



# State of Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals  
Office of Public Health - Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund

February 18, 2015

## FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

### TO ALL INTERESTED AGENCIES AND PUBLIC GROUPS:

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as administered by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH), Office of Public Health (OPH) in accordance with Act 39 of the 2006 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature in connection with the Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (DWRLF) program, an environmental review has been performed and a *Finding of No Significant Impact* determined for the proposed action as described below:

#### EAST CENTRAL VERNON WATER SYSTEM, INC.

VERNON PARISH, LOUISIANA

PWS Identification Number LA 1115117

Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (DWRLF) Project Number 1115117-01

**BACKGROUND:** The East Central Vernon Water System (ECVWS) is located in the central portion of Vernon Parish, as shown on **Figure 1- Project Area Map**. The planning area for the proposed improvements encompasses the water system's existing service area also shown on Figure 1. The latitude and longitude for the centermost point of the planning area is, respectively, 31°12'12.02" N and -93°11'29.17"W.

East Central Vernon Water System is a metered, privately owned, non-profit water system. Currently, ECVWS distribution system serves a population of approximately 5,500 with 2,013 residential and 18 commercial service connections. The water system, consists of three (3) water wells all constructed in 1991, the treatment method utilized by the system is disinfection by chlorine gas, the storage for the system consist of three (3) elevated tanks and two (2) ground storage tanks for a total storage capacity of 536,000 gallons. The distribution system consists of approximately 235 miles of primarily PVC pipe with diameters ranging 2 inch through 12 inch. Booster pump stations are located at each of the ground storage tank sites, currently they are run by VFD controllers, the pumps are submersible tube pumps that have a design capacity of 90 gpm at LaCamp site and 120 gpm at the Cold Springs site.

Historical water consumption records, which include residential and commercial demand, indicate that the average monthly water consumption/demand per customer is 546,275-gallons per month. From the System Improvement Plan the average daily (per capita) consumption is calculated to be 99 gal/day/person. Based on a 2.85-percent annual growth rate is derived from population trends from 1995 to present. The estimated average daily demand needed to

accommodate this growth at the end of the 20-year planning period is approximately 627,300 - gpd for 9,428 people. The maximum daily demand is approximately twice the average daily usage which results in a projected maximum daily demand of 1,259,000-gpd.

PURPOSE AND NEED: The purpose of the project is to increase the systems production capacity, address existing code violations , and increase the elevated storage capacity to meet State and Federal guidelines at present and for future growth of the system.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The selected plan includes construction of a new 150,000 gallon elevated water storage tank near the Vernon Parish Correctional Facility, construction of a new 300-400 gpm water well, emergency backup generator, chlorination facilities, site piping site fencing and related work, as shown on Figure 2-Proposed Project Site.

DOCUMENTATION COORDINATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Coordination with the appropriate governmental agencies has been made with no adverse environmental comments on the proposed project. All comments offered have been addressed. The proposed project will be reviewed by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals to ensure that it complies with the State Sanitary Code for Water Supplies, Louisiana Administrative Code (LAC), Title 51, Chapter 12. A public hearing was held at 5:30 p.m. on January 8, 2015 at the East Central Vernon Water System, Inc. Office at 8760 Hwy 8, Slagle, Louisiana. The hearing was advertised on December 3, 2014 in the "Leesville Daily Leader".

RECOMMENDATIONS: Based upon DWRLF's detailed review of the System Improvement Plan and the Environmental Impacts Water System Improvements for the East Central Vernon Water System, September 2014, as revised, and DWRLF's preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA), the proposed project is considered to be cost effective and environmentally sound. Therefore, a preliminary decision not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been made. Comments supporting or disagreeing with this decision may be submitted for consideration to the following address:

Brian Baker, P.E.  
Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund  
Office of Public Health  
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals  
P.O. Box 4489  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-4489

After evaluating the comments received, DWRLF will make a final decision; however, no administrative action will be taken on this project for at least thirty (30) calendar days after release of this Finding of No Significant Impact.

