.

**3. IS THERE A MOVING COST LIMIT ON DISTANCE MOVED?**

The Department will participate only in the cost of moving up to fifty (50) miles. Exceptions may be made for business concerns or farms when it is determined that relocation cannot be accomplished within the 50-mile area, but such exceptions will be allowed only to the nearest adequate and available site.

**4. IN A HARDSHIP CASE, CAN I BE PAID FOR MY MOVE IN ADVANCE?**

Yes, in hardship cases arrangements may be made to pay you for moving expenses in advance.

**5. WHAT ABOUT THE COST OF MOVING MY DWELLING?** When you retain your dwelling through the owner retention process the cost of moving it onto remainder or replacement land is part of your replacement housing payment instead of your moving expense payment. However, you may be eligible for a payment for moving any items which must be removed from the dwelling for the move. Such payment may be made on an actual cost or schedule basis. In order to be eligible for a schedule move, the rooms must be substantially emptied of their contents. The displacee may also be eligible for temporary storage costs of

personal property while the dwelling is being moved, with prior approval.

**6. AS AN OWNER-OCCUPANT OF A MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING, HOW WILL I BE PAID?**

For the unit of the multi-family dwelling that you occupy, you will be treated as outlined in this brochure under "Residential Moving Payments". In addition, you will be eligible to receive a moving expense payment for those units of the multi-family dwelling you do not occupy, as provided under "Business Moving Payments". Average annual net earnings may be based on a different period of time when the Department determines it to be more equitable.

**7. WHAT ABOUT IN LIEU PAYMENT FOR A BUSINESS OR FARM OPERATION LESS THAN TWO YEARS OLD?**

If the business or farm operation can show that it was in business, had income during such period, and is otherwise eligible, the owner may be eligible to receive the In Lieu payment. Where your business or farm was not in operation during the entire two (2) preceding taxable years, your payment will be computed by dividing your net earnings by the number of months your business or farm operation was operated and multiplying by twelve (12). This figure is the amount of the In Lieu payment, within the \$1,000 - \$20,000 limits. A taxable year is defined as any 12-month period used by the business or farm operation in filing income tax returns.

**8. MAY I BE REIMBURSED IF I HAVE TO HIRE AN ELECTRICIAN OR PLUMBER TO REMOVE AND REINSTALL SOME OF MY PERSONAL PROPERTY?**

If the move is on an actual cost basis, the expenses for removal, reinstallation and reestablishment of machinery, equipment, appliances, and other items which are not acquired, including reconnections of such items to utilities, which do not constitute an improvement to the replacement site, are eligible for reimbursement. Such costs are not applicable to items classified by the Department as real property and retained by the owner through the owner retention process. Prior to payment

of any expenses for removal and reinstallation of such property, the owner and the Department shall agree in writing that the property is personal and that the Department is released from any payment for the property as realty.

**9. WHAT ABOUT THE NONOCCUPANT OWNER OF A MOBILE HOME?**

The nonoccupant owner of a mobile home or house trailer which is considered to be personal property is entitled to receive a payment for actual reasonable expenses of moving the mobile home or house trailer, including the cost of detaching and reattaching fixtures and appliances when necessary.

**10. MAY I BE REIMBURSED FOR MORE THAN ONE MOVE?**

The Department will only participate in one move of a displaced person. However, if you move on an actual cost basis and storage charges are approved, you can be paid to move your personal property into storage, and then to move it to your replacement site.

**11. WHAT ABOUT MOVING EXPENSE PAYMENTS WHERE A BUILDING IS USED FOR BOTH A RESIDENCE AND BUSINESS?**

Where displaced individuals or families occupy living quarters on the same premises as a displaced business, farm or nonprofit organization, such individuals or families are separate displaced persons for the purpose of determining entitlement to relocation payments.

**12. ARE THERE SOME MOVING EXPENSES AND LOSSES FOR WHICH A DISPLACEE IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT?**

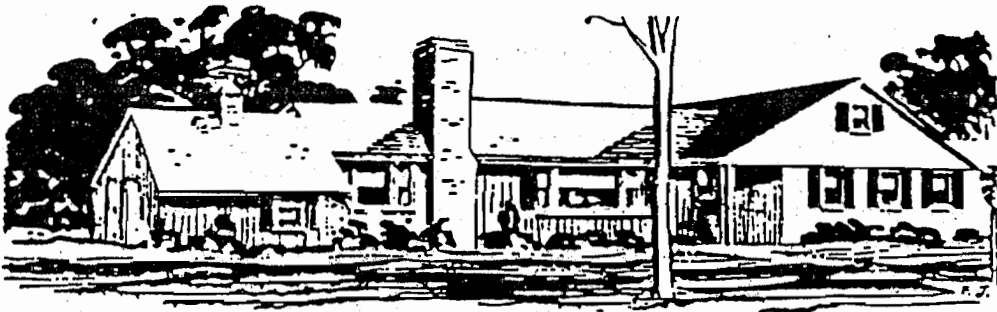
The following expenses are not eligible for reimbursement as "actual moving expenses":

