March 13, 2020

North Fort Bend Water Authority, Fort Bend County
Clean Water State Revolving Fund Project No. 73781
Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District Nos. 146 & 194 Reclaimed
Water System Water Lines Project
Environmental Assessment

BACKGROUND

The North Fort Bend Water Authority (Authority), on behalf of the Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 146 (MUD No. 146) and Fort Bend County Municipal Utility District No. 194 (MUD No. 194), together referred to as the Districts, is proposing to use $2,421,800 in financing and principal forgiveness from the CWSRF program to install approximately 38,000 linear feet of two to 12-inch reclaimed water lines for irrigation of green spaces and amenity lake level management within the Districts. The Authority proposes to use $2,421,800 in financing and principal forgiveness from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Equivalency Program, which is administered by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). The Authority closed on its commitment (L1000739 and LF1000760) on August 23, 2018. The Environmental Assessment is based primarily on the Environmental Information Document\(^1\) (EID) submitted to the TWDB by the Authority and other available resources.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Currently, the Districts use approximately 260,000 gallons per day (GPD) of potable water to irrigate green spaces and provide amenity lake level management throughout the Long Meadow Farms residential community. The proposed project will decrease costs to residents, reduce stress on drinking water, and help alleviate the Districts’ reliance on potable water by providing a sustainable and cost-effective water supply using reclaimed water for green space irrigation and amenity lake level management.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project will involve the installation of approximately 38,000 linear feet of reuse water lines ranging in size from two to 12 inches that will take the Type I effluent from existing tertiary filters from the existing MUD No. 146 wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and distribute it to the irrigation system owned by the Districts to use for irrigation of green spaces and amenity lake level management.

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throughout the Districts. Tertiary filters were installed at the WWTP in December 2017 and have been in operation since August 2019. They are currently being used for the chemical feed and non-potable water systems at the WWTP and the excess effluent is being released through the normal discharge. The proposed reuse lines will be constructed using horizontal directional drilling (HDD) under Oyster Creek and a combination of HDD and open trenching will be used throughout the rest of the project. The proposed reclaimed water system will service the Long Meadow Farms community, a residential housing development along State Highway 99 with Skinner Lane bordering to the south and west, and South Mason Road to the east, in Fort Bend County, Texas.

EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES

In addition to the preferred action alternative, the Authority evaluated the no-action alternative. Each alternative was evaluated for its potential direct, secondary, and cumulative impacts on the existing environment.

No-Action Alternative

The no-action alternative continues the Districts' use of approximately 260,000 GPD of potable water to irrigate green spaces and maintain amenity lake levels. This would continue to increase the cost for residents and deplete drinking water supplies; therefore, this alternative was rejected.

Reclaimed Water System Water Lines – Preferred Action Alternative

The Long Meadow Farms community, located in both Districts, currently uses approximately 260,000 GPD of potable water to irrigate green spaces and maintain amenity lake levels. The proposed project would replace the 260,000 GPD of potable water with reclaimed water for irrigation. The preferred action alternative was chosen because it would decrease costs to residents, reduce stress on drinking water, and provide a sustainable and cost-effective water supply for irrigation.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Existing Conditions

The proposed project is located in the City of Richmond in Long Meadow Farms, an existing master development community, southwest of the Barker Reservoir in northeast Fort Bend County. The project is limited to residentially developed parts of the Districts, with portions impacting graded and channelized sections of Buffalo Bayou.
Geology and Soils

The proposed project is located within the Gulf Coast Plains Physiographic Province of Texas. Geologically, the project is underlain by the Beaumont Formation with alluvial features. The Beaumont Formation is characterized by dominantly clay and mud of low permeability, light- to dark-gray and bluish- to greenish-gray clay and silt, intermixed and interbedded containing beds and lenses of fine sand, decayed organic matter, and many buried organic-rich, oxidized soil zones that contain calcareous and ferruginous nodules.