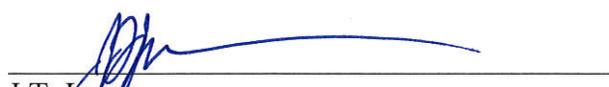
Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jennifer Wilson,  
Office of Public Health  
DWRLF, Program Manager

2-18-15  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jake Causey, P.E.  
Office of Public Health  
Chief Engineer

2/19/15  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
J.T. Lane  
Assistant Secretary  
Office of Public Health  
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

2/20/15  
Date

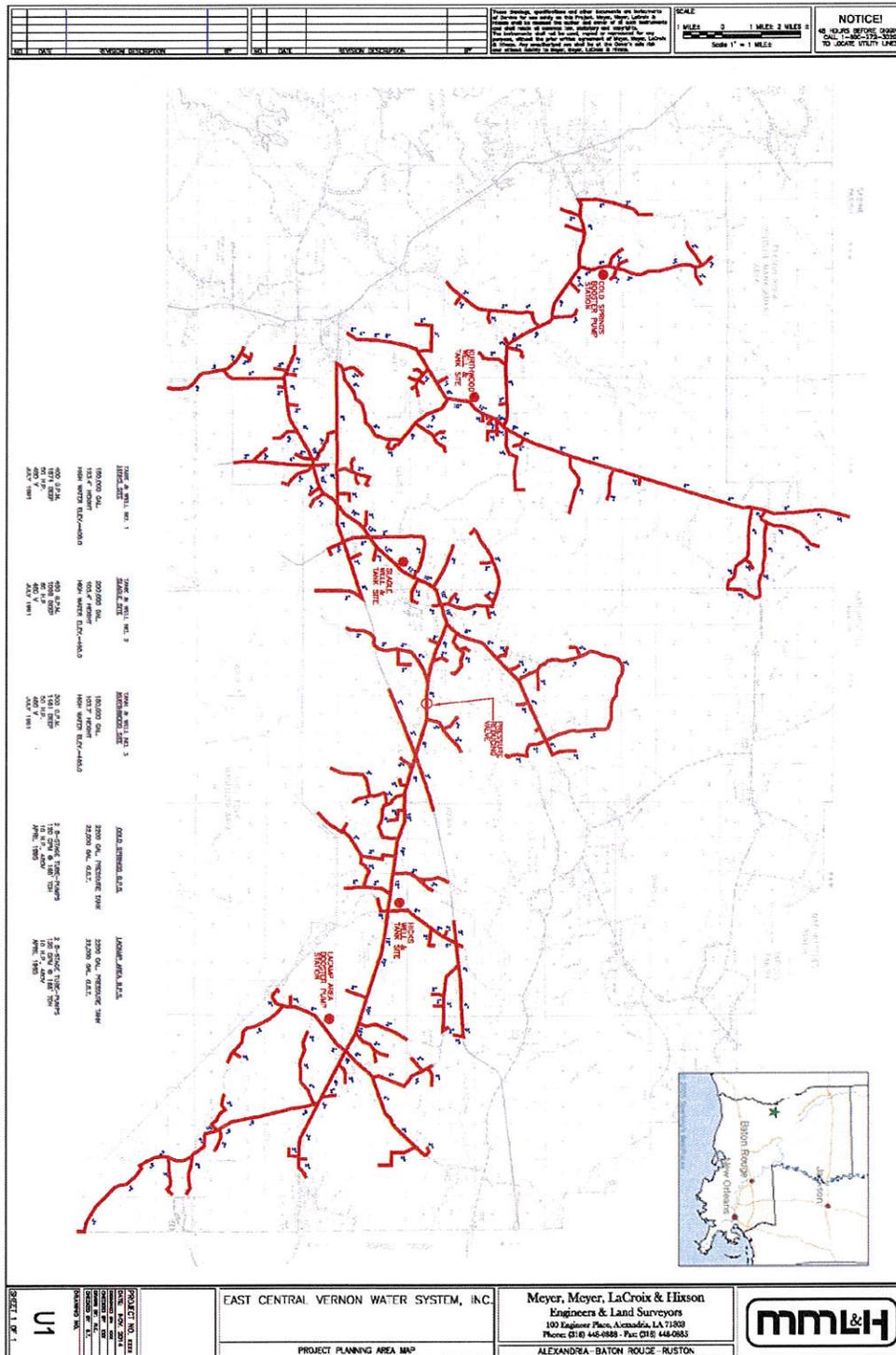


FIGURE 1  
 Project Area: East Central Vernon Water System, Vernon Parish, Louisiana