- a. additional expenses incurred because of living in a new location.
- b. cost of moving structures, improvements or other real property in which the displaced person reserved ownership.

- c. improvements to a residential replacement site.
- d. for a business,
  - 1) loss of good will.
  - 2) loss of business and/or profits.
  - 3) loss of trained employees.
  - 4) personal injury.
- e. cost of preparing the application for moving and related expenses.

**13. MAY I BE REIMBURSED FOR MOVING MY PERSONAL PROPERTY FROM THE PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY TO MY REMAINING LAND?**

**Yes, the Department will reimburse a displacee forced to move personal property onto remaining or other lands owned by the displacee or his landlord. In some instances modifications to the personal property necessary to adapt it to the replacement structure may be reimbursable.**



In addition to payment for the purchase of real property, the Department may pay the occupant of an acquired dwelling a replacement housing payment to purchase or rent a comparable, decent, safe and sanitary replacement dwelling.

## 1. SUPPLEMENT TO OWNER-OCCUPANTS

### a. Owner-Occupants of 180 Days or More Who Purchase.

- 1) An owner-occupant is eligible for replacement housing, increased interest costs, and incidental expense payments when he/she meets the definition of a "displaced person" and has owned and occupied his/her dwelling for at least 180 consecutive days prior to the initiation of negotiations. These payments, not to exceed \$22,500, are for the additional costs necessary to purchase replacement housing, to compensate for the loss of favorable financing, and to reimburse the owner-occupant for incidental expenses incurred in the purchase of replacement housing. The replacement dwelling must be decent, safe and sanitary and must be purchased within a specified time. (See questions and answers at the end of this section.)
- 2) The increased interest payment is provided to compensate a displaced owner-occupant for the increased interest he/she is required to pay for financing a replacement dwelling. To be eligible for the payment, the acquired dwelling must have been encumbered by a valid lien for at least 180 consecutive days prior to the initiation of negotiations. In addition, the owner must have

been required to cancel his/her old mortgage, and secure a new mortgage on his replacement dwelling at a higher rate of interest. Added to the increased interest payment may be the amount actually paid as points on the amount of the original mortgage balance refinanced and any origination or service fees on the refinanced balance, if such fees are normal to real estate transactions in the area. (Note: You will be required to furnish the Department's agents with copies of all papers pertaining to the old loan as well as the new loan for computing these payments.)

- 3) The incidental expenses payment is the reimbursement for actual incidental expenses incurred in the purchase of the replacement dwelling. Items which can be allowed are legal, closing and related costs, appraisal fee, credit report, surveys, plat preparation fee, title insurance, recordation fee, and notary fee. No fee is reimbursable which is a part of a finance or debt service charge or any prepaid expenses.
- 4) If any owner-occupant decides to retain, move, and occupy his/her dwelling, the actual cost for replacement housing is the cost of a replacement homesite, the cost of retaining and moving the dwelling plus the cost of making it decent, safe, and sanitary. The amount of the payment will be as described under (1) above.

**b. Owner-Occupants of 180 Days or More Who Rent**

An owner-occupant who elects to rent rather than purchase may be eligible for a rental supplement payment not to exceed \$5,250, with the following limitations:

- 1) the payment will be paid in accordance with 2. Supplement to Tenant Occupants A, (1).
- 2) economic rent plus average utilities on the acquired dwelling will be used to figure the rent supplement payment.
- 3) if an owner changes his/her mind within one year and purchases, the combined payments will not exceed the amount determined under 1.,A,(1) above.

**c. Owner-Occupants of at Least Ninety (90) Days, but Less Than 180 Days Who Purchase**

The displaced 90-Day Owner-Occupant may receive a payment for use as a down payment to purchase a replacement dwelling, not to exceed \$5,250. A down payment will be based on conventional financing, including incidental expenses, including the amount the purchaser is required to pay as points and/or an origination or loan service fee, if such charges are normal to real estate transactions in the area.