The alluvium and low terrace deposits are along streams, sand, silt, clay, and gravel with variable thickness. The unit appears on the Geologic Map of Texas on the lagoon side of barrier islands where they represent lagoon and wind-tidal-flat sand and clay. These deposits of clay and silty, clayey fine to very fine quartz sand and shell sand accumulate on alternately dry and flooded barren flats 0.3 meters below and one meter above mean sea level. Mapped areas include active eolian sand dunes on the landward side of the barrier islands.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has identified the soils within the proposed project area as belonging to the Katy-Clodine-Aris association, the Verland-Lake Charles-Edna-Bernard association, the Norwood-Brazoria-Asa association, and the Pledger-Brazoria association. These associations are all characterized as being nearly level soils across prairies, with a zero to five percent slope. They have a loamy surface layer and loamy or clayey underlying layers. They are somewhat poorly drained and moderately permeable to very slowly permeable, with low to low moderate geoarchaeological potential.

There are no faults or other pertinent geologic features mapped in the proposed project area. The proposed project is not located in a karst or pseudo-karst zone. No adverse environmental issues are expected as a result of the geologic setting.

Although the project footprint is located on some mapped soil units classified as Prime or Other Important Farmland, there will be no land use conversion. No soil contamination is present, and the soil type does not present any constraints to the proposed project. Soil will not be moved off-site and will not become contaminated as a result of the proposed project.

Water Resources

The proposed project is located in the San Jacinto River Basin. There are no Environmental Protection Agency (EPA-designated) sole source aquifers in the
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project area. The proposed project is not anticipated to have significant impacts to water quality; however, temporary vegetation loss may occur and could potentially cause an increase of sediment within construction areas. Best management practices (BMPs) will be placed in appropriate areas until ground stabilization has occurred.

Topography and Floodplains

Elevation across the proposed project area ranges from approximately 70 to 100 feet above mean sea level (MSL). The topography of the project area is mostly level with dominant drainage for the area in Oyster Creek, which runs through the heart of the subdivision, eventually draining into the Brazos River. Oyster Creek runs through the southern portion of the development, and four amenity ponds and one natural pond are found in the vicinity of the Long Meadow Farms subdivision.

The project is partially located within the floodway and the 100-year floodplain of Oyster Creek. The City of Richmond and Fort Bend County participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). All impacts to the 100-year floodplain are avoided by the HDD crossing method at the identified waterway. All construction impacts will be temporary and short-term, taking place in already developed areas. All temporary impacts will be returned to pre-construction conditions. Coordination with the local floodplain coordinator will need to be complete prior to the start of construction.

Wetlands, Streams, and Waters of the United States

A team of wetland scientists surveyed the project area for wetlands and waterbodies. The landscape of the proposed project area is dominated by upland prairie and residential neighborhoods. The wetland scientists identified and mapped the ordinary highwater mark of one perennial streams/canals identified as Oyster Creek within the proposed project area. The wetland scientists did not identify any forested or herbaceous wetlands within the proposed project area. Upon completion of the wetland/waterbody survey, the wetland scientists determined that the identified stream has a significant nexus to the Gulf of Mexico. Construction activities would avoid all temporary and permanent impacts to waters of the United States by HDD at the stream crossing. No impacts are expected to occur to any wetlands, streams, and/or waters of the United States. Proper BMPs measurements will be in place until construction activities have been completed in order to control erosion, surface water runoff, stormwater runoff, and potential spills from construction equipment.
The proposed project will not require a United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit because HDD will be utilized to install the proposed lines under Oyster Creek. This environmental finding is conditioned that directional boring is to be utilized to avoid waters of the United States, including wetlands. The proposed project will therefore not adversely impact waters of the United States, including wetlands.

