Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact and Adoption for the IIJA/BIL Gulf Hypoxia Program

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is adopting the <u>May 2020, final programmatic</u> <u>environmental assessment (PEA)</u> released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the <u>April 27, 2018, PEA</u> released by the EPA for the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) program with this preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

In accordance with Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and the EPA procedures for implementing NEPA (40 CFR part 6), EPA has conducted an independent review and evaluation of NRCS's EQIP PEA and EPA's WIFIA PEA and has determined that the analysis in the PEAs and underlying assumptions remain valid.

The EQIP promotes the voluntary application of conservation practices that maintain or improve the condition of soil, water, air, and other natural resources. The program assists owners and operators of agricultural and nonindustrial private forest land with identification of natural resource problems and opportunities to improve their condition and provides technical and financial assistance to address natural resource concerns in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. There are over 160 conservation practice standards in the NRCS National Handbook of Conservation Practices (NHCP). EPA plans to use the conservation practices standards provided in the EQIP for the Gulf Hypoxia Program (GHP). The programmatic conservation activities planned under the GHP are substantially the same conservation practice activities under EQIP—including soil erosion prevention, wetland restoration, water quality improvements, fish and wildlife habitat conservation efforts, etc. The intent of these conservation activities is to improve the quality of the environment for future generations by mitigating the effects of agricultural production on our Nation's natural resources using the best available science-based information and technologies.

The WIFIA program promotes investment in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure by providing credit assistance for a range of stormwater, drinking water, and wastewater projects that address environmental impacts from precipitation runoff, point source discharges, or facilities in need of repair, replacement, or renovation. For stormwater management practices, WIFIA assists borrowers with green infrastructure and decentralized wastewater treatment. Green infrastructure filters and absorbs stormwater close to where it falls. It often uses plant or soil systems, permeable pavement, or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to store, infiltrate, or evapotranspirate stormwater and reduce flows to sewer systems or to surface waters. Decentralized wastewater treatment consists of onsite or clusters systems used to collect, treat, and disperse or reclaim wastewater from a small community or service area, such as septic systems, cluster systems, or lagoons,

and can assist in nutrient removal. EPA plans to use these stormwater and decentralized wastewater management practices as provided in the WIFIA PEA for the GHP. These stormwater and decentralized wastewater management practices are substantially the same practices planned under the GHP. The intent of promoting green infrastructure systems is to provide cleaner air and water as well as significant value for the community with flood protection, diverse habitat, and beautiful green spaces.

Background

Nutrient loads from the Mississippi/Atchafalaya River Basin (MARB) contribute to a low oxygen (hypoxic) "dead" zone in the northern Gulf of Mexico that is one of the largest in the world. Hypoxia means low oxygen levels in water and can be caused by excess nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus. Hypoxia can impact ecosystems, killing fish and other wildlife, creating aquatic dead zones in severe areas.

The Hypoxia Task Force (HTF) is a partnership established in 1997 to work collaboratively on reducing nutrient loads in the MARB and the Gulf's hypoxic zone. Members and partners of the HTF include five federal agencies, 12 states bordering the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, and the National Tribal Water Council on behalf of tribes; EPA and the state of Iowa serve as Co-Chairs. Multi-state Sub-Basin committees and a Land Grant University consortium are also key partners under the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan.

The HTF adopted a Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan in 2001, updated it in 2008, and adopted a revised coastal goal in 2015, which lays out specific steps needed to accomplish the goal of reducing, mitigating, and controlling hypoxia in the Gulf and improve water quality in the Basin. The current coastal goal is to limit the dead zone to no more than 5,000 square kilometers by 2035, using a dual nitrogen and phosphorus reduction strategy. In 2015, the HTF adopted an interim goal to reduce nutrient loading of nitrogen and phosphorous by 20 percent by 2025.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, directs EPA to establish a GHP that will provide \$60 million over five years to reduce nutrient pollution in support of the HTF's Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan. The majority of funding will be provided as cooperative agreements to the 12 HTF states under this new grantmaking authority established by the IIJA.

The priorities for the GHP are to: 1) support states as they scale up implementation of their nutrient reduction strategies; 2) support tribes in leveraging existing nutrient reduction strategies or developing new ones to advance HTF goals; 3) advance multi-state collaboration through support for multi-state organizations that will help to achieve the goals of the Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan; 4) document and communicate progress towards HTF goals at the Basin scale; 5) advance research in support of nutrient reduction strategies; and 6) leverage resources and coordinate with other federal, foundation, state, and tribal programs. Additional EPA priorities are to: 7) ensure that GHP benefits are realized by disadvantaged communities and communities with environmental justice concerns; 8) advance water quality actions that have

climate adaptation or mitigation co-benefits; 9) fully enforce civil rights; 10) support the American worker and build a strong conservation workforce; and 11) support domestic manufacturing.