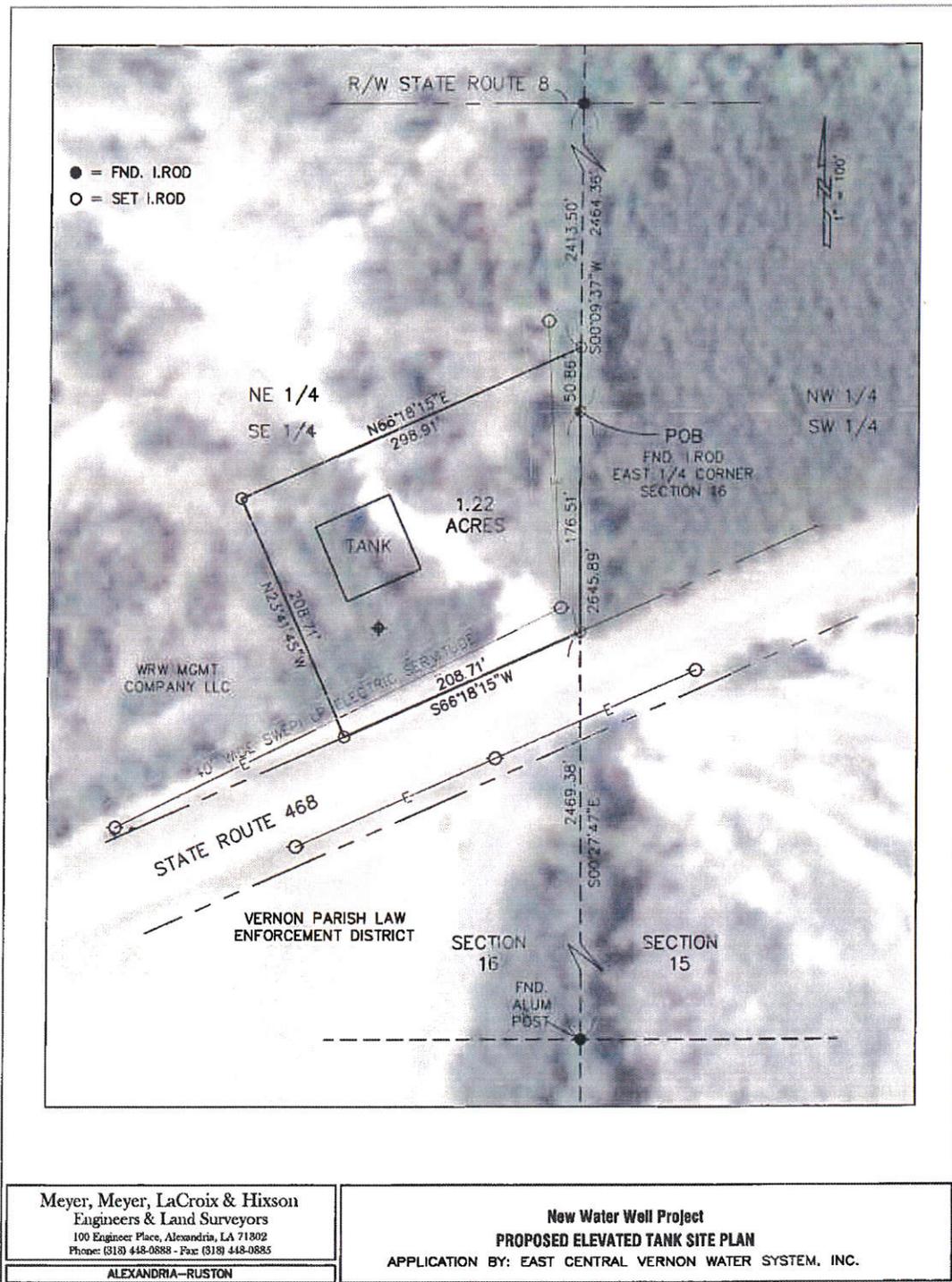


FIGURE 2: Proposed Project Site



# State of Louisiana

Department of Health and Hospitals  
Office of Public Health - Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund

February 18, 2015

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

For

### EAST CENTRAL VERNON WATER SYSTEM

VERNON PARISH, LOUISIANA

PWS Identification Number LA 1115117

Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund (DWRLF) Project Number 1115117-01

**BACKGROUND:** The East Central Vernon Water System (ECVWS) is located in the central portion of Vernon Parish. The planning area for the proposed improvements encompasses the water system's existing service area as shown in **Figure 1 – Project Planning Area for the ECVWS**. The latitude and longitude for the centermost point of the planning area is, respectively, 31°12'12.02" N and -93°11'29.17"W.

East Central Vernon Water System is a metered, privately owned, non-profit water system. Currently, ECVWS distribution system serves a population of approximately 5,500 with 2,013 residential and 18 commercial service connections. The water system, consists of three (3) water wells all constructed in 1991, the treatment method utilized by the system is disinfection by chlorine gas, the storage for the system consist of three (3) elevated tanks and two (2) ground storage tanks for a total storage capacity of 536,000 gallons. The distribution system consists of approximately 235 miles of primarily PVC pipe with diameters ranging 2 inch through 12 inch. Booster pump stations are located at each of the ground storage tank sites, currently they are run by VFD controllers, the pumps are submersible tube pumps that have a design capacity of 90 gpm at LaCamp site and 120 gpm at the Cold Springs site.

Historical water consumption records, which include residential and commercial demand, indicate that the average monthly water consumption/demand per customer is 546,275-gallons per month. From the System Improvement Plan the average daily (per capita) consumption is calculated to be 99 gal/day/person. Based on a 2.85-percent annual growth rate is derived from population trends from 1995 to present. The estimated average daily demand needed to accommodate this growth at the end of the 20-year planning period is approximately 627,300 -gpd for 9,428 people. The maximum daily demand is approximately twice the average daily usage which results in a projected maximum daily demand of 1,259,000-gpd.