**Biological Elements**

The proposed project area is located within the Western Gulf Coastal Plain Ecological Region. A field survey was conducted in August 2018. Most of the survey area took place in landscaped residential neighborhoods. The proposed pipeline area is described as an approximately 30-foot-wide maintained grass easement that was incorporated into the recreational amenities of Long Meadow Farms residential neighborhoods. A majority of the easements either contained or were immediately adjacent to yards of single-family homes, manicured landscaping, sidewalks, exercise paths, benches, roads, retention ponds, pavilions, gazebos, or greenspaces with scattered mature trees. All mature trees will be avoided. A nature preserve is located on the southern end of the proposed reclaimed water system in the Long Meadow Farms community; however, no permanent impacts are proposed. All temporarily disturbed areas will be returned to pre-construction conditions.

Brown & Gay Engineers, Inc. (BGE) has determined that 29 species are listed as rare, candidate, threatened, or endangered in Fort Bend County by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). Based on the literature review, the site does not meet the descriptions for 24 of the species' preferred habitats. Preferred habitat within Oyster Creek may exist for the smooth pimpleback (*Quadrula Houstonensis*), Texas fawnsfoot (*Truncilla Macrodon*), American eel (*Anguilla rostrate*), sharpnose shiner (*Notropis oxyrhyynchus*), and the alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*). No impacts to any of these species are anticipated as impacts to Oyster Creek would be avoided by use of HDD.

The Texas Natural Diversity Database (TxNDD) search results do not show documented critical habitats or species occurrences within the project alignment; however, TxNDD contains records for the federally listed endangered Texas prairie dawn (*Hymenoxys texana*) approximately 2.0 and 2.2 miles north of the project and records for the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) approximately 2.1 miles east of the project.

During field observations, no threatened and endangered species were observed. The only wildlife observed in the area were red-eared slider turtles (*Trachemys
scripta elegans) and a single black-bellied whistling duck (Dendrocygna autumnalis). The vegetation observed consisted mostly of St. Augustine grass (Stenotaphrum secundatum) and scattered mature pecan trees (Carya illinoinensis) and live oak trees (Quercus fusiformis). Retention amenity ponds are scattered throughout the neighborhoods. All upland grass areas had been recently mowed. It is BGE’s professional opinion that no listed species are anticipated to be adversely impacted due to construction associated with the proposed project.

**Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Species Known to Occur in Fort Bend County**

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Status Key:
- LE, LT - Federally Listed Endangered/Threatened
- PE – Federally Proposed Endangered
- PT, C - Federally Proposed Threatened, or Candidate Species
- SA – Endangered due to similarity of appearance of other species.
- DL, PDL - Federally Delisted/Proposed Delisted
- E, T - State Endangered/Threatened
- blank - Rare but with no regulatory listing status
- *extirpated from the area

Data Sources: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, United States Fish and Wildlife Service

No state or national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, wild or scenic rivers, natural areas or similar preserves are located within the project area.

**Cultural Resources**

There are no previously recorded significant or potentially significant sites within or adjacent to the project footprint, according to Texas Historical Commission’s (THC)
Archaeological Sites Atlas, nor is the proposed project within the protected area surrounding a historic cemetery, structure, or district.

A cultural resources literature review and site visit was done for the proposed project area. The proposed project is within an area heavily impacted during urbanization, which included the processes of modifying the natural course of perennial waterways (Jones Creek, Oyster Creek, Bullhead Bayou, and Long Point Slough) and construction of both the Addicks Reservoir and the Barker Reservoir, located to the northwest of the project area. The most impacts are associated with the previous development of Long Meadow Farms as a residential community and the associated infrastructure, including subsurface flood control pipelines, public utilities, roadways, buried telecommunications lines, and the excavation of multiple detention basins. Consequently, the potential for encountering intact cultural resources, either of a prehistoric or a historic nature, is extremely low. The presence of 15 previously recorded cultural resources sites in close proximity to nearby waterways suggests that prior to development, areas along the various nearby water bodies and ultimately, Buffalo Bayou, would have possessed a high probability for housing cultural resources. However, due to the widespread and total modification of these waterways in the entirety of the project’s area of potential effect, no high probability areas exist.