Under the GHP, the NRCS agricultural conservation practices will be applied on or near farm fields or nearby degraded waterways. The WIFIA use of green infrastructure practices will be applied to manage stormwater in urban areas. Specifically, the following practices are among those that will be adopted and implemented from EQIP and WIFIA:

- Two-stage ditches: open channels with established benches that provide a low-flow channel and a higher vegetated bench that is flooded during higher flows (USDA Conservation Practice (CP) 582).
- Saturated buffers: a subsurface, perforated distribution pipe used to distribute drainage system discharge beneath a vegetated buffer along its length and discharge channel (USDA NRCS CP 604).
- Bioreactors: subsurface structures built into a field that use a carbon source (e.g., wood chips) to reduce the concentration of nitrate in subsurface agricultural drainage flow (USDA NRCS CP 605).
- Multipurpose oxbow: the return of a wetland and its functions to a close approximation
 of its original condition as it existed prior to disturbance on a former or degraded
 wetland site, along with the augmentation of wetland functions beyond the original
 natural conditions on a former, degraded, or naturally functioning wetland site;
 sometimes at the expense of other functions. (USDA NRCS CPs 657, 659).
- Water quality wetlands: Wetland created on a site location that was historically not a wetland that reduces nutrient losses and may provide wildlife habit and other cobenefits (USDA NRCS CPs 657, 658, 659).
- Cascading waterways: shaped or graded channel with suitable vegetation to convey surface water at a nonerosive velocity using a broad and shallow cross section to a stable outlet, with a series of earthen embankments or a combination ridge and channel constructed across the slope of the grassed waterway (USDA NRCS CPs 412, 638).
- Urban stormwater green infrastructure, including decentralized wastewater treatment (WIIFA PEA): green infrastructure includes a suite of practices, such as bioretention, bioswales, and permeable pavements. These systems use vegetation, soil media, or permeable surfaces to capture, infiltrate, or evapotranspirate stormwater. Additionally, these practices are intended to reduce erosive peak flows and enhance water quality. These practices are generally used in highly modified urban environments and can help restore a more natural stream hydrography and reduce nutrients and excess sedimentation in streams. Green infrastructure applicability, sitting, and design considerations are provided in <u>EPA fact sheets</u>.

The GHP and EQIP both have compatible goals to promote conservation practices and to optimize environmental benefits. Specifically, both programs:

- Assist grantees in complying with local, state, and national regulatory requirements concerning soil, water, air quality, wildlife habitat, surface and ground water conservation.
- Assist grantees in protecting soil, water, air, and related natural resources and meeting environmental quality criteria established by federal, state, tribal, and local agencies.
- Provides flexible assistance to producers to install and maintain conservation practices that sustain food and fiber production while enhancing soil, water, and related natural resources, including grazing land, forest land, wetland, and wildlife, developing and improving wildlife habitat, and conserving energy.
- Assist grantees to make beneficial, cost-effective changes to production systems, including addressing identified, new, or expected resource concerns related to organic production; grazing management; fuels management; forest management; nutrient management associated with crops and livestock; pest management; irrigation management; adapting to, and mitigating against, increasing weather volatility; drought resiliency measures; or other practices on agricultural and forested land.

Both programs authorize similar activities that improve our Nation's natural resources, and the impacts from implementing NRCS EQIP conservation practices provide many environmental benefits, as described in the PEA. Specifically, benefits include:

- Reductions of nonpoint source pollution, such as nutrients, sediment, pesticides, or excess salinity in impaired watersheds, consistent with total daily maximum loads (TMDLs), where available; the reduction of surface and ground water contamination; and reduction of contamination from agricultural sources.
- Conservation of ground and surface water resources that result in water savings.
- Reduction in soil erosion and sedimentation from unacceptable levels on agricultural land.
- On-farm energy conservation.
- Promotion of at-risk species habitat conservation including development and improvement of wildlife habitat.
- Advancing research to address identified, new, or expected resource concerns.
- Adaptation and mitigation against increasing weather volatility and drought resilience measures.

Likewise, the GHP and WIFIA share similar objectives and fund similar activities associated with stormwater runoff from developed areas. Stormwater runoff is generated from rain and snowmelt events that flow over land or impervious surfaces, such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops, and does not soak into the ground. The runoff picks up pollutants like trash, chemicals, oils, and dirt/sediment that can harm our rivers, streams, lakes, and coastal waters. Both programs promote stormwater management practices, such green infrastructure, to protect these water resources. These stormwater management practices filter out pollutants and/or prevent pollution by controlling it at its source. Both the GHP and WIFIA support substantially the same activities associated with stormwater runoff from developed areas as follows.

- Green infrastructure project types may include green roofs, green streets, and green walls; rainwater harvesting collection, storage, management, and distribution systems; real-time control systems for harvested rainwater; infiltration basins; constructed wetlands, including surface flow and subsurface flow (e.g., gravel) wetlands; bioretention/bioswales (e.g., rain gardens, tree boxes); permeable pavement; wetland/riparian/shoreline creation, protection, and restoration; establishment/restoration of urban tree canopy; and replacement of gray infrastructure with green infrastructure including purchase and demolition costs.
- Decentralized wastewater treatment activities may include the upgrade (e.g., nutrient removal), repair, or replacement of existing systems; construction/installation of new systems.

Implementation

Both the EQIP and WIFIA PEAs present nationwide information on existing conditions and discuss potential impacts and mitigation measures that might typically occur during construction and operation of broad project types. Both PEAs provide mechanisms to evaluate site specific conditions and impacts for individual projects and to determine if project impacts fall within the scope of the PEAs.

EPA will implement the GHP in a similar manner to EQIP and WIFIA. As part of the conservation planning and green infrastructure practices under the GHP, individual environmental reviews called environmental evaluations (EEs) will be completed to inform the conservation planning and green infrastructure practices and assist the agency's compliance with NEPA. The EEs are a concurrent part of the planning process in which the potential long- and short-term impacts of an action are briefly evaluated to ensure the action falls within the conservation or green infrastructure practices adopted for the GHP. The EE can be completed with the *Environmental Evaluation Questionnaire and Supporting Document Checklist* prepared as part of the GHP or applicants familiar with the NRCS conservation practices under EQIP may choose to complete the EE with the *USDA NRCS-CPA-52 form*.