**PURPOSE AND NEED:** The purpose of the project is to increase the systems production capacity, address existing code violations, and increase the elevated storage capacity to meet State and Federal guidelines at present and for future growth of the system.

ALTERNATIVES: The alternatives considered and analyzed for the East Central Vernon Water System include:

- A. No Action Alternative: The “No Action” alternative considers the future environment without implementing any of the proposed actions. The current storage capacity is adequate for the population, but it is estimated that within 6 years the system will not be able to keep up with demand.
- B. Consolidation: The water system is not interconnected to any other systems. The systems near East Central Vernon do not have the capacity to supply flow or pressure required by the systems current demand. Therefore, this option is not a viable alternative.
- C. New 150,000 Gallon Elevated Tank: Includes construction of a new 150,000 gallon elevated storage tank along LA Hwy 468 near the Vernon Parish Correction Facility. The new tank high water level elevation would be set at the same elevation as the higher pressure zone of the water system. A tank at this location would provide adequate storage capacity but would lack in production capacity.
- D. New Water Well at Slagle Tank Site: Includes construction of a new 300-400 gpm water production well at the existing Slagle Well and Tank site. The new well will pump directly into the existing Slagle elevated tank. Although this will provide redundancy to the systems existing wells, but it does not address storage capacity shortfalls.
- E. New Water Well and New 150,000 Gallon Elevated Tank Site: Includes construction of a new 150,000 gallon elevated tank and new 300 to 400 gpm water production well along LA Hwy 468 near the Vernon Parish Correction Facility. This is a feasible option in that it addresses both production and storage issues of the system.
- F. New Water Well and New 200,000 Gallon Elevated Tank Site: This alternated is very similar to alternative E, but increases the elevated tank capacity to 200,000 gallons. This increase in storage capacity also increases the cost of the project approximately \$400,000. This cost increase far outweighs the benefit the system.

