U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization Grant Program

City of Donaldsonville

Donaldsonville, Louisiana

Categorical Exclusion Documentation

NGDISM-FY23-CE-2024-06

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1. Overview

This document serves as the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's (PHMSA) determination of applicability of the Department of Energy's (DOE) B5.4 categorical exclusion (CE) for repair or replacement of pipelines for the project identified below. Effective July 3, 2024, PHMSA adopted DOE's CE in accordance with the Section 109 of the National Environmental Policy Act, enacted as part of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023, which allows a federal agency to ''adopt'' another federal agency's CEs for proposed actions.

For projects that PHMSA determines DOE CE B5.4 is applicable, it must: (1) consider the presence of any integral elements at 10 CFR part 1021, subpart D, appendix B (1)-(5); and, (2) evaluate the proposed action for extraordinary circumstances in which a normally excluded action may have a significant effect. If an extraordinary circumstance is present, the agency nevertheless may categorically exclude the proposed action if the agency determines that there are circumstances that lessen the impacts or other conditions sufficient to avoid significant effects.

The project identified below was provisionally awarded federal funding through PHMSA's Natural Gas Distribution Infrastructure Safety and Modernization (NGDISM) grant program. This document describes the proposed action, the anticipated impacts of that action, any circumstances or conditions that must be implemented to ensure significant effects are avoided, and documents the approval of the project as a categorical exclusion.

Project Title	City of Donaldsonville Natural Gas Pipeline Replacement
Project Location	Donaldsonville, Ascension Parish, Louisiana
Project Description/Proposed Action:	

The project area would be in the City of Donaldsonville, Ascension Parish, Louisiana (see Appendix A). The project would consist of the replacement of all cast iron gas mains sized 2, 2 ¼, 3, 4, and 6 inches within two areas that are separated by the PHMSA Round 1 area. The westerly portion is bounded by the Mississippi River on the northerly side, LA Hwy 18 on the easterly side, the Union Pacific Railroad on the southerly side and Stewart Street on the easterly side that is within Zone 2 Area 3. The easterly portion includes a 3-inch gas main that replaces an existing 2 ¼ inch cast iron gas main along LA Hwy 18 (River Road) beginning on the westerly end at the intersection of Thibaut Drive, which is included in the PHMSA Round I project, and LA Hwy 18 and continuing along LA Hwy 18 to LA Hwy 3120, including 2-inch gas pipes on the side streets that connect to LA Hwy 18. The new 3-inch gas main would continue along LA Hwy 18 from LA Hwy 3120, serving the A-Bend community, to its terminus 345 feet northeast of Wells Road. The easterly portion of the PHMSA Round II project is located in Zone 2, Area 3 and Zone 3, Area 5. Staging areas to be used for execution of the project would be determined by the Contractor and have not been established, but the area adjacent to the City's gas system maintenance facility (warehouse) on Thibaut Drive would be available for the contractor to use as a staging area.

The depth of the existing mains averages three feet, which were installed in the 1920s and the 1930s. The new mains would be installed with a minimum of 4 feet of cover to meet code requirements with tie-ins to the existing mains being made at the three foot depth. The replacement medium density polyethylene pipe (MDPE) pipes would be installed parallel to the existing cast iron mains with an approximate offset of three feet to either the right or left, depending on the side of the street/highway that the existing cast iron main was installed.

All of the work on this project would be conducted within either existing City or State-owned Rights-of-Way. The pipe would be horizontally directional drilled with a maximum allowed operating pressure (MAOP) of 100 psi. Replacement mains would be 28,270 feet of 2-inch pipe, 18,615 feet of 3-inch pipe, 9,500 feet of 4-inch pipe and 6,990 feet of 6-inch pipe. It should be noted that replacing 3-inch cast iron pipes with 4-inch MDPE pipes is not a capacity increase because the inside diameter of the 4-inch MDPE pipe is approximately the same as the inside diameter of the existing 3-inch cast iron pipes due to the thicker wall of the MDPE pipe.