The EE assesses the site-specific effects of the conservation and green infrastructure practices and provides information for the EPA Responsible Official to determine the need for consultation or to develop an additional EA or environmental impact statement (EIS) if the action is ineligible for coverage under the PEAs. The Responsible Official will review the results of the EE to ensure any necessary consultation has been carried out and to determine whether the NEPA analysis is sufficient before federal funding is approved for the proposed action. Additionally, the GHP will be administered in a manner to achieve the following EPA IIJA priorities:

Ensure that the GHP benefits are realized by disadvantaged communities (7). EPA recognizes that negative environmental impacts—whether in rural, suburban, or urban areas—disproportionately impact communities that are low-income, predominately of color, indigenous, linguistically isolated, and/or impacted by other stressors. State GHP cooperative agreements describe how activities will improve water quality in areas that both advance Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan goals and benefit disadvantaged communities. Example activities can include expanding the adaptive capacity and/or deepening engagement or representation of disadvantaged communities in the development of nutrient reduction strategies and watershed-based planning efforts.

Advance water quality actions that have climate adaptation or mitigation co-benefits (8). More frequent and intense storms and increased temperatures associated with climate change are anticipated to cause a range of impacts on nutrient loads and the formation and duration of the hypoxic zone, creating challenges for ecosystem and waterbody health. Increasing the capacity of the landscape to store carbon, attenuate floodwaters, retain nutrients, and withstand the impacts of extreme events can help to reduce hypoxia and harmful algal blooms, mitigate impacts on coastal ecosystems and communities, and build capacity for carbon sequestration across the MARB and other watersheds. EPA will work with states to ensure that water program investments increase resilience to climate change and anticipate and prepare for climate-related impacts disasters (e.g., droughts, floods, sea level rise and storm surge, changing salinity, extreme heat, wildfires) and identify water quality actions that can also yield climate adaptation or mitigation co-benefits (e.g., nature-based solutions for natural hazard mitigation).

Public Involvement

The environmental evaluation documents that will be used for the GHP are available for review through the EPA NEPA Compliance Documents Database at https://cdxapps.epa.gov/cdx-enepa-ll/public/action/nepa/search and on the EPA Gulf Hypoxia Program website at https://www.epa.gov/ms-htf/gulf-hypoxia-program.

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this decision may be submitted to EPA for consideration. All comments must be received within 30 calendar days of the date of this FONSI and Adoption. Please address your comments to: Katie Flahive, Flahive.Katie@epa.gov.

No administrative action will be taken by EPA on this action for at least 30 calendar days from the date this FONSI and Adoption was signed. This decision will become final after 30 calendar days if no substantive negative comments are received by EPA.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis within the PEAs, EPA concludes that no significant effects on the human environment will be caused by adopting the conservation practices as described in the EQIP PEA or the urban stormwater green infrastructure practices, including decentralized wastewater treatment, as described in the WIFIA PEA. EPA has determined that any funding EPA provides or recommends in support of the EQIP conservation practices, or the WIFIA urban stormwater green infrastructure practices, are consistent with the GHP. Any Proposed Action by the states through their GHP workplans will not cause highly uncertain or controversial impacts, unique or unknown risks, or significant cumulative impacts. Furthermore, the Proposed Action will not violate any federal, state, or local environmental protection law. The Proposed Action does not constitute a major federal action that significantly affects the quality of the human environment. Based on the foregoing an EIS is not required for this action and thus will not be prepared.

Signature:

Date:

IIJA/BIL Gulf Hypoxia Program State Cooperative Agreements

Environmental Evaluation Questionnaire and Supporting Document Checklist

This questionnaire helps verify the applicability of the relevant programmatic environmental assessment (e.g., USDA Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act) for activities conducted by states entering into cooperative agreements with EPA under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The IIJA directs EPA to establish a Gulf Hypoxia Program (GHP) that will provide \$60 million over five years to reduce nutrient pollution in support of the Hypoxia Task Force's (HTF) Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan. Most of the funding will be provided as cooperative agreements to the 12 HTF states under new grantmaking authority established by the IIJA. Compliance with other federal and state environmental laws and regulations is required, as applicable and appropriate. These could include, for example, those requiring site-specific consultations with other federal, state, or Tribal governments, and agencies (such as consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Clean Water Act (CWA), Archaeological and Paleontological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) or National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)); completing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)-like requirements of the state; or complying with certain state requirements for activities in, near, or along bodies of water.

This completed *Environmental Evaluation Questionnaire and Supporting Document Checklist* provides for the environmental evaluation (EE) to inform GHP conservation planning and green infrastructure practices and assist EPA's compliance with regulations implementing NEPA. Applicants familiar with the USDA conservation practices under EQIP may choose to complete the EE with the <u>USDA NRCS-</u> <u>CPA-52 form</u>.

Completing the *Environmental Evaluation Questionnaire and Supporting Document Checklist* can be an iterative process. The document may be revised after its initial submittal following project activity changes or clarifying questions made by EPA. States conducting EPA-supported activities subject to NEPA should submit a completed *Environmental Evaluation Questionnaire and Supporting Document Checklist* or <u>USDA NRCS-CPA-52 form</u> including all relevant information and supporting documents listed in this checklist. Guidance for specific sections appears in the table below.