The following conditions are applicable to the down payment procedure under this section.

- 1) The full amount of the down payment must be applied to the purchase and/or closing costs of a replacement dwelling. These amounts must be shown in the closing statement and a copy must be given to the Department.
- 2) The down payment supplement to a 90-day homeowner shall not exceed the amount the owner would receive as a purchase supplement if he/she met the 180-day owner requirement, described in 1.A.
- 3) If the displaced owner previously received a rental payment as set forth in D below, the rental payment will be deducted from the down payment and the combined payments shall not exceed \$5,250. Status of the relocation must have changed from renter to purchaser within one year of original move.

**d. Owner-Occupants of at Least Ninety (90) Days, but Less Than 180 Days Who Rent**

A displaced 90-Day Owner-Occupant who elects to rent a replacement dwelling may be eligible for a rent supplement. The payment will be computed and disbursed as described in (2), Supplement to Tenant Occupants, A, (1), except that economic rent plus average utilities will be used in computing the payment.



## 2. SUPPLEMENT TO TENANT OCCUPANTS

### a. Tenant-Occupants for at Least Ninety (90) Days Who Rent

A displaced 90-Day Tenant may be eligible to receive a rent supplement not to exceed \$5,250 when: he/she is eligible as a "displaced person", has been in occupancy for at least ninety (90) consecutive days prior to the initiation of negotiations, the property is subsequently acquired by the Department, and he/she rents and occupies a decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling within the one year specified.

- 1) The payment will be computed by subtracting the base monthly rental\* of the displacement dwelling from the lesser of (a) the monthly rent and estimated average monthly cost of utilities for a comparable dwelling, or (b) the monthly rent and estimated average monthly cost of utilities for the decent, safe and sanitary dwelling actually occupied by the displaced person, and multiplying the difference by 42.
- 2) The rental supplement payment will be paid in lump sum.

\* The base monthly rental of the displaced dwelling is the lesser of (a) the average monthly cost for rent and utilities at the displacement dwelling for six (6) months prior to displacement, or (b) thirty (30) percent of the person's average gross household income. If the person refuses to provide appropriate evidence of income or is a dependent, the base monthly rental shall be computed using the criteria in (a).

### b. Tenant-Occupants for at Least Ninety (90) Days Who Purchase

A displaced tenant who elects to become a homeowner may be eligible for a down payment supplement. The payment, not to exceed \$5,250, must be applied as a down payment on a decent, safe, and sanitary comparable dwelling. The payment will be computed the same as in 1., C. Owner-Occupants of at Least

Ninety (90) Days but Less Than 180 Days Who Purchase.

**c. Occupants of Less Than Ninety (90) Days (Short-Term Occupants)**

A short-term occupant is eligible to receive a rental supplement if the rent of the decent, safe and sanitary replacement dwelling actually occupied (or the comparable replacement dwelling, if less) exceeds thirty (30) percent of the person's gross monthly household income. The supplement will be computed as the amount of the monthly rent and estimated utilities in excess of 30 percent of the gross monthly household income multiplied by 42.

**d. Tenant-Occupant of a Sleeping Room for at Least Ninety (90) Days.**

A displaced tenant of a sleeping room is eligible for a rental or down payment supplement as outlined in 2. A. & B. The rental supplement will be computed on a comparable sleeping room.

**3. MOBILE HOMES**

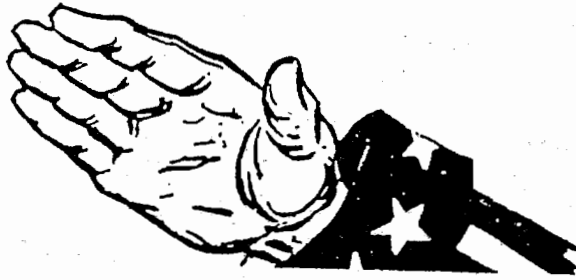
The provisions of replacement housing payments are generally applicable to occupants of mobile homes. However, the basis for the payment is affected by who owns or rents the site upon which the mobile home rests and who owns the mobile home. In some instances, the type of replacement dwelling obtained is a factor in determining the payment. The Department's District Real Estate Representative will provide mobile home displacees with full details about the payments applicable in their particular situation.

