

**COMBINED NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND INTENT TO REQUEST
RELEASE OF FUNDS – AND
FINAL NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF A PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A 100-YEAR
FLOODPLAIN**

September 10, 2013
Willacy County, of Texas
Willacy County Courthouse
County Judge's Office
576 West Main Street
Raymondville, Texas 78580
210.265.8025

This Notice shall satisfy the above-cited three separate but related procedural notification requirements.

To: All interested Agencies, Local Government, Groups and Individuals

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or after October 1, 2013 Willacy County will submit a request to the General Land Office for the release of Community Development Block Grant funds under Section 104(f) of Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, to undertake the following project:

Project Title: Willacy County Road and Drainage Improvement Project(s)

Purpose: To reduce flooding by improving the drainage facilities in selected communities throughout the county

Location: San Francisco/ Ledesma Street Area (26.4897°N; -97.7789°W), Colonia La Rosita (26.4342°N; -97.6707°W), & Colonia San Perlita (26.5096°N; -97.6395°W) Willacy County, Texas.

Project Description:

San Francisco Avenue/Ledesma Area: Willacy County (Grantee) shall reconstruct and replace the specified residential street to County Standard paved width, including furnishing and installing curb and gutter or drainage swales as required subgrade, flexible base, primecoat, , and Hot Mix Asphalt Concrete (HMAC) surface. Additionally, approximately two thousand linear feet (2,000 l.f.) of storm pipe shall be installed, along with driveway reconstruction (within the existing public right-of-way), street lighting, and other site work associated with construction. All interior drainage improvements (e.g. inlets, internals) shall be designed for a 5-year storm frequency; trunk lines shall be designed for a 10-year storm frequency; and the major conveyance channel designed for a 25-year storm frequency. Construction shall take place on the following roads in the City of Raymondville in Willacy County, Texas:

Street:	From:	To:
11 th Street	Ledesma Street	San Francisco Avenue
San Francisco Avenue	Bus. 77	3,000 L.F. east
Ledesma Street	11 th Street	1,000 L.F. west (Cul De Sac)

Grantee shall also install approximately nine hundred and sixty linear feet (960 l.f.) of storm pipe within a proposed fifteen foot wide by three hundred and ninety-two foot long (15 feet x 392 feet) drainage easement from Ledesma Street to San Francisco Avenue. All interior drainage improvements (e.g. inlets, internals) shall be designed for a 5-year storm frequency; trunk lines shall be designed for a 10-year storm frequency; and the major conveyance channel designed for a 25-year storm frequency.

Furthermore, Grantee shall acquire easements as needed to accommodate the drainage improvements. Grantee shall carry out all acquisition of real property, easements, and/or rights-of-way in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition

Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.) and HUD implementing regulations (24 CFR part 42). Grantee shall purchase property for drainage improvements at the following location:

Acquisition	From:	To:
Drainage Easement (15' x 392')	Ledesma Street	San Francisco Avenue

Proposed improvements will harden, restore, and ensure the function of the streets for primary access and emergency vehicle use, and reduce flooding.

These activities shall benefit two hundred six (206) persons, of which one thousand one hundred seventy-seven (177), or eighty-five percent (85%), are of low to moderate income.

Colonia La Rosita: Grantee shall install approximately four thousand two hundred linear feet (4,200 l.f.) of storm pipe, reshape the roadside linear detention ditches, install street lightings, and perform other site work associated with construction. Construction shall take place on the following roads in the community of La Rosita in Willacy County, Texas:

Street:	From:	To:
County Road 397	La Rosita Road	County Road 2100
La Rosita Road	County Road 397	1,800 l.f. east

The proposed improvements will harden, restore, and ensure the function of the streets for primary access and emergency vehicle use, and reduce flooding.

These activities shall benefit twenty-two (22) persons, of which thirteen (13), or fifty-nine percent (59%), are of low to moderate income.