Section	Checklist Item or Instructions	Included
General	• All questions have been answered fully based on all available	
Guidance	 All resource impacts have been evaluated and check boxes are filled in for each row. 	
	• All supporting documentation is referenced and attached.	
	 Additional pages are attached as necessary. 	
Question 2: Activity	 Describe <u>each</u> Category 3 project activity subject to a NEPA environmental assessment. 	
Description	 Note if activities are new, replacements, or rehabilitations. 	
	\circ Provide estimated size of construction site footprint.	
	 Indicate if the activities are still in the early phases of design and if specific details are not yet available. 	
	Note activity implementation phases (if applicable).	
Question 3: Activity	 Provide location descriptions for <u>each</u> Category 3 activity subject to a NEPA environmental assessment. 	
Location	 Provide street address or latitude/longitude. 	
	 Note if located at a farm, riparian, or urbanized area, or other location. 	
	\circ Note any previous site disturbances or current usage.	
	\circ Note existing land cover/vegetation.	
	 Provide an overview map, showing activities in one map. 	
Question 4: Activity Type	Please see instructions provided below. Respond to all questions that	at apply.
Question 5: Environmental Permits or Approvals Needed	Please see instructions provided below. Respond to all questions that	at apply.

Section	Checklist Item or Instructions	Included
Sections A through M: Impact Assessment Checkoff Tables	Assess anticipated impacts for each environmental resource. For each resource check the appropriate box if there are no impacts, less than significant impacts, or potentially significant or significant impact. In considering whether the effects of the proposed action are significant, analyze the potentially affected environment and the degree or intensity of the effects of the action. 40 CFR	
	 No Impact: Mark the "no impact" box if there is no potential for the to affect a resource (e.g., the activity falls outside a coastal zone). Less Than Significant Impact: Mark the "less than significant import the incorporation of mitigation measures will reduce an effect fro "potentially significant or significant impact" to "less than significant impact". 	he activity act" box if m ant
	 Potentially Significant or Significant Impact: Mark the "potentially significant or significant impact" box if impacts remain significant incorporation of mitigation measures, or if impacts fall outside the those considered in the programmatic environmental assessment box for a proposed action that is likely to have significant effects of significance of the effects is unknown. 	ly despite the e scope of c. Check this or when the
	 Narrative Description: Provide a brief narrative for each box check than significant impact" or "potentially significant or significant impact". Narrative description may be included in the space provided or additional p be added. 	ked <i>"less</i> npact". <u>A</u> e ages may
	 Include a description of the <u>impact(s)</u> (both construction / insta operational impacts). Include a brief description of associated <u>mitigation measures, k</u> <u>management practices (BMPs), and/or standard operating proc</u><u>(SOPs)</u> to avoid, minimize or compensate for impacts. Provide adequate supporting <u>reference information</u> for impact mitigation assessments (e.g., procedure used, assessment prot 	allation and <u>best</u> cedures and ocol. etc.).

EPA Gulf Hypoxia Program Environmental Evaluation Questionnaire

This questionnaire will be used for most EPA GHP grant funded project activities and supports the programmatic environmental assessment "tiering" category framework, the associated preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and activity specific NEPA documentation for the EPA GHP.

1. EPA GHP Activity Name (i.e., conservation practice, BMP, stormwater practice, project activity type, etc.):

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Activity Description: Describe each activity component outlined in the EPA GHP Workplan. (Note: most activities such as on-farm conservation practices, riparian buffers, drainage improvements, stormwater control measures, and etc. can be described as activities with a single component.)

Component: Click or tap here to enter text.

Description: Click or tap here to enter text.

Component is: \Box New \Box Replacement \Box Rehabilitation

Stage of design: Click or tap here to enter text.

*Note: Create additional tables for all components

3. Activity Location: Answer the questions below about activity location for each component. Attach or provide project activity map as applicable.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Provide a location for each activity outlined in the EPA GHP Workplan.

Select the checkbox(es) that best describe the activity:					
Within an existing farm, urbanized area, or other facility.					
Outside of an existing farm, urbanized area, or other facility.					
\Box Site previously undisturbed. \Box Site previously disturbed.					
Describe the current site use, landcover, and vegetation (e.g., farmland, developed, etc.):					
Click or tap here to enter text.					
Street address or nearest intersection:					
Click or tap here to enter text.					

Site coordinates (Latitude/Longitude, or Decimal Degrees):

Click or tap here to enter text.

*Note: Create additional tables for all components

4. Activity type: (Check all that apply):

Identify if any of the following apply to the project activity:

□ Program of similar activities: Activities that consist of a common type of work (e.g.,
agricultural conservation practices, stormwater control measures / management
practices) within a similar construction time frame (up to 5 years) that may have
unknown project activity locations within a general geographic area (e.g.,
implementation of two-stage ditches, establishment of riparian buffers, installation
of sediment control basins) over several years).
Combination of activities: A group of project activities with a common purpose

that have defined locations and similar construction schedules.