Gas service pipes would be 1 inch and would be connected to the new mains with self-tapping saddle tees, including Series 1800 excess flow valves. The construction of new service pipes would be adjacent to the existing steel service pipes and will be installed via the Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) installation method. New MDPE to Steel service risers would be installed at the customer end of the MDPE service pipe and connected to the existing gas meters. Replacement of existing gas meters would not be part of the project. Remote reading meter heads would be installed on the existing customer gas meters. Approximately 580 services, risers and reading heads would be installed on the project.

2. Project Description/Proposed Action

Question	Information
Describe the location and dimensions of all ground disturbing activities and provide a map depicting the location(s) where ground	There would be a 4-foot long by 4foot wide by 4-foot deep pit at each street intersection to connect new pipes together.

disturbance would occur. (*e.g.*, width and depth of trenching or excavation for borings, location of regulator stations, etc.)	
If the exact location where new pipe would be installed or where other work would occur, provide the width of the ROW or the general area encompassing the footprint where all work would occur. Include the anticipated footprint and depth of new pipe installation.	All pipes would be installed within existing City or State-owned Rights-of-Way below sidewalks to eliminate conflicts with existing utilities.
Will service lines be replaced?	Yes.
Will meters or other equipment be replaced? If so, provide a description detailing what meter components, etc. will be replaced and indicate if this will require ground disturbance, if the equipment will be attached to existing structures, etc.	No meters would be replaced. The existing manual reading heads would be replaced with remote reading heads.
What portions of the pipeline will be abandoned? What portions of the pipeline will be removed?	All portions of the pipeline would be abandoned.

Question	**Information**
What construction methods will be used?	Directional boring would be used to facilitate the replacement adjacent to existing pipe.
Does the project require a new right-of-way not currently in the ownership of the utility? If new ROW will occur, please provide a description of the property to be acquired (existing condition and land use).	No new right-of-way or easement would be needed.
How many linear feet of pipe will be replaced or repaired?	63,375 feet.

2.1. Proposed Pipeline Replacement Details

Existing Pipeline Length in feet	***Pipeline Diameter in inches***	***Pipeline Material (cast iron, bare steel,***	***Operating Pressure (PSI)***	***Reduced Pressure if Possible (PSI)***	***Year installed if known.***

		coated steel, PVC)			
28,270.00 feet	2.00	Cast iron	23.00		Between 1920 and 1930
9,500.00 feet	4.00	Cast iron	23.00		Between 1920 and 1930
6,990.00 feet	6.00	Cast iron	23.00		Between 1920 and 1930
18,615.00 feet	3.00	Cast iron	23.00		Between 1920 and 1930

Resource Review

The following information represents questions posed to the project proponent identified on the cover page of this document regarding the project that was provisionally awarded grant funds under PHMSA's NGDISM program. The information and justification section includes the applicant's response. PHMSA's conclusions are based on applicant provided information, independently reviewed by PHMSA. The mitigation measures were reviewed and confirmed by the project proponent.

Air Quality	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Is the project located in an area designated by the EPA as non-attainment or maintenance status for one or more of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)?	Yes, based on review of the EPA Greenbook.[1]
Will the construction activities produce emissions that exceed de minimis thresholds (tons per year)?	No.
Will mitigation measures be used to capture blowdown? (Blowdown refers to the venting of natural gas in current facilities, in order to begin rehabilitation, repair, or replacement activities.)	Yes, the contractor would be required to formulate a plan to capture all blowdown. It would be their responsibility under the contract.
Will project proponent commit to reducing pressure on the segments/lines to be replaced, prior to venting?	No.
Estimate the current leak rate per mile based on the type of pipeline material. Based on mileage of replacement and new pipeline material, estimate the total reduction of natural gas leakage.	The existing leak rate is estimated to be 55,169 kilograms (kg)/year(yr). Replacement of pipelines would result in a leak rate of approximately 346 kg/yr or a reduction of approximately 1,096,463 kg over a 20-yr

[1] Criteria Air Pollutants | US EPA

	timeframe.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Air Quality?	No.

