

# **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

## **J. Strom Thurmond Lake Master Plan Environmental Assessment and FONSI**

### **Georgia and South Carolina**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Savannah District (Savannah District) has conducted an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508) as reflected in the USACE Engineering Regulation ER 200-2-2. The Thurmond Lake Master Plan (MP) and Environmental Assessment (EA) dated April 2022, Georgia and South Carolina, is a revision of the previous Thurmond Lake MP dated June 1995. The MP has been revised according to ER 1130-2-550, January 2013 and addresses the development, maintenance, and management of all natural, cultural, and recreational resources at the project.

The EA, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated two alternatives including the proposed action and the no action alternative, or future without project condition. In the future without project condition (i.e. no-action), Thurmond Project would continue to operate under the 1995 MP. As a result, individual EAs could be required for any development of facilities or conducting activities not addressed in the 1995 MP. In accordance with ER 1130-2-550, January 2013 an updated MP is required for civil works projects and other fee-owned lands for which USACE has administrative responsibility which includes an evaluation and an update of land classifications with management goals that are compatible with those land classifications, therefore, no-action is not a viable alternative.

The proposed action evaluated current land classifications, updated recreation maps, and provided management goals for each recreation area. The proposed action allows for some limited expansion and development of recreation areas while maintaining, preserving, or enhancing natural and cultural resources.

#### ***SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS:***

For both alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the recommended plan are listed in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Recommended Plan**

	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects due to mitigation	Resource unaffected by action
Wetlands/Aquatic Vegetation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aquatic Resources/Fisheries	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floodplains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forest Resources/Terrestrial Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wildlife	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Threatened/Endangered Species Critical Habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recreation Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aesthetics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socioeconomics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Justice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Waste	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noise Levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. Best management practices (BMPs) as detailed in the MP/EA will be implemented, if appropriate, to minimize impacts. No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the recommended plan.

Public review of the draft EA and FONSI was completed on 20 January 2022. All comments submitted during the public review period were responded to in the Final EA and FONSI. A 30-day state and agency review of the Final EA was completed on 20 January 2022.

### **Endangered Species Act (ESA)**

Pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that the recommended plan will have no adverse effect on federally listed species or their designated critical habitat. The South Carolina and Georgia field offices for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concurred with the determination on 7 December 2021 and 20 January 2022, respectively.

## **National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)**

Pursuant to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that historic properties would not be adversely affected by the recommended plan. The South Carolina and Georgia State Historic Preservation Offices concurred with the determination on 13 January 2022 and 4 February 2022, respectively.

## **Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404b1 Compliance**

The MP does not authorize the discharge of dredged or fill material. Therefore, a Section 404(b)(1) evaluation is not required. Any proposed action that requires a discharge of dredged or fill material would be required to comply with Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the CWA.

## **Clean Water Act Section 401 Compliance**

Section 401 Water Quality Certifications from the states of Georgia and South Carolina are not needed for the proposed action because no discharge of effluent or materials would be disposed of into waters of the U.S. as a result of the Proposed Action. Any proposed action that requires a discharge will be required to comply with Section 401 of the CWA.

## **Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA Consistency) Compliance**

Pursuant to Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, the project is outside of the Coastal Zone and has no direct or indirect impacts to the Coastal Zone.

## ***FINDING***

All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in evaluation of alternatives. Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the recommended plan would not cause significant adverse effects on the quality of the human environment; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

18 July, 2022

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Date

*Joseph R. Geary*

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Joseph R. Geary, PhD, PE  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Commanding