□ Not Applicable (N/A)

Identify which project activity type(s) best describe the activity (please select all that apply):

Staff Activities Only – No Earth Disturbance or Natural Resource Impacts			
Staff Activities Plus Disturbance/Impacts Checked Off Below:			
Row Crop Conservation Practice on Farmland			
Pasture / Rangeland Conservation Practice on Pasture/Range			
Edge-of-Field Conservation Practice			
Drought Prevention, Reduction, or Mitigation Activities			
Drainage Tile Water Treatment			
Combination of Agricultural and Drainage Activities			
Sediment / Stormwater Basin or Pond			
Two-Stage Ditch			
Streambank Stabilization / Restoration			
Riparian Buffer Restoration or Establishment			
Agricultural Conservation Practice Incentives Involving Soil Disturbance			
Wastewater Treatment Optimization / Upgrades Involving Construction			
Repair, Rehabilitation, and Replacement Activities			
Other [Please explain]			

5. Describe any environmental permits or approvals needed for the activity (e.g., federal, state, local – such as U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for CWA Sec. 404, state CWA Sec. 401/402) and the status of any permit (see table):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Please fill out the table for any permits applicable to this project activity.*

Bormit (Authorization		Agoney Status Da	
Permit/Authonization	issuing Agency	Status	Issued/Anticipated
		\Box Received	
Clean Water Act 404		□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.	USACE	\Box To Be Submitted	
	State	Received	
Clean Water Act 401	Environment	□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Department	🗆 To Be Submitted	
		Received	
Coastal Zone Management	Relevant federal	□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.	or state agency	🗆 To Be Submitted	
	U.S. Fish and	Received	
Endangered Species Act	Wildlife Service	□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.	(USFWS)	To Be Submitted	
Fish and Wildlife Coordination			
Act	USFWS		
Archaeological and			
Paleontological Resources	State Historic	Received	
Protection Act	Preservation	□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.	Office (SHPO)	🗆 To Be Submitted	
	Lead federal		
	agencies leads		
National Historic Preservation	Tribal	Application Submitted	
Act	Consultation	☐ To Be Submitted	
		Received	
		□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.		🗆 To Be Submitted	
		Received	
		□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.		🗆 To Be Submitted	
		□ Received	
		□ Application Submitted	
Click or tap here to enter text.		🗆 To Be Submitted	

*Note: Additional rows may be added as necessary

Checkoff Tables: Summary and Assessment of Impacts

For the following tables labeled A through M, check the boxes as appropriate for your project activities. Note that "Impact Anticipated" refers to the probable adverse effects/impacts your project activity(s) will have on the resources or parameter listed (e.g., land, air, water, noise, cultural). In considering whether the effects of the proposed action are significant, analyze the potentially affected environment and the degree or intensity of the effects of the action. 40 CFR 1501.3. Check the appropriate boxes as follows:

- **No Impact**: Mark the "no impact" box if there is no potential for the project activity to adversely affect a resource (e.g., the project activity falls outside a coastal zone, described impact is not applicable).
- Less Than Significant Impact: Mark the "less than significant impact" box if the incorporation of mitigation measures will reduce an adverse effect from "potentially significant or significant impact" to "less than significant impact".
- **Potentially Significant or Significant Impact**: Mark the "potentially significant or significant impact" box if adverse impacts remain significant despite the incorporation of mitigation measures. Check this box for a proposed action that is likely to have significant effects or when the significance of the effects is unknown.
- Narrative Description: Provide a brief narrative for each box checked "less than significant impact" or "potentially significant or significant impact". <u>A narrative is not required for boxes checked "no</u> <u>impact"</u>. Narrative description may be included in the space provided or additional pages may be added.
 - \circ Include a description of the <u>impact(s)</u> (both construction and operational impacts).
 - Include a brief description of associated <u>mitigation measures</u>, <u>best management practices</u> (BMPs), and/or standard operating procedures (SOPs) to avoid, minimize or compensate for impacts.

Provide adequate supporting <u>reference information</u> for impact and mitigation assessments (e.g., procedure used, assessment protocol, etc.).

A. Land Use:	Ir	Impact Anticipated		
	No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact	
 Conversions of Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), to non-agricultural use as defined under the Farmland Protection Act 7 U.S.C. 4201 et seq. 				
 Conflicts with any applicable land use plan, policy, act, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project activity (including, but not limited to, the general plan, climate change adaptation plan, habitat conservation plan, specific plan, local plan, or zoning ordinance). 				
Examples to Reduce Land Use Impacts:	Not Applicable	Not Incorporated	Incorporated	
 Compatibility with state and local government and private programs and policies. 				
2. Measures agreed upon in coordination with stakeholders.				

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION: Please provide a narrative description of the impacts (including construction and operation impacts) associated with any items with checked boxes in the less than significant impact or **Potentially**

Significant or significant impact columns. Identify and describe any mitigation measures, conservation practices, BMPs, and/or SOPs that may avoid, minimize, or compensate for the impacts, including those that reduce impacts to less than significant.

B. Air Quality:		In	Impact Anticipated		
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact	
1.	Conflicts with or delays in implementation of any applicable federal, state, or local air quality plan.				
2.	Violations of any federal air quality standards or contributions to an existing or projected air quality violation (including protected areas designated as mandatory Federal "Class I").				
3.	Increases in any criteria pollutant for which the project activity region is in non- attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors).				
4.	Releases of objectionable odors, such as hydrogen sulfide.				
Ex	amples to Reduce Air Quality Impacts:	Not Applicable	Not Incorporated	Incorporated	
1.	Odor minimizing facility design or emission control devices.				
2.	Use of energy efficient technologies, such as anti-idling measures for construction vehicles.				
3.	Use of dust suppression techniques, such as water or soil binders for dust suppression, reducing vehicle speeds, covering truck loads during transit, rumble strips, and truck washing stations during construction.				

C. Noise and Vibration:		Impact Anticipated		
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies; or generation of noise resulting in public health impacts.			
2.	Permanent increases in ambient noise levels in the project activity vicinity above levels existing without the project activity.			
3.	Temporary or periodic increases in ambient noise levels in the project activity vicinity above levels existing without the project activity.			
4.	Generation of vibration that could increase the risk of structural damage.			
Ex	amples to Reduce Noise Impacts:	Not	Not	Incorporated
		Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Compliance with local ordinances and land use designations.			
2.	Placing intakes and exhausts facing away from sensitive receivers.			
3.	Attenuation of fan and pump and motor noise.			
4.	Use of general noise reduction measures.			

