



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to host Public Scoping Meeting on proposed Pascagoula River Drought Resiliency Project

MOBILE, Ala. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District (USACE) is scheduled to host a Public Scoping Meeting Jan. 24, 2017 on the George County Board of Supervisors and the Pat Harrison Waterway District (Applicants) proposed Pascagoula River Drought Resiliency Project. The meeting will take place from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the George County Senior Citizens Building in Lucedale, Miss.

The Applicants have requested a Department of the Army permit, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344), to construct two water supply lakes in George and Jackson Counties in southeastern Mississippi. The application claims water stored in the lakes would bolster the Pascagoula River's water supply during extreme drought and provide sufficient surface water and restore water table levels to maintain the river's flow above established minimums through the year 2060.

At this time, a permit decision has not been made for the proposed project. After initial review of the permit application and public interest, the USACE has determined that the proposed project will be evaluated through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The public scoping meeting is at the beginning of the EIS process.

During the public scoping meeting, the USACE will provide background on the permit process and solicit feedback from the public to identify potential issues associated with the proposal. The Applicants will also have representatives on hand to brief members of the public on the concept for the project.

Following the 45-day public scoping period, the USACE will review public comments to determine the scope and content of the EIS. The EIS is used to ensure compliance under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and will assess potential social, economic, and environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the proposed lakes and their associated facilities.

All comments previously received from Federal and state agencies, professional environmental organizations, and the public are automatically included and will be evaluated in this scoping procedure. The decision of whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of probable and cumulative impacts that the proposal will have on the public interest.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – MOBILE DISTRICT
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Individuals unable to attend the meeting can submit their comments online by visiting www.georgecountylakesEIS.com; or by mail at: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Attn: Regulatory Division, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Ala. 36628. The deadline to submit comments under the scoping period is **Feb. 6, 2017**.

For additional information on the USACE Regulatory permitting process visit: <http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/>.

The USACE Mobile District asks all media outlets interested in attending the Public Scoping Meeting to contact Tim Oberle, USACE Mobile Deputy Public Affairs Officer at (251) 690-2506 or timothy.n.oberle@usace.army.mil for credentialing.

Public Scoping Meeting Location:
George County Senior Citizens Building
7102 Highway 198 East
Lucedale, MS 39452