As a result of this cultural resources literature review and site visit, a cultural resources investigation was not conducted due to the widespread landscape modifications associated with urbanization. The THC concurred with these results, as described later in the ‘Cross-Cutter Compliance and Agency Coordination section. No direct impacts to cultural resources/historic properties are anticipated as a result of the project.

**Hazardous Materials**

An informal site assessment was conducted for the proposed project, including a limited environmental review of regulatory databases, historical imagery, and a project site visit. Environmental Data Resources, Inc. (EDR) services were retained to provide database information on local, state, and federal sites which are known to regulatory agencies to be contaminated, or sites that are in the process of evaluation for potential contamination. According to the environmental records review summary, one registered environmental record containing three state registered underground storage tanks were identified less than a quarter mile from the proposed project site. This site is not anticipated to pose an environmental hazard to the proposed project site.
EDR services were also retained to provide database information on the presence of known water and oil/gas wells occurring within the project site. The EDR DataMap Well Search Report and review of the Railroad Commission of Texas and TWDB online databases indicated the presence of 19 wells occurring within the project site, including seven oil/gas wells and 12 water wells. Five pipelines also occur within the project site, including one crude oil, one methane, and three natural gas pipelines. These sites are not anticipated to pose an environmental hazard to the project site.

Aerial imagery showed negligible land use change within and adjacent to the proposed project site between 1978 to 2002 and during this period the area was utilized for agricultural purposes. Based on a review of aerial imagery, it appears that the Long Meadow Farms community began construction in early 2004. Currently, the project site consists of greenspace easements adjacent to a residential housing development.

A site visit was conducted on July 11, 2018, to confirm aerial and database findings and to identify any other environmental concerns. The sites identified during the Phase I are not anticipated to pose an environmental hazard to the project site.

There are no Superfund Sites from the EPA National Priorities List located on the subject property or in areas associated with the proposed work for the water line.

**Social Implications and Environmental Justice**

In accordance with Executive Order 12898 pertaining to Environmental Justice (EJ), potential environmental impacts to low-income and minority communities have been assessed. The United States EPA defines environmental justice as conveyed by the Executive Order as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. The goal of fair treatment is not to shift risks among populations, but to identify potential disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations and to identify alternatives to mitigate those impacts.

The United States Census Bureau characterizes “Hispanic Origin” as a minority group, but not a separate race. Racial groups include: White, African-American, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Other Race, and Multiracial. The calculation for “Percent Minority” includes all minority groups and races except non-Hispanic, white persons. The terms “Living Below the Poverty Level” is equivalent to the term
“Economically Distressed” and includes, according to the 2015 United States Census, a four-person family with an annual income at or below $24,250.

The proposed project was evaluated for EJ impacts using the Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJScreen), a mapping tool designed by the United States EPA that allows users to create maps and generate reports on factors that may affect public and environmental health. Data includes population, percentage of minority residents, per capita income, etc. for comparison with data for the county and state.

The EJ Analysis was performed on September 19, 2019, for the proposed project area, within a 0.5-mile area around the reclaimed water line alignment. The results are listed below with data from the United States Census for the State and County included for comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% Minority</th>
<th>% Below Poverty Level/Per Capita Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>28,701,845</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
<td>14.7%/$28,985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Bend County</td>
<td>787,858</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>8.0%/$38,382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Richmond</td>
<td>12,033</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
<td>21.6%/$21,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Area (0.5-mile buffer)</td>
<td>10,165</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>6.0%/$50,354</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EJ Analyses were performed for a 0.5-mile area around the proposed project area (including all project components together). The project area has a lower percentage of minorities (46 percent) than the State (58.5 percent), Fort Bend County (67.5 percent), and City of Richmond (77.2 percent). The percent below poverty level for the project area (6.0 percent) is similar to Fort Bend County (8.0 percent), but much lower than the State (14.7 percent) and the City of Richmond (21.6 percent). The per capita income of the project area ($50,354) is significantly higher than the State ($28,985), Fort Bend County ($38,382), and the City of Richmond ($21,878). The communities within the proposed project area will not be disproportionately impacted in a negative way. People or businesses will not be relocated as a result of the project.