NOTICE

A SPECIAL WORD OF CAUTION: BEFORE MOVING OR PURCHASING REPLACEMENT HOUSING, CONTACT THE DEPARTMENT TO ASSURE YOUR ELIGIBILITY AND THE PROMPT PAYMENT OF YOUR RELOCATION BENEFITS. IF YOU MOVE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTIFICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT, YOU RISK LOSING ALL POSSIBLE BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

NOTICE

**RELOCATION BENEFITS ARE TAX FREE**



**No payment received as described herein shall be considered as income for the purpose of the State Income Tax or the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, which has been redesignated the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or for the purpose of determining the eligibility or the extent of eligibility of any person for any public assistance or assistance under the Social Security Act or any other Federal Law.**

**QUESTIONS FREQUENTLY ASKED ABOUT  
REPLACEMENT HOUSING PAYMENTS**

**1. IF I OWN MY HOME NOW, CAN I ELECT TO RENT  
REPLACEMENT HOUSING?**

**Yes.**

**2. IS THERE ANY TIME LIMIT ON MY RELOCATION  
OFFER?**

**The displaced owner is eligible for the appropriate payments when he/she relocates and occupies a decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling within a one-year period beginning on the latter of the following dates:**

- a. the date on which the owner received from the Department final payment for all costs of the acquired dwelling in negotiated settlements; or in the case of condemnation, the date on which the Department deposits the required amount in court for the benefit of the owner.**
- b. the date on which he/she is required to move by the Department's written notice to vacate, or the date on which he/she moves, if earlier than the date on which he/she is required to move.**

**A displaced person who has entered into a contract for the construction or rehabilitation of a replacement dwelling, and for reasons beyond his reasonable control, cannot occupy the replacement dwelling within the time period shown above shall be considered to have purchased and occupied the dwelling as of the date of such contract. The replacement housing payments under these conditions will be deferred until actual occupancy is accomplished.**

**3. HOW DOES THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINE IF  
MY HOUSE IS DECENT, SAFE, AND SANITARY?**

**Before making payment to the displacee, the Department must inspect the replacement dwelling and determine that it meets the standards for decent, safe, and sanitary**

housing. The Department may utilize the services of any public agency ordinarily engaged in housing inspection to make the inspection. Such determination by the Department that a dwelling meets the standards for decent, safe, and sanitary housing is made solely for the purpose of determining the eligibility of relocated individuals and families for payments and is not a representation for any other purpose.

**4. MAY I BORROW MONEY ON MY REPLACEMENT HOUSING PAYMENT OFFER?**

The Department, after inspecting the proposed dwelling and finding that it meets the standards set forth for decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings, shall upon the qualified displacee's request, state to any interested party, financial institution or lending agency, that the displacee will be eligible for the payment of a specified sum provided he/she purchases and occupies the inspected dwelling within the time limits specified.

**5. WHAT IF THE DEPARTMENT TAKES MY RESIDENCE AND ONLY A PORTION OF MY LOT?**

Where a dwelling is located on a tract normal for residential use in the area, the maximum replacement housing payment shall be determined by subtracting the Department's acquisition price of the property from the estimated selling price of a comparable dwelling on a lot typical for the area. Where a dwelling is located on a tract larger in size than typical for residential use in the area, the maximum replacement housing payment is the probable selling price of a comparable dwelling upon a tract typical in size for residential use in the area, less the Department's acquisition price of the acquired dwelling and less the acquisition price of that portion of the acquired land representing a tract typical in size for residential use in the area.

**6. WHAT IF MY LAND IS APPRAISED AS COMMERCIAL RATHER THAN AS RESIDENTIAL?**

The appraisal of the land as commercial rather than as residential will have no bearing on the method of computing the maximum payment.

**7. WHAT IF TWO FAMILIES OCCUPY THE SAME DWELLING?**

If two or more eligible families occupy the same single family dwelling unit, each family may be eligible for a replacement housing payment if they relocate to separate dwelling units. Such eligibility will be determined by the Department.

If two or more eligible individuals with no identifiable head of household occupy the same single family dwelling unit, they will be considered one "family" for replacement housing purposes. When all individuals do not relocate to decent, safe, and sanitary housing, the Department shall determine and pay those individuals who do relocate into decent, safe, and sanitary housing a pro-rata share of the appropriate payment that would have been received if all individuals had relocated together in the same ownership or rental status as they had at the time of initiation of negotiations.

**8. WHAT IF MY BUSINESS AND DWELLING ARE IN THE SAME BUILDING?**

Where displaced individuals or families occupy living quarters on the same premises as a displaced business, farm operation or nonprofit organization, such individuals or families are separate displaced persons for purposes of determining entitlement to relocation payments.