D. Geology and Soils:		Impact Anticipated		
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Exposure of people or structures to hazards from unstable soils, landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.			
2.	Increase in soil erosion or loss of topsoil.			
3.	Loss of economically viable mineral deposits, scientifically significant paleontological resources, or unique geological features.			
Ex	amples to Reduce Impacts to Geology and	Not	Not	Incorporated
So	il:	Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Use of erosion protection / sediment control and site stabilization BMPs.			
2.	Implementation of a stormwater pollution prevention plan and fugitive dust control plan.			
3.	Implementation of effective site selection, design, and construction / installation practices.			

E. Water Resources: Impact Anticipated		d		
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Violations of any federal water quality standards or waste discharge requirements, including degradation of water quality.			
2.	Depletion or contamination of groundwater supplies (including sole-source aquifers) or negative interference with groundwater recharge.			
3.	Alteration of the drainage pattern of a water resource that would result in an increase in erosion or flooding on- or off-site.			
4.	Soil erosion or stormwater runoff that increases sediment, pollutants, or contaminants into streams, rivers, wetlands, or other water resources.			
5.	Floodplain modification, development within, or redirection, as defined by Executive Order 11988.			
6.	Increase in flood risk affecting loss on human safety, health, and welfare.			
7.	Loss, degradation, or destruction of wetlands or other Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.			
8.	Alteration of wild and scenic rivers as defined by the Wild and Scenic River Act 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.			
9.	Conflicts with the Rivers and Harbors Act, 33 U.S.C. 403.			
10	. Conflicts with the Coastal Barrier Resources Act, 16 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.			
11	Conflicts with the enforceable policies of a state's federally approved coastal management program (the Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq.).			

Examples to Reduce Impacts to Water		Not	Not	Incorporated
Re	esources:	Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Compliance with all state and local requirements regarding soil disturbance, permitting requirements, and construction practices.			
2.	Use of appropriate erosion protection and sediment control measures, BMPs, and site stabilization practices.			
3.	Development and use of an approved stormwater pollution prevention plan.			
4.	Adherence to recommended nonpoint source pollution control practices that reduce runoff of sediment, nutrients, and other pollutants.			
5.	Implementation of effective site selection, design, and construction / installation techniques and practices.			
6.	Construction during dry periods, use of channel flow controls / bypasses as appropriate.			

F.	Biological Resources:	In	npact Anticipate	d
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Potential harm to any federally threatened or endangered species as listed by the USFWS or NMFS in the Endangered Species Act 16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.			
2.	Adversely modify, fragment, or degrade critical habitat by the USFWS or NMFS.			
3.	Modification, fragmentation, or degradation of biological sensitive areas other than designated critical habitat.			
4.	Harm to fauna, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and invertebrates.			
5.	Changes in vegetation type (native to the region), particularly if the vegetation type in the region is already highly fragmented because of human activity.			
6.	Potential to injure or disturb marine mammals in U.S. waters as protected under Marine Mammal Protection Act as defined under 16 U.S.C 1361-1407.			
7.	Reduction in the quality or quantity of Essential Fish Habitat as designated in accordance with the Magnuson Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act.			
8.	Disturbances to Bald or Golden Eagles as defined under 16 U.S.C. 668 et seq.			
9.	Disturbances to migratory birds as defined under 16 U.S.C. 703-712 as amended.			
10	. Conflicts with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan as approved under section 10 (a) (1) (B) of the ESA or other federal habitat conservation plan.			
11	. Introduction or spread of invasive species as identified under Executive Order 13112.			
12	Loss of or damage to wildlife resources due to the control or modification of any stream or other body of water protected by the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act 16 U.S.C. 661- 667e.			

Examples to Reduce Impacts to Biological Resources:	Not Applicable	Not Incorporated	Incorporated
1. Implementation of avoidance and minimization measures, and BMPs.			
 Adoption of recommendations and conservation measures from USFWS, NMF and/or the National Oceanic and Atmosph Administration. 	S eric		
 Prevention of spills and leaks from vehicles and equipment. 	5		
 Implementation of measures to minimize s compaction and the transportation of noxious, invasive and pest species. 	ioil 🗌		

G.	Cultural Resource:	Ir	npact Anticipate	d
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Potential adverse effects to federally listed and eligible historical properties, including prehistoric and historic sites, historic districts and traditional cultural properties, as defined in 36 CFR part 800.			
2.	Modification of unique paleontological resources or site or unique geologic features.			
3.	Disturbance of human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.			
4.	Conflicts with Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, as defined in 25 U.S.C. § 3001 et seq.			
5.	Conflicts with the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, as defined in 16 U.S.C. §§ 470AA-MM			
Ex	amples to Reduce Impacts to Cultural	Not	Not	Incorporated
Re	sources:	Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Implementation of effective site selection, design, and construction / installation practices.			
2.	Implementation of avoidance and minimization measures identified in consultation with the State Historic Preservation (SHPO) and/or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO).			
3.	Completion of surveys prior to construction.			
4.	Development of an unanticipated discoveries plan.			