No new land will be acquired for the proposed project; therefore, the proposed project will not require the use of eminent domain. People or businesses will not be relocated as a result of the project. An increase in the rates due to the proposed project is not anticipated. Current rates are projected to meet debt service for the proposed project. The proposed project will not require an increase in taxes to finance the debt. The project will not disproportionately impact minority or low-income populations in a negative way.
POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIVE MEASURES

Standard Mitigative and Precautionary Measures

No permanent impacts affecting federal or state protected resources are anticipated to occur. The construction activities are temporary. All temporary impacts will take place within an approximately 30-foot maintained grass easement that was incorporated into the recreational amenities of Long Meadow Farms residential community. Scenic views will not be impacted during construction or operation. While the reclaimed water lines are being installed there may be a disruption to local traffic. The time will be minimized and scheduled during off-peak hours. The proposed project is not anticipated to cause any other adverse impacts other than was previously addressed.

Air pollution from construction activities occurs primarily in the form of particulate matter, which is created by dust-generating activities (i.e. excavation, grading, trucking, demolition, etc.) and exhaust from the diesel engines that power most of the construction equipment and trucks. To minimize the potential air pollution from construction activities, the proposed project will utilize BMPs. Dust control will include, but is not limited to, use of water spraying devices, avoiding stockpiling of materials on streets, and covering/wetting stockpiles to prevent dust. To limit exhaust all non-operational vehicles or equipment will remain off until use is required.

A stormwater pollution control plan has been created and will be followed for the proposed project. The stormwater pollution control plan includes the following: (1) place filter fabric silt fence around all inlets; (2) all soil stockpiles of significant size shall be encompassed by silt fence; (3) all proposed swales to be constructed by the contractor for maintaining site drainage shall have silt fence placed across the entire swale just upstream of the outfall location; (4) a vehicle wash-down area chosen by the contractor shall protect the inlet where the wash-down water is directed; (5) the contractor shall be responsible for maintaining all features indicated in the stormwater pollution control plan; (6) upon project completion, the entire disturbed area not proposed for immediate reconstruction shall be reseeded as per the stormwater pollution control plan; (7) upon project completion and final stabilization, all silt fence shall be removed and disposed of; and (8) contractor to remove filter dam upon completion of project and restore ditch to existing or better condition.
Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

The proposed project provides a low cost, sustainable solution to using potable water for irrigation. The reclaimed water system would replace all 260,000 GPD of potable water with reclaimed water for irrigation. The reclaimed water system will increase conservation of a drinking water supply and provides a sustainable and cost-effective water supply for irrigation.

Cross-Cutter Compliance and Agency Coordination

The proposed project has been reviewed for potential impacts to the quality of the human environment following the procedures provided in 31 Texas Administrative Code § 375.61, in order to ensure compliance with CWSRF program requirements and federal and state regulations, including the federal cross-cutting environmental authorities from the EPA listed below.

1. National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, PL 91-190
3. Clean Air Act, 42 USC 7506(c)
4. Coastal Barrier Resources Act, 16 USC 3501, et seq.
5. Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, PL 92-583, as amended
7. Executive Order 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment
8. Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management
9. Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands
11. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, PL 85-624, as amended
13. Safe Drinking Water Act, § 1424(e), PL 92-523, as amended
14. Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, PL 90-542, as amended
15. The Wilderness Act, 16 USC 1131, et seq.
16. Environmental Justice, Executive Order 12898
20. Clean Water Act, PL 92-500, as amended

This environmental review included coordination with various state and federal regulatory agencies and other interested parties including a 30-day public review period of the planning documents. The following section provides a summary of that coordination and provides a discussion of any concerns, recommendations, or
conditions pertaining to methods for avoidance, minimization, or mitigation of potential impacts.

**Texas Historical Commission**

The THC reviewed the proposed project in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as well as the Antiquities Code of Texas, and in a response dated October 22, 2018 (THC Tracking No. 201900755), indicated that no historic properties are present or affected by the proposed project and no archeological survey of the project area is needed; therefore, the project may proceed.