Colonia San Perlita: Willacy County (Grantee) shall excavate and widen the existing drainage ditch and increase its capacity for linear detention and perform any other site work associated with construction. All interior drainage improvements (e.g. inlets, internals) shall be designed for a 5-year storm frequency; truck lines shall be designed for a 10-year storm frequency; and the major conveyance channel designed for a 25-year storm frequency. Construction shall take place starting at the intersection of FM 2209 and the North Raymondville Drain Channel and head south 1,488 linear feet in the community of San Perlita in Willacy County Texas.

Grantee shall also acquire easements as needed to accommodate the drainage improvements. Grantee shall carry out all acquisition of needed real property, easements, and/or rights-of-way in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.) and HUD implementing regulations (24 CFR Part 42). Grantee shall purchase property for drainage improvements at the following locations:

Acquisition	From:	To:
Drainage Easement (30' x 1,488')	Willacy County Drainage Outfall	1,488 linear feet south

These activities shall benefit seven hundred forty-nine (749) persons, of which four hundred ninety-seven (497), or sixty-six percent (66%), are of low to moderate income.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Willacy County has determined that the projects will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the Willacy County Courthouse (Address given at top) and may be examined or copied weekdays 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

FINAL NOTICE AND PUBLIC EXPLANATION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY IN A 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN

This is to give notice that Willacy County has conducted an evaluation of The Willacy County Road and Drainage Improvement Project(s) (DRS210204), as required by Executive Order 11988 and in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management, to determine the potential affect that its activity in the floodplain will have on the human environment.

Willacy County, with consideration of purpose, practicality, and potential impacts, evaluated several project alternatives as follows:

- Actions as proposed;
- Re-paving existing streets and re-grading roadside drainage ditches in the San Francisco Avenue/Ledesma Street Area;
- Constructing a new drainage conveyance channel north of Colonia San Perlita; and
- No action.

The “no action” alternative is not feasible, as the proposed improvements are essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the approximately 977 people which these improvements will benefit.

The alternative that proposed the re-paving of the roads and the widening and deepening of roadside drainage ditches was not selected because it was determined that simply re-grading the roadside drainage ditches would not provide the necessary drainage requirements put forth in the performance statement. Installing the proposed sewer pipe and curb and gutter will ensure adequate drainage in the communities during future high-volume precipitation producing weather events.

The alternative that proposed constructing a new conveyance channel was not selected due to the large amount of new easement acquisition acquired as well as the substantial amount of additional environmental impacts.

The actions as proposed were chosen because they best served the purpose of the project, which is to protect property, and to provide public health, safety, and welfare to those in the communities while causing as little environmental impact as reasonably possible.

Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988, are included in the ERR on file at the Willacy County Courthouse. This activity will have no significant impact on the environment for the following reasons:

The activities, as proposed, will result in minimal land use change. The impermeable surfaces represented by the existing street surface will be reconstructed to their existing widths. All impacted ROWs will be restored to pre-construction grade and condition where possible. Impacts to both the human and natural environment will be quite negligible relative to the purpose of the project.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on the project may submit written comments regarding the project. All comments received by September 30, 2013 or within 18 days of the publication of this notice (whichever is later), will be considered by Willacy County prior to authorizing submission of a Request for Release of Funds. Comments should specify which part of this Notice they are addressing. Comments must be hand delivered to the Willacy County Courthouse or addressed and mailed to the following:

Attention: John F Gonzales, Jr., County Judge, Willacy County Courthouse, 576 West Main Street, Raymondville, Texas 78580. Comments may also be submitted via email at edward.gonzales@co.willacy.tx.us.

RELEASE OF FUNDS

Willacy County certifies to HUD/GLO that John F. Gonzales, Jr., in his capacity as county judge, consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. GLOs approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities, and allows Willacy County to use Program funds.

OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

The GLO will consider objections to its release of funds and the Willacy County certification received by October 16, 2013, or a period of fifteen days from its receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer or other officer of Willacy County approved by the GLO, (b) the (RE) has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the project have committed funds or incurred costs not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by the GLO or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedural quality. Objections and shall be addressed to Disaster Recovery Program, Environmental Regulatory Officer at 3429 Executive Center Drive, Suite 150, Austin, Texas 78731-1658. Potential objectors should contact the GLO to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

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Project Title: Willacy County Road and Drainage Improvement Project (Sebastian East)
Purpose: To reduce flooding by improving the drainage facilities in the community of Sebastian.

