

DRAFT
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
REPLACEMENT OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND'S BATTERY PARK TRUNK SEWER
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA
FEMA-1661-DR-VA

The City of Richmond has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for assistance with a public assistance project to relocate a portion of the City of Richmond's Battery Park Trunk Sewer Line (BPTS) that was severely damaged in August and September of 2006 when a sinkhole associated with Tropical Depression Ernesto collapsed and crushed the sewer line. Drainage from the Battery Park sewer shed was severely compromised, and subsequent rain events continue to cause additional flooding.

FEMA proposes to provide assistance for this project through the Public Assistance Program (PA) under Presidential Disaster Declaration FEMA-1661-DR-VA. In accordance with 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for FEMA, Subpart B, Agency Implementing Procedures, Part 10.9, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as implemented by the regulations promulgated by the President's Council on Environmental Quality (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). The purpose of the EA is to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the relocation project, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). In the EA process, FEMA considered three alternatives: The No Action Alternative, Alternative 1 (two-shaft and three-shaft designs), and Alternative 2.

Alternatives 1 and 2 would relocate the damaged portion of the BPTS in an alignment to the west of the existing line to avoid encountering the municipal solid waste (MSW) material that lies above the existing line to the greatest extent possible. Alternative 1 would involve the construction of a new section of sewer, approximately 1500-foot long, as well as 2 or 3 large work shafts. However, at least one of the shafts would be excavated in an area known to contain MSW. Alternative 2 is designed to avoid the potential for contact with MSW nearly entirely by extending the new sewer alignment much further to the north and west. This alignment would be approximately 2800-feet long.

The attached EA has been prepared in accordance with FEMA's regulations in 44 CFR Part 10 (Environmental Considerations) and Executive Orders 11988 (Floodplain Management), 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), and 12898 (Environmental Justice) and all other relevant federal, state, and local laws.

Based on the findings of the attached EA, coordination with the appropriate agencies, and adherence to the project conditions set forth in the EA, FEMA has determined that the proposed project qualifies as a major federal action that will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared and the proposed project as described in the attached EA may proceed.

Date: _____

Brent Paul
Environmental Officer
Federal Emergency Management Agency Headquarters, Washington, DC
Department of Homeland Security