Pursuant to the conditions of this approval, if archeological sites are discovered during construction, work will cease immediately in that area and the Authority will notify the THC and the TWDB of the discovery. The THC and the TWDB will then proceed in accordance with the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (36 CFR Part 800) prior to taking any action that would affect the cultural resources.

**United States Army Corps of Engineers**

The Authority sent a letter dated August 27, 2018, to USACE indicating that no permit is needed for the proposed project. The USACE reviewed the proposed project in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and provided a response letter dated January 9, 2020 (Project Number SWG-2018-00743). The USACE stated that Oyster Creek, at the project site, is not a navigable water of the United States and is not subject to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (Section 10); therefore, structures or work, such as a line and installation of the line, across or under Oyster Creek, does not require a Department of the Army permit under Section 10. The USACE also determined that Oyster Creek, at the project site, is a relatively permanent water and is a water of the United States subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (Section 404); therefore, the discharge of dredged or fill material into Oyster Creek is subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and requires a Department of the Army permit. BGE, Inc. stated that the line under Oyster Creek will be installed by HDD, which will avoid a discharge of dredged or fill material into Oyster Creek. The installation of the aforementioned line, as proposed utilizing directional drilling methods under Oyster Creek, will not result in a discharge of dredged or fill material into Oyster Creek and is not a regulated activity subject to Section 404 or Section 10; therefore, the proposed installation of the lines do not require a Department of the Army permit.
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and United States Fish and Wildlife Service

The TPWD Wildlife Habitat Assessment Program reviewed the proposed project in accordance with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code (TPW Code § 12.0011), and provided a response dated September 5, 2018 (TPWD Project No. 40631). The TPWD made several recommendations and BGE, on behalf of the Authority, responded briefly as described below.

**TPWD Recommendation:** Where trenching or other excavation is involved in construction, the TPWD recommends that contactors keep trenching/excavations and backfilling crews close together to minimize the amount of trenches/excavation areas left open at any given time during construction. The TPWD recommends that any open trenches or excavation areas be covered overnight and/or inspected every morning to ensure no wildlife species have been trapped. Trenches left open for more than two daylight hours should be inspected for the presence of trapped wildlife prior to backfilling. If trenches/excavation areas cannot be backfilled the day of initial excavation, then escape ramps should be installed at least every 90 meters (approximately 295 feet). Escape ramps can be short lateral trenches or wooden planks sloping to the surface at an angle less than 45 degrees (1:1).

**Authority’s Response:** The Authority will ensure that any trenches left open overnight will contain installed escape ramps and be inspected for wildlife species every morning. Open trenches will be inspected regularly for presence of wildlife species and any identified wildlife will be removed prior to backfilling.

**TPWD Recommendation:** For soil stabilization and/or revegetation of disturbed areas within the project area, the TPWD recommends erosion and seed/mulch stabilization materials that avoid entanglement hazards to snakes and other wildlife species. Because the mesh found in many erosion control blankets or mats pose an entanglement hazard to wildlife, the TPWD recommends the use of no-till drilling, hydromulching, and/or hydroseeding rather than erosion control blankets or mats due to a reduced risk to wildlife. If erosion control blankets or mats will be used, the product should contain no netting or contain loosely woven, natural fiber netting in which the mesh design allows the threads to move, therefore allowing expansion of the mesh openings. Plastic mesh matting should be avoided.

**Authority’s Response:** The Authority will utilize hydromulching, hydroseeding, and sodding as methods for soil stabilization and revegetation of disturbed areas within the project area.

The USFWS, in accordance with the Endangered Species Act and statutes affecting other federally protected species, was given the opportunity to review the proposed
project in a letter dated June 11, 2018. No formal response was received. Based on the TPWD recommendations and the Authority’s response, the TWDB did not require a formal consultation with the USFWS.

