

Addendum 2 to the Technical Memorandum “U.S. 287: Wetlands and Waters of the U.S., and CDOT Wetland Finding” dated July 7, 2003

PREPARED FOR: U.S. 287 at Lamar - CDOT Region 2
PREPARED BY: Colleen Kirby Roberts/CH2M HILL
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Introduction

This addendum updates the Technical Memorandum “U.S. 287: Wetlands and Waters of the U.S., and CDOT Wetland Finding” dated July 7, 2003 and provides information from the FACWet functional assessment conducted by CDOT in January 2011 and supplemental site visit conducted by CDOT in July 2011.

FACWet Functional Assessment

CDOT conducted a FACWet functional assessment of the wetlands and water features January 2011 (CDOT, 2011). The FACWet Analysis examines the ecological health and function of the wetland area. The wetland and water features had an average composite Functional Capacity Index (FCI) score of 0.75, which ranks as average. The Arkansas River ranked highest with a composite FCI score of 0.88, representing a fairly natural and “highly functioning” system, while the lowest rank of 0.66 (“functionally impaired”) was shared by Willow Creek and Lamar Canal.

July 2011 Site Visit

The July 2011 site visit confirmed that the corridor wetlands in the south and south-central portions of the reliever route study area remained unchanged since the initial field survey, and the determinations as documented in the July 7, 2003 Wetlands and Waters of the U.S. Technical Memorandum are still valid.

Observations of the Lamar Canal immediately south of Willow Creek found no wetlands. Observations of the canal adjacent to the existing Alternative Truck Route found pockets of cattail that may be wetland, but no wetland vegetation along most of the canal. The banks were partially armored with concrete slabs.

Observations of Willow Creek west of the Lamar Canal found no wetlands. Small pockets of watercress were present, but vegetation was dominated by upland and non-native vegetation. The water in the creek is highly dynamic because of irrigation use, and the vegetation is therefore ephemeral. Observations of the creek adjacent to the existing Alternative Truck Route found pockets of wetlands containing Eleocharis, Rumex, bulrush, and very sparse willow; most of the creek banks did not contain wetlands.

The site visit found that the Lamar Canal and Willow Creek vegetation is highly ephemeral given the severe fluctuations in water. CDOT determined that a new delineation would likely not be accurate within a year's time and would not be adequate for permitting. CDOT recommended conducting a formal delineation during final design.

Conclusion

A formal waters of the United States delineation will take place during final design stages. This delineation will be used in combination with the final design to determine wetland impacts. Based on the extent and nature of those impacts, the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit applications will be submitted to the USACE. Project impacts would be permitted with the appropriate combination of Nationwide and/or Individual Permits during final design stages

References

CDOT. 2011. *Wetland Functional Assessment*. Datasheets prepared by Robert Frei, Biologist with CDOT Region 2, on January 19, 2011.