**The Preferred Alternative**: The No Action does not allow the water system the capability of producing water to meet the future demands of the water systems customers. As mentioned above the surrounding water systems are unable to produce the capacity needed to meet the demand of the East Central Vernon System. The preferred alternative is to construct a new water well and new 150,000 gallon elevated tank at the LA Hwy 468 site. This alternative is feasible and will address compliance issues. Operation and maintenance will be minimal once the tank and well are in service and will be very similar to the O&M for the three other existing sites.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The selected plan includes construction of a new 150,000 gallon elevated water storage tank near the Vernon Parish Correctional Facility, construction of a new 300-400 gpm water well, emergency backup generator, chlorination facilities, site piping site fencing and related work, as shown on Figure 2.

**EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL SETTINGS:** The existing land use for the planning area is primarily residential; lite commercial; a military base, Fort Polk; and the surrounding area has a mix of small agricultural and cattle ranching. The climate for the planning area is humid and sub-tropical with an average high temperature range from 59 to 93 degrees Fahrenheit and an average low temperature range from 36 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. The average monthly precipitation for the planning area ranges from 3 to 5.5-inches, with a total annual average of 57-inches. The prevailing winds of the planning area are generally from the South-Southeast at an average speed of 5 miles per hour (mph). According to the Natural Resources Conservation Service the soils located within the areas of construction are sandy loams including Malbis fine sandy loam (MaB) with 1 to 3 percent slopes, and Malbis fine sandy loam (MaC) with 3 to 5 percent slopes. The planning area does not have soils that are classified as hydric or that have a hydric component, which indicates that there are no wetlands in the project area.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:** Potential short-term and long-term primary and secondary environmental impacts that can be identified for the proposed project pertain to Storm Water, Soil Stability/Erodibility, Wetlands, Floodplains, Protected Species, Public Health and Safety, Historical/Archeological Sites, Prime Agricultural Land, Ground Water/Hydrology, Air Quality, and Community Development. The loan will be conditioned to read that any mitigation measures required by federal cross-cutting authorities must be adopted to ensure the action will not have any significant environmental impacts.

**Storm Water:** There will be no increase in storm water runoff as a result of this project. All drainage ditches and drainage ways will be graded back to their pre-construction conditions. The water well sites will be graded to drain. All water main trenches will be backfilled and compacted. Existing natural grades will be restored after the installation of the new water mains is complete. No significant paving will be constructed; therefore no increase in storm water runoff should be observed. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has been notified of the project. LDEQ provided a letter of no objection with a few additional recommendations of items that may influence the project, including the requirement to obtain a Storm Water General Permit for construction areas equal to or greater than one acre and that all precautions must be observed to control non-point source pollution from the construction activities. Additionally, if the project results in a discharge to waters of the state, a Louisiana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit would be required to be submitted. All of these requirements and recommendations will be adhered to during and after construction.

**Soil Stability/Erodibility:** The project will not involve a large amount of earthwork. Best management practices regarding erosion control measures will be implemented during construction to minimize erosion and sediment transport. Area watercourses will not be adversely affected by siltation and sedimentation as a result of this project.

Wetlands: The U.S. Department of the Army, Galveston District, Corps of Engineers (Corps) was contacted regarding this project and determined that the site was not subject to its jurisdiction under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), provided no work is done in Section 10 Waters of the United States (U.S.) and/or fill is placed into water of the U.S.. Thus no permit is required.