Н.	Socioeconomic and Environmental Justice:	Ir	mpact Anticipate	d
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Changes to the demographics around project activity location, such as population growth.			
2.	Modifications to economic factors such as per capita income, unemployment rate, or poverty.			
3.	Alterations to social assets, such as housing or public services.			
4.	Potential disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects, including cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens on communities with environmental justice concerns as defined under Executive Order 14096.			
Ex En	amples to Reduce Socioeconomic and vironmental Justice Impacts:	Not Applicable	Not Incorporated	Incorporated
1.	Implementation of construction mitigation measures.			
2.	Implementation of measures developed as a result of conducting meaningful public engagement with environmental justice communities.			

Ι.	Transportation and Traffic:	Impact Anticipated		
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Changes to traffic patterns around the project activity area including, but not limited to, the arrival and departure of construction workers, vehicles hauling equipment and materials to the site, road closures or detours, and slower movement and larger turning radii of truck going to project activity site.			
Ex	amples to Reduce Transportation and Traffic	Not	Not	Incorporated
Im	npacts:	Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Mitigation measures identified in coordination with local agencies.			
2.	Use of warning signage, flag persons.			
3.	Use of lane closures and detours as necessary.			

J.	Utilities and Community Services:	Ir	npact Anticipate	d
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Changes to electric, cable, gas, sewer, water, stormwater, and other existing utility services.			
2.	Changes to community services, such as open space, recreational and cultural facilities.			
Ex	amples to Reduce Utilities and Community	Not	Not	Incorporated
Se	rvices Impacts:	Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Identification and avoidance of utilities.			
2.	Coordination with service providers and minimization of service interruption.			
3.	Mitigation measures identified in coordination with park and recreational resource managers / agencies.			

К.	Hazardous and Toxic Materials and Waste:	l II	mpact Anticipate	d
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Accidental releases, spills, or improper storage and disposal of hazardous materials.			
2.	Conflicts with Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), Solid Waste Disposal Act, Toxic Substances Control Act, and Emergency Planning and Community Right- to-Know Act.			
3.	Generation or increase in the amount of sewage sludge that is not in compliance with EPA standards for the use or disposal of sewage sludge.			
Ex	amples to Reduce Impacts from Hazardous	Not	Not	Incorporated
an	d Toxic Materials and Waste:	Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Mitigation measures identified through compliance with applicable hazardous and toxic materials laws and regulations.			
2.	Implementation of environmental protection measures, BMPs, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).			
3.	Development or Adoption of an Emergency Plan / Emergency Response Plan (or similar).			

L.	Human Health and Safety:	Ir	npact Anticipate	ed
		No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1.	Creating occupational health hazards for workers during construction or operation.			
2.	Creating or contributing to environmental health or public health risks and safety risks that may disproportionately affect children, consistent with Executive Order 13045.			
3.	Creating or contributing to public health risk of immediate injury or long-term health hazards.			
Ex	amples to Reduce Impacts to Human Health and	Not	Not	Incorporated
Sa	fety:	Applicable	Incorporated	
1.	Implementation of a health and safety plan.			
2.	Limiting site access to authorized personnel only.			
3.	Proper handling of chemicals and other substances.			
4.	Implementation of fugitive dust control measures.			

M. Other Environmental Effects	In	npact Anticipate	ed
	No Impact	Less Than Significant Impact	Potentially Significant or Significant Impact
1. Click or tap here to enter text.			
2. Click or tap here to enter text.			
3. Click or tap here to enter text.			
4. Click or tap here to enter text.			
5. Click or tap here to enter text.			

*Note: Additional rows may be added as necessary

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION: Please provide a narrative description of the impacts (including construction and operation impacts) associated with any items with checked boxes in the less than significant impact or potentially significant or significant impact columns. Identify and describe any mitigation measures, conservation practices, BMPs, and/or SOPs that may avoid, minimize, or compensate for the impacts, including those that reduce impacts to less than significant.

IIJA/BIL Gulf Hypoxia Program State Cooperative Agreements

Crosscutting Authorities Review Table

Record below the compliance or conformance determinations for each statute and executive order.

Crosscutting Authority	Will Proposed Activities to be Funded by the GHP Grant:	No	Yes
Environmental Justice Executive Orders 12898 and 14096	Result in disproportionate and adverse human health or environmental effects on communities with Environmental Justice concerns, or fail to promote nondiscrimination affecting human health and the environment, or otherwise is inconsistent with Executive Orders <u>12898</u> and/or <u>14096</u> ?		
Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531-1543)	Fail to protect threatened or endangered species and their critical habitats, result in the import/export or interstate/foreign commerce of listed species, or otherwise cause a violation of the <u>Endangered Species Act?</u>		
Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 668-668c)	Result in the taking or harassment of a bald or golden eagle, or a taking of their feathers, nests, or eggs, or otherwise violate the <u>Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act</u> ?		
Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. § 661 et seq)	Modify a stream, river, lake, or other body of water in a manner that damages fish or wildlife resources, without providing sufficient mitigation measures to ensure the conservation, maintenance and management of wildlife resources and habitat, in accordance with the <u>Fish and Wildlife</u> <u>Coordination Act?</u>		
Marine Mammal Protection Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 1361-1407)	Result in the taking or importing of marine mammals (e.g., manatee, sea otters), including parts and products, or otherwise cause a violation of the conservation or other provisions of the <u>Marine Mammal Protection Act?</u>		
National Historic Preservation Act as amended (54 U.S.C. § 300101 et seq)	Cause adverse impacts to any historic property or result in any unaddressed violation of the <u>National Historic Preservation</u> <u>Act?</u>		
Archeological and Historic Preservation Act, as amended (54 U.S.C. §§ 312501- 312508)	Cause the loss or destruction of historic or archeological objects or materials in a manner that violates the requirements of the <u>Archeological and Historic Preservation Act?</u>		