**9. IF I PURCHASE A REPLACEMENT DWELLING PRIOR TO DISPLACEMENT, WILL I BE ELIGIBLE FOR A REPLACEMENT HOUSING PAYMENT?**

If you have obtained legal ownership of a replacement dwelling prior to being displaced and you occupy the replacement dwelling after being displaced and within the specified time limit, you may be eligible for replacement housing payment, if the dwelling is decent, safe, and sanitary. However, if you have purchased and occupied a replacement dwelling prior to the initiation of negotiations you are not eligible for a replacement housing payment.

**10. WHEN MUST I VACATE MY PROPERTY?**

A written notice will normally be given and shall include a statement that you will not be required to move from your dwelling or to move your business or farm operation before ninety (90) days from the date of the notice. Such notice shall inform you of the date by which your property must be vacated. The 90-day notice shall be given as soon as feasible.

11. What if I am unable to move by the time I am required by the 90-day notice?

If for circumstances beyond your reasonable control, you are unable to move by the date specified in the 90-day notice, you may request a 30-day extension. The request must be in writing, stating the reasons for your request and submitted to the Department's District Officer for the area in which you are located.

12. IF I NEED MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RELOCATION ASSISTANCE, WHERE MAY I OBTAIN IT?

There will be a Real Estate Agent assigned to the project who will explain the Relocation Assistance Program in detail as it pertains to you. He/she will make sure you have a Relocation Assistance Brochure and advise you how he may be contacted. If you need additional information or help, you may write or call the Department's District Office for the area in which the project is located.

13. IF I AM NOT SATISFIED WITH MY RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PAYMENT OFFER, DO I HAVE THE RIGHT TO APPEAL?

Yes, you have the right of appeal, if you are dissatisfied with the determination made as to your eligibility for payments or the amount of the payments. The appeal must be made in writing, either in a letter addressed to the Department, or on the appeal form available from the Department. At your request, the Department agent assigned to the project will assist you in filling out the appeal form. Each applicant will be given an opportunity to be heard, and a determination of his/her claim will be made promptly with the reasons given if the appeal is

rejected. In the event the appeal is denied you have the right to seek judicial review. Application forms for appeals and copies of the Department's Relocation Assistance Program regulations can be obtained from any District Office listed on pages 54-55 or from the Relocation Assistance Officer, P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245.

**14. WHEN CAN I RECEIVE MY REPLACEMENT HOUSING PAYMENT IF I DECIDE NOT TO ACCEPT THE FULL CASH VALUE FOR MY PROPERTY AND GO TO COURT?**

If you decide to go to court, a replacement housing offer will still be made to you on the basis of the appraised fair market value of your property. You may make a claim on this offer when you actually occupy a decent, safe and sanitary replacement dwelling. Following final adjudication of your case by the court, a reevaluation will be made as to the amount of your replacement housing eligibility. If the final award for the acquired property and dwelling is in excess of the original appraised value, your replacement housing offer may be decreased, and you may be required to refund the Department the overage.

**15. WHAT HAPPENS IF THE \$22,500 AND \$5,250 LIMITATIONS ON SUPPLEMENTS TO OWNER-OCCUPANTS AND TENANTS ARE INADEQUATE?**

The Relocation Assistance Program provides whatever financial assistance is required to insure the availability of comparable purchase or rental replacement housing. The Department's District Relocation Assistance representative will discuss with you the provisions of "Last Resort Housing" should it become necessary.



## RELOCATION ASSISTANCE OFFICES

The Department has personnel familiar with Relocation Assistance assigned to each of the Department of Transportation and Development District Offices. If you require additional information you should contact the District Office in which the project is located. See map on the back cover to determine in which District the project is located.

### **DISTRICT 02:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
3108 Williams Blvd.  
Kenner, Louisiana 70065  
Phone: (504) 465-3468**

### **DISTRICT 03:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
US Highway 90 East  
Lafayette, Louisiana 70501  
Phone: (318) 233-7404**

### **DISTRICT 04:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
1687 Texas Avenue  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71103  
Phone: (318) 676-7425 or 676-7426**

### **DISTRICT 05:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
8010 Desiard Street  
Monroe, Louisiana 71203  
Phone: (318) 343-6640**

**DISTRICT 07:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
5827 Highway 90  
Lake Charles, Louisiana 70616  
Phone: (318) 437-9250**

**DISTRICT 08:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
3300 MacArthur Drive  
Alexandria, Louisiana 71301  
Phone: (318) 443-2553**

**DISTRICT 58:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
Highway 15 South  
Chase, Louisiana 71324  
Phone: (318) 435-5155**