Floodplains: As required, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), LA Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD), Kisatchie Delta Regional Planning & Development District, Inc., and the local Floodplain Administrator for Vernon Parish were contacted regarding the project. FEMA transferred reviewing authority to the local Floodplain Administrator to ensure compliance with the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance since the Parish participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) it also stated that the Town should follow 44CFR 65.3 requirements to submit new technical data. The LA Department of Transportation & Development (LDOTD) – Floodplain Management Section stated that the proposed project follow the minimum requirements of the NFIP for water supply systems can be found in 44 CFR 60.3 and state that within flood prone areas new replacement water supply systems must be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters into the system. LDOTD also stated that these areas must be kept clear of debris so as not to interfere with their floodplain function. The Vernon Parish Floodplain Administrator stated that the proposed work is within Zone X and had no issues with elevated tank location.

Protected Species: The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) - Natural Heritage Program (NHP) stated that there are no adverse impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species or critical habitats anticipated for this project. The project will not harm or reduce the population of any protected species, nor destroy any habitats on which protected species would be dependent upon for their survival. If any threatened or endangered species are encountered during construction, work will cease immediately and DWRLF will be notified so that mitigation measures can be taken in accordance with the Endangered Species Act.

Public Health and Safety: Impacts to landforms, streams, and natural drainage is expected to be negligible and is not expected to result in any major irreversible changes to land use patterns. There is not expected to be any major changes in the rate, density, or type of development in the project planning area as a result of this project. The proposed project requires a new site to drill a new well, and construct a new elevated storage tank. Water disinfection facilities will be constructed at this location. The tower will then be tied to the existing 10" water mains along LA Hwy 468. The project does not involve any clearing of land by the use of herbicides, defoliant, blasting, or burning and will not cause any long-term damage to area vegetation. The clearing at the new site will be done through the use of mechanical equipment only. Limiting vegetative clearing will minimize erosion due to site grading and other construction activities. Runoff will be diverted or re-routed from areas subject to erosion and exposed ground surfaces will be re-seeded. Night work is not anticipated for this project. Standard techniques will be employed to control dust and noise during construction. There will be no odor problems associated with this project and no insect control program should be required for this project. The new well site will be fenced and gated. Only authorized personnel will be admitted to the construction sites. Other than minor delays during construction, no changes in existing traffic patterns, loads, or volumes are anticipated as a result of this project. The contractor will put measures

in place to control traffic disruption and insects during construction. The project construction will comply with all Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards and with the state requirements for safety during construction. The proposed project will not encourage development in hazardous areas.

Historical/Archeological Sites: The US Department of the Interior - National Park Service (NPS) and the State of Louisiana Historic Preservation Officer stated that there are not any known archaeological sites or historic properties in the area of this project. Therefore, the proposed project will not disturb any known historical and/or archeological properties. If any archeological resources are discovered during construction, work will cease immediately in the area and the loan recipient will notify DWRLF; which shall then proceed in accordance with the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historical Preservation (36 CFR Part 800) prior to taking any action which would affect the cultural resources.

Prime Agricultural Land: The USDA-NRCS stated that the soils within the project area are in the vicinity of Prime Farmland; therefore, any additional right-of-ways acquired would require a farmland conversion impact rating. The proposed project will be constructed on existing easements already owned by the water system and on public right-of-ways. Therefore, no additional lands will be acquired as part of this project. Thus, no farmland conversion impact rating will be required for this project. USDA-NRCS also stated that the proposed project would not impact any USDA-NRCS work in the vicinity.

Ground Water/Hydrology: The US EPA Region 6 Ground Water/UIC Section's Sole Source Aquifer (SSA) program stated that the project is located within the boundaries of a designated sole source aquifer (Chicot Aquifer) but should not have an adverse effect on quality of the groundwater underlying the project site. The LDEQ also stated no objection to the project, but that all precautions should be observed to protect the ground water of the region and to control non-point source pollution from construction activities. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) and the US Department of the Interior - National Park Service (NPS) both indicated that the project will not affect any endangered species or NPS resources.