Crosscutting Authority	Will Proposed Activities to be Funded by the GHP Grant:	No	Yes
Archaeological Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 470aa-mm)	Fail to protect or secure archaeological resources and sites which are on federal public lands and Indian lands, or otherwise violate the terms and conditions of the <u>Archeological Resources Protection Act?</u>		
Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. § 3001 ET SEQ.)	Result in any disturbance, transport, or other impacts to Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony in a manner that violates the <u>Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act?</u>		
Clean Water Act (Sections 401 and 404)	Trigger requirements for a state water quality certification for federal actions under <u>Section 401</u> of the Clean Water Act, or require a permit for the discharge of dredged or fill material into a water of the United States as required under <u>Section 404</u> of the Clean Water Act?		
Rivers and Harbors Act (Section 10)	Involve the construction of any structure in or over any navigable water of the United States, or any structure outside the limits defined for navigable waters of the United States that may affect the course, location, or condition of the waterbody, as defined by <u>Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors</u> <u>Act</u> of 1899?		
Protection of Wetlands Executive Order 11990 (1977), as amended by Executive Order 12608 (1997)	Result in long or short term adverse impacts associated with the destruction or modification of wetlands, or involve new construction in wetlands when there is a practicable alternative, or otherwise cause the unmitigated destruction, loss or degradation, or failure to protect wetlands in a manner that violates Executive Order 11990?		
Floodplain Management Executive Order 11988 (1977), as amended by Executive Order 12148 (1979)	Cause long or short term adverse impacts associated with the occupancy or modification of floodplains, including development in floodplains, without measures to reduce or mitigate the impact of floods on human safety, health and welfare by restoring or preserving the natural and beneficial values served by floodplains, or otherwise violate the terms of <u>Executive Order 11988?</u>		
Safe Drinking Water Act (42 U.S.C. §§ 300f– 300j-26)	Threaten or adversely affect underground or other sources of drinking water in a manner that violates the <u>Safe Drinking</u> <u>Water Act?</u>		
Farmland Protection Policy Act (7 U.S.C. §§ 4201–4209)	Result in unmitigated adverse effects on the protection of farmland, or otherwise fail to comply with the provisions of the Farmland Protection Policy Act?		

Crosscutting Authority	Will Proposed Activities to be Funded by the GHP Grant:	No	Yes
Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 1451–1466)	Fail to preserve, protect, restore, or enhance the resources of the nation's coastal zone—including the Great Lakes—or proceed without the required state coordination in a manner that violates the <u>National Coastal Zone Management Program</u> , the <u>National Estuarine Research Reserve System</u> , and the <u>Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program</u> ?		
Coastal Barriers Resources Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 3501–3510)	Adversely affect the Coastal Barrier Resources System, those undeveloped coastal barriers and other areas located on the coasts of the United States that are identified and depicted on the maps on file with the Secretary of the Interior, in violation of the <u>Coastal Barriers Resources Act</u> ?		
Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 1271–1287)	Fail to protect or adversely affect any state, tribal, or other wild or scenic river that has been so designated due to remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, or their immediate environments, in a manner that violates the <u>Wild and Scenic</u> <u>Rivers Act</u> ?		
Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 1801– 1891)	Affect the long-term biological and economic sustainability of marine fisheries through overfishing or other actions, in violation of the <u>Magnuson-Stevens Act</u> ?		
Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. §§ 703- 712)	Result in the taking, killing, capturing, selling, trading, or transporting of any protected migratory bird species without prior authorization by the Department of Interior U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as required by the <u>Migratory Bird Treaty Act?</u>		
Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. § 7506(c))	Involve transportation activities that will cause new air quality violations, worsen existing violations, adversely affect state air quality implementation plans, or delay timely attainment of the national ambient air quality standards in a manner that violates provision of the <u>Clean Air Act section 176(c)</u> ?		
Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. § 1131 et seq.)	Fail to protect or impair the future use and enjoyment of congressionally designated areas within the Wilderness Preservation System in a manner that violates the <u>Wilderness</u> <u>Act</u> ?		

Crosscutting Authority	Will Proposed Activities to be Funded by the GHP Grant:	No	Yes
Executive Order 11593, Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment	Fail to preserve, restore, enhance, or maintain federally owned or controlled historical or cultural environments or properties as required by <u>Executive Order 11593</u> , including procedures to assure the preservation and enhancement of non-federally owned sites, structures and objects of historical, architectural or archaeological significance?		
Executive Order 13112, Invasive Species	Cause or promote the introduction or spread of invasive species, in violation of <u>Executive Order 13112</u> ?		
Federal Noxious Weed Act (7 U.S.C. 2814)	Adversely affect the control or management of undesirable, noxious, harmful, exotic, injurious, or poisonous plants on federal lands, as required by the <u>Federal Noxious Weed Act</u> and related state laws?		

For all crosscutting laws, please append the appropriate compliance documentation to Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 of this Review Table. Provide credible, traceable, and supportive source documentation for each authority. Where applicable, complete the necessary reviews or consultations and obtain or note applicable permits of approvals. Clearly note citations, dates/names/titles of contacts, and page references. Attach additional documentation as appropriate.

Appendix 1: Activity Summary, Location, and Summary of Impacts

Please attach this information <u>only</u> for GHP Grant activities covered or addressed by the crosscutting authorities listed in the checkoff table. For those checked "Yes," describe any compliance steps or mitigation required.

Appendix 2: Summary of Coordination, Consultation, Permitting, and Other Compliance Actions

Please include this information <u>only</u> for the GHP Grant activities addressed in Appendix 1.