**DISTRICT 61:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
8100 Airline Highway  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821  
Phone: (504) 231-4142**

**DISTRICT 62:**

**District Relocation Assistance Office  
Department of Transportation and Development  
685 North Morrison  
Hammond, Louisiana 70401  
Phone: (504) 375-0100**

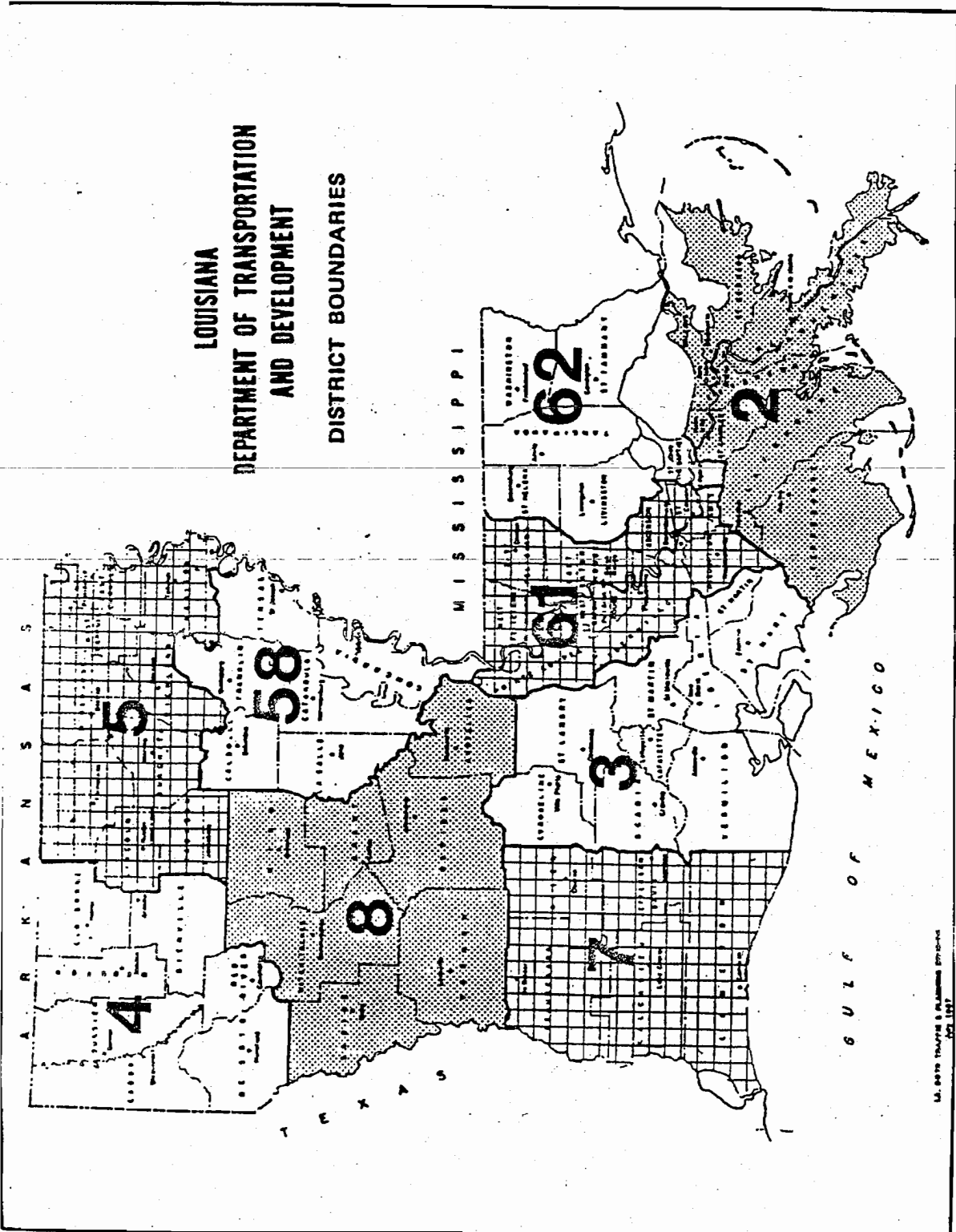
**For additional information write:**

**Relocation Assistance Office  
Real Estate Directorate  
Department of Transportation and Development  
P. O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245**



LOUISIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
AND DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT BOUNDARIES



LA 6070 TRAVEL & PLANNING DIVISION  
APR 1987