Location: The community of Sebastian (East of the railroad right-of-way) (26.3437° - 97.7888°W) in Willacy County, Texas.

Project Description: Grantee (Willacy County) shall reconstruct and replace the specified residential street to its existing paved width, including furnishing and installing cement stabilized subgrade, flexible base, primecoat, curb and gutter, and Hot Mix Asphalt Concrete (HMAC) surface. Additionally, approximately six thousand five hundred linear feet (6,500 l.f.) of storm pipe shall be installed, along with driveway reconstruction (within the existing public right-of-way), street lighting, and other site work associated with construction. All interior drainage improvements (e.g. inlets, internals) shall be designed for a 5-year storm frequency; trunk lines shall be designed for a 10-year storm frequency; and the major conveyance channel designed for a 25-year storm frequency. Construction shall take place on the following roads in the community of Sebastian in Willacy County, Texas:

Street:	From:	To:
Palmetto Avenue	2nd Street	8th Street
East Avenue	EAST Broadway Street	6th Street
East 3rd Street	R.R. - R.O.W.	East Avenue
East Broadway Street	Florida Avenue (Bus. 77)	East Avenue

Street:	From:	To:
EAST 6th Street	Florida Avenue (Bus. 77)	East Avenue
EAST 7th Street	Florida Avenue (Bus. 77)	East Avenue
EAST 8th Street	Coast Avenue	U.S. Highway 77

Proposed improvements will harden, restore, and ensure the function of the streets for primary access and emergency vehicle use, and reduce flooding.

These activities shall benefit one thousand nine hundred thirteen (1,913) persons, of which one thousand one hundred twelve (1,112), or fifty-eight percent (58%), are of low to moderate income.

Project Issues: The project area lies in special flood hazard Zone A, as designated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Transportation in various areas may be temporarily or periodically impacted during project construction.

Mitigation Measures/Conditions/Permits (if any): Flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Programs must be obtained for the parts of the project within special flood hazard zones. A Traffic Control Plan will be implemented during construction to minimize the impacts to transportation.

Estimated Project Cost: The total funding allotted for the project is \$8,441,078. All funds are Community Development Block Grant funds.

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Willacy County has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the Willacy County Courthouse (Address given at top) and may be examined or copied weekdays 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.

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This is to give notice that Willacy County has conducted an evaluation of The Willacy County Road and Drainage Improvement Project (DRS210204), as required by Executive Order 11988 and in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management, to determine the potential affect that its activity in the floodplain or wetland will have on the human environment. The project proposes to construct in approximately 0.3 acres of Zone A (100-year floodplain), as designated by FEMA.

Willacy County, with consideration of purpose, practicality, and potential impacts, evaluated several alternatives as follows:

- Action as proposed;
- Re-pave existing streets and re-grade roadside drainage ditches;

- No action.

The “no action” alternative is not feasible, as the proposed improvements are essential to the health, safety, and welfare of the approximately 1,913 people which these improvements will benefit.

The alternative that proposed the re-paving of the roads and the widening and deepening of roadside drainage ditches was not selected because it was determined that simply re-grading the roadside drainage ditches would not provide the necessary drainage requirements put forth in the performance statement.

The action as proposed, which is described in great detail in the project description provided above and will entail the installation of sewer pipe and curb and gutter roadways, was chosen because it best served the purpose of the project, which is to protect property, and to provide public health, safety, and welfare to those in the communities.

Willacy County has reevaluated the alternatives to constructing in the floodplain and has determined that it has no practicable alternative. Environmental files that document compliance with steps 3 through 6 of Executive Order 11988, are available for public inspection, review and copying upon request at the times and location delineated in the last paragraph of this notice for receipt of comments. This activity will have no significant impact on the environment for the following reasons:

The activities, as proposed, will result in no land use change. The impermeable surfaces represented by the existing street surface will be reconstructed to their existing widths. All impacted ROWs will be restored to pre-construction grade and condition where possible.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in floodplains and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information about floodplains can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in floodplains, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

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