Pursuant to the conditions of this approval, if threatened or endangered species happen to be encountered during construction, work will cease immediately, and the Authority will notify TWDB staff, the TPWD, and the USFWS. Subsequent to notification, mitigation measures will be taken in accordance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Although some of the proposed project is located on mapped soil units classified as Prime or Other Important Farmland, it is buried reclaimed water lines and does not involve land use conversion. Therefore, TWDB did not require coordination with the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Services in order to confirm compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act.

Bureau of Reclamation – Oklahoma-Texas Area Office

The Bureau of Reclamation was given the opportunity to review the proposed project. The review request was dated June 11, 2018. No formal response was received. The proposed project will not impact Bureau of Reclamation lands.

Local Floodplain Administrator (National Flood Insurance Program)

The project is partially located within the floodway and 100-year floodplain of Oyster Creek. This environmental finding is conditioned to require that a floodplain permit will be obtained from the City of Richmond and Fort Bend County prior to clearing or construction activities within any 100-year floodplain.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

In a response dated November 10, 2017, the TCEQ stated that a review of the project for general conformity impact, in accordance with 40 CFR Part 93, indicates that Fort Bend County is currently classified by the United States EPA as moderate nonattainment for the 2008 ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Therefore, general conformity rules apply.

The two primary precursors to ozone are volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and nitrogen oxides (NOx). A general conformity analysis may be required when a project results in an emission increase of 100 tons per year or greater for either
VOCs or NOx. Because the emissions from this proposed project are expected to be below these thresholds, the TCEQ does not anticipate that it will impact the State Implementation Plan; therefore, a general conformity analysis is not required.

The TCEQ does not anticipate significant long-term environmental impacts from this project as long as construction and waste disposal activities are completed in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal permits, statutes, and regulations. The TCEQ recommends that the Authority take necessary steps to ensure that BMPs are used to control runoff from construction sites to prevent detrimental impact to surface and groundwater. The TCEQ also recommends that debris or waste disposal should be at an appropriately authorized disposal facility.

Intergovernmental Review

In letter dated June 11, 2018, the Fort Bend County Judge was given the opportunity to review the EID for the proposed project. No formal responses were received.

DOCUMENTATION, COORDINATION, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The proposed project is consistent with local, regional, and statewide planning. Coordination with the appropriate governmental agencies has been made and no adverse comments have been received.

Public participation conducted during facilities planning included a public meeting held on July 25, 2018, which was advertised in the Houston Chronicle, a newspaper of general circulation in the service area. The notice was published on June 25, 2018 and contained information regarding availability of planning documents, including the EID, for public review at the BGE’s office at 10777 Westheimer Road, Suite 400, Houston, Texas 77042 between the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The public meeting was held at 6:00 p.m. on July 25, 2018 at the Willow Fork Country Club. Approximately 45 people attended the meeting, including the Authority's board. No other concerns or adverse comments were voiced at the public meeting or received during the 30-day public review period.

CONDITIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon a detailed review of the CWSRF planning information, the EID, this Environmental Assessment, and other documentation, the proposed project is considered to be environmentally sound with the following conditions:

- Use of directional boring to avoid waters of the United States, including wetlands;
In order to comply with requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency regarding implementation of the National Flood Insurance Act, National Disaster Protection Act, National Flood Insurance Reform Act, Federal Executive Orders 11988 and 11990, and to comply with related state statutes, proponents of construction projects in special flood hazard areas must coordinate in advance with the local floodplain administrator of the City of Richmond and Fort Bend County and obtain a floodplain development permit prior to construction;

- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of cultural resources; and
- Standard emergency condition for the discovery of threatened and endangered species.

Therefore, it is recommended that a Finding of No Significant Impact be issued.
Fort Bend MUDs 146 and 194

Regional Location Map

Disclaimer:
Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the basemap data. BGE, Inc. assumes no liability or damages due to errors or omissions.
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USGS Topographic Map

Proposed Water Line

USGS 7.5 Minute Topographic Map
Clodine(1995) and Richmond NE(1971) Quadrangles