Air Quality: The US EPA Region 6 – Air Planning Section stated that Vernon Parish is in attainment for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS); therefore general conformity regulations do not apply and an applicability analysis is not necessary. However, any demolition, construction, rehabilitation, repair, dredging, or filling activities have the potential to emit air pollutants and they recommend best management practices be implemented to minimize the impact of any air pollutants. Further, construction and waste disposal activities should be conducted in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal statutes and regulations. Dust due to construction activities is anticipated but expected to be minimal. To further minimize dust, the contractor will apply water during construction to areas of excavation and potential dust generation.

Community Development: The proposed project will not cause any changes in the rate of population growth, nor cause any need for improvements and/or additions to the area roads, schools, sewage treatment system, etc. Pursuant to Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice (EJ) impacts to

minority and low-income communities were assessed. EJ is defined as the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. The goal of fair treatment is not to shift risks among populations, but to identify potential disproportionately high adverse impacts and to identify alternatives to mitigate those impacts. The Kistatche-Delta Regional Planning & Development District stated that “Based on the nature and location of the proposed improvements, there are no special or additional recommendations for mitigation of land use, noise, and environmental justice outside the normal construction period methods customarily employed. The identified project poses no known negative influence on development areas or significant places of importance within the planning area for this project or that would result in distinct advantage to one economic, racial, or other social group over another. The proposed project, as presented, is intended to be supportive of residential, commercial, industrial and/or other public use.” No potential disproportionately high adverse impacts to minority and low-income communities exist for this project. The East Central Vernon Water System will not deny service to any person on the basis of race, color, income, or national origin.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS: There are no known planned or reasonably foreseeable projects that would contribute to additional indirect effects in combination with the proposed project. The Kisatchi Regional Planning and Development District, Inc., has found this project to be congruent with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and considerate of both environmental and socioeconomic needs. The proposed project is anticipated to benefit this community’s development and its quality of place, as well as provide for safe and adequate water supply.

DOCUMENTATION COORDINATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Coordination with the appropriate governmental agencies has been made with no adverse environmental comments on the proposed project. All comments offered have been addressed. The proposed project will be reviewed by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals to ensure that it complies with the State Sanitary Code for Water Supplies, Louisiana Administrative Code (LAC), Title 51, Chapter 12. A public hearing was held at 5:30 p.m. on January 8, 2015 at the East Central Vernon Water System, Inc. Office at 8760 Hwy 8, Slagle, Louisiana. The hearing was advertised on December 3, 2014 in the "Leesville Daily Leader".

RECOMMENDATIONS: Based upon DWRLF’s detailed review of the System Improvement Plan and the Environmental Information Document for East Central Vernon Water System, Inc., September 2014, and DWRLF’s preparation of this Environmental Assessment (EA), the proposed project is considered to be cost effective and environmentally sound. Therefore, it is recommended that a *Finding of No Significant Impact* be issued.

LIST OF AGENCIES CONTACTED:

U.S. Department of the Interior - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries – Natural Heritage Program  
Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism – State Historic Preservation Officer  
U.S. Department of the Interior - National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office  
U.S. Department of the Army, New Orleans, Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Department of the Army, Vicksburg, Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Department of the Army, Galveston, Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 - Marine and Wetlands Section  
Kisatchie Delta Regional Planning and Development District  
U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Forest Service  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 - Ground Water/UIC Section (Sole Source Aquifer Program)  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 – Air Planning Section  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 – Marine and Wetlands Section  
Federal Emergency Management Agency Region 6  
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development – Floodplain Management Division  
Vernon Parish – Local Floodplain Manager  
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality - Contracts and Grants (Clearing House Review)  
Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

REFERENCES:

1. System Improvement Plan and Environmental Information Document for East Central Vernon Water System, September 2014; Meyer, Meyer, LaCroix & Hixson, Inc.



