



## NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CE) Review and Decision Record

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Project Name	Mobile-Tombigbee River and Perdido Bay Basins Watershed Study
Science Center	<a href="#">LOWER MISSISSIPPI GULF WATER SCIENCE CTR</a>
Business Entity (BE)	
Project Location (Address)	Five selected sites in Alabama and Florida within the Mobile and Perdido River Basins.
Project Location (State/Territory)	Alabama
USGS Region	Southeast
Project Evaluator/Principal Investigator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rodgers, Kirk D
Center Director or other Responsible Official (RO)	Warner, Kelly L
Environmental Protection Specialist (EPS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bryson, Eva J
Project Description (and attachments)	The USGS will be installing five new streamgages on existing bridge infrastructure with a non-contact radar installed in a small box on a bridge railing that uploads water level information via satellite. The purpose is to create a more robust streamgage network and help to minimize flow alteration predictions in future analyses. If bridge installation is not suitable, a small box will be installed near an existing road crossing on a post or small platform. If site conditions limit standard streamgage installations that require minimal disturbance to the site location, further assessment will be made to ensure installation would result in no significant impacts. If necessary, another location will be selected for the streamgage installation that would result in no significant impact. Part 1 of the Study includes documentation from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service dated August 20, 2015, (2015-I-0762) and the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council under the Restore Act (EPA_RESTORE_004_000_Cat1).
USGS Categorical Exclusion (CE) - from DOI DM 516 Chapter 9, Section 9.5 A-P	E. Operate/const/install/remove+restoration of sites to pre-structure cond. or equiv. of surrounding envt. of hydrological/water qual. mon. structures/equip. including but not ltd. to weirs, cableways, gaging stat., grndwtr. wells,+meterologic structures
DOI Categorical Exclusion (in lieu of USGS CE)	Not applicable
CE Extraordinary Circumstances Review: To qualify for a CE, you must determine if any extraordinary circumstances are applicalbe. Answer questions 1-12 to begin this process:	2020-04-20T07:00:00Z
1. Will the project result in significant impacts on public health or safety?	No
2. Will the project have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographical characteristics as (check all that apply):	Not applicable
3. Will project have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources?	No
4. Will project have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks?	No
5. Will project establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects?	No

EFFECTS:

6. Will project have a direct relation to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects? No

7. Will the project have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the bureau? No

8. Will project have significant impacts on species listed, proposed to be listed, on list of Endangered or Threatened Species or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species? No

9. Will project violate a Federal Law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment? No

10. Will the project have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations? No

11. Will the project limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites? No

12. Will project continue introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species? No

Project Evaluator/Principal Investigator (e-signature) Decision Record  Rodgers, Kirk D

Center Director or other Responsible Official RO (e-signature) Decision Record  Warner, Kelly L

Center Director or other Responsible Official RO Decision Approve

Enter names of staff that you want notified of form completion  Rodgers, Kirk D  Steyer, Gregory D  Knight, Rodney R

EPS Action Reviewed for Categorical Exclusion

EPS Comments

EPS (e-signature)  Bryson, Eva J

Attachments

- [11 Native American-Part 2 River Basin Study.docx](#)
- [7 Historic-Part 2 River Basin Study.docx](#)
- [8 Species-Part 2 River Basin Study.docx](#)
- [Baseline Flow - Implementation - CE-read-only.pdf](#)
- [FWS Mobile River Basin.pdf](#)
- [FWS Official Species List-River Basin Study 1.pdf](#)
- [FWS Official Species List-River Basin Study 2.pdf](#)
- [FWS Official Species List-River Basin Study 3.pdf](#)
- [IPaC\\_ Resources.pdf](#)
- [OASIS Study Area.png](#)

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Environmental Management Branch-Denver  
Internal Memorandum

To: File

From: Eva Bryson, Environmental Manager

Date: April 20, 2020

Subject: Lower Mississippi Gulf Water Science Center  
Mobile-Tombigbee River and Perdido Bay Basins Watershed Study - Part 2  
Mississippi, Alabama, Florida  
Categorical Exclusion Question #8

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*Question #8. Will the project have a significant Impact on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the Federal list of Endangered or Threatened Species or have significant impacts on the designated critical habitat for these species? (43 CFR Part 46.21 5(h)) Note: Not all areas will have endangered and threatened species. With the Department of the Interior's Guidance, the evaluator (if the evaluator has the expertise to make this determination) may not need to consult with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). However, if the evaluator does not have the expertise or recent documentation with the endangered and threatened species determination, a consultation with the FWS must take place. All consultations will be performed by your respective Environmental Specialist.*

No. Based on the Official Species List from the Fish and Wildlife Service dated April 20, 2020, the USGS has concluded that the proposed project will have no effect on any species that may be in the project area. According to the Fish and Wildlife Service's website for threatened and endangered species, including candidate species, there are 42 critical habitats in or near the project area. This project overlaps several critical habitats, but the exact location of the stream gage will be on bridges or bridge abutments. Therefore, critical habitats will not be impacted by this project. See the Official Species List from the Fish and Wildlife Service attached to the NEPA form.

No wetlands or floodplains will be impacted by the proposed project area.

There are 26 migratory species that could potentially be within the range of the project. No migratory birds will be impacted since the project will take place outside the general bird nesting season. Birds species of concern do not nest on bridges or bridge abutments.

There are three refuge lands or fish hatcheries are within the project area. However, the stream gages will be placed on state-owned bridges or bridge abutments.



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Categorical Exclusion Question #7

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*7. Will the project have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by the bureau? (43 CFR Part 46.215(g))*

No. There are no properties listed or eligible for listing on existing bridges in these states. The presence of properties was evaluated by the states during the initial bridge development and it was determined that no properties, historical or otherwise, were within the project area. If bridge installation is not suitable, a small box will be installed near an existing road crossing on a post or small platform. Such properties are in previously disturbed areas and were evaluated by the appropriate state agency.



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Categorical Exclusion Question #11

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*11. Will the project limit access to and ceremonial use of Native American sacred sites on Federal lands by Native American religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites? (43 CFR Part 46.215(k)).*

No. Access to the project area will be from existing roads and the project area will be on existing state bridges or bridge abutments. The physical integrity of any sacred sites in the project area were evaluated by the states during the initial bridge development and it was determined that no tribal sites are within the project area.