



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
CIVIL WORKS
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WASHINGTON DC 20310-0108

JAN 31 2026

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MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDING GENERAL, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

SUBJECT: Policy Direction on Pearl River Basin, Mississippi Federal Flood Risk Management Project

1. This memorandum provides my direction for the Pearl River Basin, Mississippi project in accordance with the requirements of Section 3104 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007.
2. Background. The non-Federal interest for this effort, Rankin-Hinds Flood and Drainage Control District (non-federal sponsor), completed a feasibility study under Section 211 of WRDA 1996. Upon review by the Corps and my office, it was determined additional analysis was required so that the appropriate evaluations required under Section 3104 could be made. The additional analysis is captured in the Revised Draft: Environmental Impact Statement (July 2025) (RDEIS). Section 3104 authorizes construction subject to my comparison of the level of flood protection provided by the National Economic Development Plan (NED plan) and the locally preferred plan (LPP). Section 3104 further requires that, if selecting the LPP, I determine that the flood risk reduction is equal or greater than that provided by the NED plan and that the LPP is environmentally acceptable and technically feasible. The analysis settled on three plans as outlined in the RDEIS (A1, D1, E1) for my review.
3. Alternative A1. This alternative fails to provide a comprehensive flood risk reduction solution for the Jackson, MS, metropolitan area and has many implementation risks. Alternative A1 fails to fully satisfy the four criteria within Planning and General accounts-Other Social Effects for completeness, efficiency, effectiveness, and acceptability. Note RDEIS at ES-iv & x; pp. 3-7 – 3-8 (identifying problems with Alternative A1 that “may prohibit selection” as the NED plan and suggesting “screen[ing A1] from further consideration”). The current economic analysis assumes 100 percent participation in the non-structural components of A1. This is a flawed assumption and overstates project economic benefits. As a result, Alternative A1 is not the NED plan.
4. Alternative E1 (NED plan). Based on the alternatives and associated benefits considered, I have determined that Alternative E1 is technically feasible and when paired with additional features (outlined below), is the NED plan because it delivers a comprehensive flood damage reduction solution that maximizes net national economic development benefits. The Corps will consider formulation of additional features during design to address downstream water temperature variability and turbidity needs that

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may arise during construction or project operations that may affect existing downstream interests. Further, the Corps will provide the public with additional transparency on the independent operations of the Ross Barnett Reservoir, including via a direct link to the NOAA and USGS websites and ensure prior to construction of the Pearl River Flood Risk Management Project, the non-federal sponsor fulfills its operations and maintenance obligations for the existing federal project in accordance with the Operations & Maintenance Manual (May 1985). Alternative E1 would reduce expected annual damages by \$19.7 Million, approximately 70 percent of the (\$27.9 Million) damages that would otherwise occur.

5. Alternative D1 (LPP). As stated in the non-federal sponsor's letter dated October 30, 2025, Alternative D1 is the LPP. Like Alternative E1, Alternative D1 would reduce economic annual damages by \$19.7 Million. In accordance with Section 3104(c)(1) of WRDA 2007, I find the LPP technically feasible and that it provides equal flood damage reduction as Alternative E1. Alternative D1, like Alternative E1, will address the systemic and repetitive flood damages that have negatively impacted the study area for decades, while also providing additional recreation benefits.

6. Environmental Acceptability. Based on my assessment of the information, available at this time, I find that both Alternative D1 and E1 are environmentally acceptable, subject to further investigations required for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as well as the development of mitigation plans to compensate for losses of habitat.

7. Plan Selection. I have carefully reviewed the substantive technical and interagency work the Corps has accomplished since 2023 in collaboration with the non-federal sponsor, and I have compared the NED plan with the LPP. In accordance with Section 3104(c)(1) of WRDA 2007, and in consideration of public comments on the RDEIS, I have selected a plan that is a "combination" of the NED and the LPP (D1) for implementation. Unlike the NED or LPP, the plan I am directing will include the elements of the LPP while also incorporating the additional features of the NED plan.

8. Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED). PED may commence by utilizing funds provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act following the execution of a cost-share agreement.


9. Cost-sharing. Through the completion of construction and on an annual basis, the Corps will ensure that the cost share remains fiscally balanced. The project will be cost shared in accordance with Section 103 of WRDA 1986, as amended (33 U.S.C. 2213), and Section 3104 of WRDA 2007. Items of local cooperation and operation, maintenance, repair, replacement and rehabilitation of the project will be a non-Federal sponsor responsibility.

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10. The Pearl River Basin, Mississippi Federal Flood Risk Management Project and any other assistance provided by the Corps for flood risk reduction in the Pearl River Basin, is intended to be supplemental to state and local efforts. As such, it is imperative that the non-federal sponsor, state, and local agencies work together on a long-term tributary management plan and on continuing existing efforts on the Pearl River tributaries.

11. Briefing. An implementation strategy briefing shall be scheduled to occur NLT 30 days of the date of this memorandum. My point of contact for this project is Robyn Colosimo, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army, Project Planning and Review at robyn.s.colosimo.civ@army.mil or (703) 614-3977.



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