

~Announcing~
COMMENT PERIOD
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
And
ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION REPORT
as related to the
Section 1135 BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD
RESTORATION PROJECT,
NORTH CANADIAN RIVER,
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

in compliance with
The National Environmental Policy Act

FORMAL COMMENT PERIOD
31 JANUARY through 2 MARCH, 2000

The Draft Environmental Assessment addresses the environmental effects of constructing and operating a bottomland hardwood restoration project on the North Canadian River in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The comment period is a continuation of the public involvement process used to develop the draft assessment. The public is invited to review the draft assessment and environmental restoration report and make comments. A copy of the assessment and report are available on compact disk (CD-ROM) at:

Metropolitan Library
131 Dean A. Mcgee Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

All written comments and questions will be addressed in the Final Environmental Assessment. To be included in the final assessment, comments and questions must be received prior to the close of the formal comment period. Comments and questions about the draft assessment or the comment process can be directed to:

David L. Combs,
Chief, Environmental Analysis and Compliance Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1645 S. 101st E. Ave.
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74128-4629
Phone: 918-669-7660
E-mail David.L.Combs@usace.army.mil



DEPARTMENT OF ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, TULSA DISTRICT
1645 SOUTH 101ST EAST AVENUE
TULSA, OKLAHOMA 74128-4609

January 31, 2000

Planning, Environmental, and Regulatory Division
Environmental Analysis and Compliance Branch

TO INTERESTED PARTIES

The Tulsa District has assessed the environmental impacts of constructing a Section 1135 Bottomland Hardwood Restoration Project on the North Canadian River in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, from Eastern Avenue to Western Avenue. The purpose of the project is to restore degraded and fragmented bottomland hardwood, open water habitat, and wetland riparian habitat resulting from construction and operation of the North Canadian River Floodway. The project was designed to compliment Oklahoma City approved Ordinance No. 20,045 (Metropolitan Area Projects).

The assessment was prepared in accordance with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulations in 33 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 230, Policy and Procedures for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act. It was determined this action would cause no significant adverse impacts on the natural or human environment.

The draft Finding of No Significant Impact and the Environmental Assessment are enclosed on a compact disk (CD) for your review and comments. Comments should be submitted within 30 days from the date of this letter to the Tulsa District, U.S. Corps of Engineers, ATTN: CESWT-PE-E, 1645 South 101st East Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74128-4609. If you are unable to review the document on CD, please contact Mr. David L. Combs, Chief, Environmental Analysis and Compliance Branch at 918-669-7660 and a bound copy of the report will be furnished for review.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. David Steele", is written over the typed name.

for G. David Steele, P.E.
Chief, Planning, Environmental,
and Regulatory Division

Enclosures

***FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

SECTION 1135 BOTTOMLAND HARDWOOD RESTORATION PROJECT NORTH CANADIAN RIVER OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA EASTERN AVENUE TO WESTERN AVENUE

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, including guidelines in 33 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 230, the Tulsa District has assessed the impacts of constructing a Section 1135 Bottomland Hardwood Restoration Project along the North Canadian River, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma from Eastern Avenue to Western Avenue. An integrated Ecosystem Restoration Report and Environmental Assessment (ERR) has been prepared to address impacts of the proposed project and for alternatives to provide ecosystem restoration. The proposed project would include restoration of approximately 60 acres of riparian and bottomland hardwoods, 20 acres of wetlands, and 170 acres of riverine and open water aquatic habitat. The purposes of the restoration activities are to improve bottomland habitat values by planting hard and soft mast producing tree species; develop permanent backwater wetlands to restore waterfowl nesting, brood rearing and wintering habitat; establish an early successional vegetative component; restore habitat for neotropical birds; develop aquatic habitat for spawning of fish and other aquatic organisms; and reestablish a contiguous corridor to allow free migration of avian and wildlife species throughout the proposed project area.

Several plans were evaluated for their potential to restore ecosystem function and stability. Alternatives included various levels of forest management measures to improve riparian and bottomland hardwood habitat for the benefit of multiple species of birds and wildlife; alternatives for created wetland development to benefit waterfowl, shore and wading birds and allow reestablishment of historic vegetation communities; alternatives to provide instream habitat for multiple species of fish; and alternatives to establish a component of early successional vegetation to benefit neotropical birds, hummingbirds, butterflies, and other urban wildlife species. In addition, a "no action" plan was evaluated.

The recommended plan would impact waters of the United States and is subject to provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The terrestrial restoration activities recommended would meet the conditions of Nationwide Permit 27, Wetland and Riparian Restoration and Creation Activities. The State of Oklahoma has issued a water quality certificate for Nationwide Permit 27

and therefore no further coordination is required under Section 404. The proposed project is located within the flood plain of the North Canadian River. The project as proposed requires siting within the flood plain to meet its intended purpose but, the project would not induce or increase flood damages within the area. The proposed project is in compliance with Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management. The proposed project would neither adversely impact nor result in any loss of wetland area; therefore, the project complies with Executive Order 11990.

Based on the ERR and results of coordination with the public and appropriate state and Federal agencies, I have concluded that the recommended plan would not have a significant adverse impact on the natural or human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared.

Date

Leonardo V. Flor
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Engineer