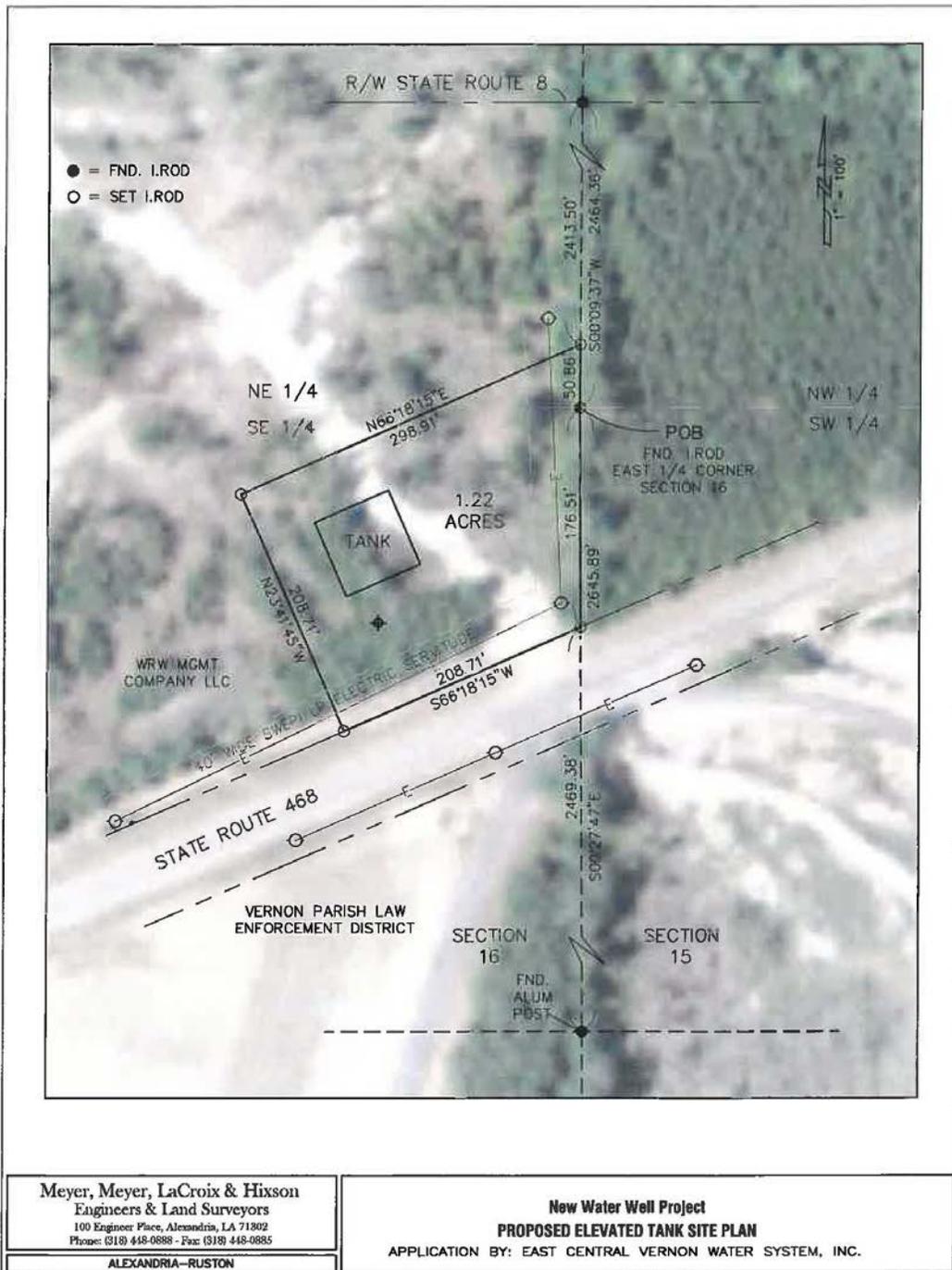


FIGURE 2  
 Proposed Project site