Conclusion:

The project area is located within Ascension Parish, Louisiana. Based on EPA's Greenbook,[2] the project area falls within a non-attainment area for the 1-hour ozone and a maintenance area for 8- hour ozone national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS).[3] Therefore, PHMSA must ensure that the project would not interfere with the state's plan to maintain national standards for air quality. PHMSA reviewed information provided by the applicant and estimated the emissions that would likely be produced by the construction equipment used to install pipelines. This information was used in conjunction with EPA's MOVES[4] model to determine if the project would exceed EPA's thresholds for NAAQS. PHMSA's assessment is that due to the relatively minor scope of the proposed project, impacts on local air quality resulting from construction activities, such as dust and exhaust from construction equipment, would be temporary and considered de minimis. Thus, the proposed project does not require a General Conformity Analysis under Section 176(c) (4) of the Clean Air Act at the proposed project sites. Therefore, it is PHMSA's assessment that the proposed project would provide a net benefit to air quality from the overall reduction of natural gas emissions and that no adverse indirect or cumulative impacts would result from the project.

Mitigation Measures:

- Use on-road and non-road vehicles efficiently by minimizing speeds and the number of vehicles;
- Minimize excavation to the greatest extent practical;
- Use cleaner, newer, non-road equipment as much as practicable;
- Minimize all vehicle idling and at minimum, conforming with local idling regulations;
- Ensure that all vehicles and equipment are in proper operating condition;
- On-road and non-road engines must meet EPA exhaust emission standards (40 CFR Parts 85, 86, and 89);
- Cover open-bodied trucks while transporting materials;
- Use water or other approved dust suppressants at construction sites and on unpaved roadways, as necessary;
- Minimize the area of soil disturbance to that necessary for construction;
- Minimize construction site traffic by using offsite parking and shuttle buses, as necessary; and

[2] https://www.epa.gov/green-book/green-book-national-area-and-county-level-multi-pollutant-information
[3] https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/anayo_pa.html

[4] https://www.epa.gov/moves

- Minimize the idling of equipment.

Water Resources	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Are there water resources within the project area, such as wetlands, streams, rivers, or floodplains? If so, would the project temporarily or permanently impact wetlands or waterways? If water resources are present but will not be impacted, please describe how these impacts will be avoided (*e.g.* directional boring under the resource)	Yes, according to United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI), and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps, two water bodies occur near or within the project area. Bayou Lafourche is located within the project area, and the Mississippi River borders the northeastern portion of the project. Riverine and freshwater forested/scrubland wetlands are indicated within and directly adjacent to Bayou Lafourche. Part of the project would be located within FEMA Flood Zones Zone AH, A, and X. No impact would occur as ground disturbance in these areas would be temporary and not cause any fill on a floodplain. Directional boring would be used in these water resource areas to avoid impacts.
Under the Clean Water Act, is a Section 401 State certification potentially required? If yes, describe anticipated permit and how project proponent will ensure permit compliance.	No.
Under the Clean Water Act, is a USACE Section 404 Permit required for the discharge of dredge and fill material? If yes, describe anticipated permit and how project proponent will ensure permit compliance.	No dredge or fill material would be discharged into a waterway. All work would occur within previously disturbed pipeline and roadway ROW and all pipeline work would be replacement work so no additional impacts are anticipated. If final design identifies impacts, to include unanticipated discharges into a water resource then a USACE Section 404 Permit must be obtained and provided to PHMSA, prior to construction activities commencing.
Under the Clean Water Act, is an EPA or State Section 402 permit required for the discharge of pollutants into the waters of the United States? Is a	No. Yes, Contractor would be required to create a SWPPP and register with the State.

Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) required? If yes, describe how project proponent will ensure permit compliance.	
Will work activities take place within a FEMA designated floodplain? If so, describe any permanent or temporary impacts and the required coordination efforts with state or local floodplain regulatory agencies.	FEMA's flood maps[5] indicate the project area is located in FEMA Flood Zones A, AH, and X. Areas designated as Zone X are outside of any designated special flood hazard areas. Areas designated as Zone A and AH are considered Special Flood Hazard Areas and correspond to the one percent annual chance of flooding (100-year floodplain). Directional boring would be used in these water resource areas to avoid impacts.
Is the project located in a Coastal Zone? Will the proposed project activities affect any coastal use or natural resource of the coastal zone, requiring a Consistency Determination and Certification? Please provide any relevant information regarding how the project proponent normally coordinates with the applicable state's coastal zone management agency.	No, the project is not located within a designated coastal zone.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Water Resources.	No.

Conclusion:

PHMSA reviewed NWI maps, as well as the FEMA national flood hazard maps. Two water bodies occur near or within the project area. Bayou Lafourche is located within the project area, and the Mississippi River borders the northeastern portion of the project. Riverine and freshwater forested/scrubland wetlands are indicated within and directly adjacent to Bayou Lafourche. A portion of the project area from Stewart Road to Martin Luther King Drive are in FEMA Flood Zone AH. Areas within and directly adjacent to Bayou Lafourche are in FEMA Flood Zone A. The remainder of the project area falls in FEMA Flood Zone X. Ground disturbance in these areas would be temporary and not cause any fill on a floodplain. HDD would be used to replace pipeline in the water resource areas to avoid impacts to waterbodies and wetlands. Excavation for HDD would occur at street intersections. In the event that HDD excavation would occur outside of street intersections, the City of Donaldsonville would hire an environmental professional to delineate all aquatic resources, to include wetlands and waters within the ROW and clearly mark these areas with appropriate flagging. The wetland delineation would be coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' New Orleans District (Corps) for review and verification, consistent with the Corps' normal practices. Upon completion of final design and prior to construction, the City of Donaldsonville would confirm that the

[5] FEMA Flood Map Service Center | Welcome!

work for replacing pipelines would not encroach on any aquatic resources. If final design shows that there would be a discharge within wetlands or other aquatic resources (to include the placement of dirt, rock, or any fill material), the City of Donaldsonville would reassess the proposed work in these areas to avoid and minimize impacts. If complete avoidance is not possible, the City of Donaldsonville would obtain the appropriate authorization from the Corps and the provide a copy to PHMSA prior to beginning construction activities. The project area also includes FEMA designated special flood hazard areas. PHMSA anticipates that ground disturbance activities in these areas would be avoided by directional drilling pipelines under identified floodplains. Project activities would not affect the flood-holding capacity of the 100-year floodplain or cause any adverse impacts to the Special Flood Hazard Area. There would be temporary impacts from directional boring activities; however, all areas would be restored to pre-construction contours and conditions and there would be no permanent impacts. Should any work occur within special flood hazard areas, the City of Donaldsonville should coordinate with the appropriate FEMA representative or local floodplain coordinator. By avoiding direct impacts to aquatic resources and implementing best management practices during construction, PHMSA does not anticipate any adverse impacts to water resources.

Mitigation Measures:

- Avoid staging and laydown areas in wetlands or floodplains;
- Reseed disturbed areas with native plant species;
- Restore disturbed areas to pre-construction contours;
- Adhere to additional mitigation measures in accordance with applicable permits;
- Use best management practices during construction to control sediment and erosion and prevent pollutants from entering adjacent waterways; and
- Coordinate with the appropriate FEMA representative or local floodplain coordinator when work will occur in FEMA designated special flood hazard areas, as needed.

Groundwater and Hazardous Materials/Waste	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Does the project have potential to encounter and impact groundwater? If yes, describe potential impacts from construction activities.	Yes, due to ground disturbance activities, there is a potential to encounter groundwater during excavation. No impact is expected as no hazardous materials would be in contact with the groundwater.
Will the project require boring or directional drilling that may require pits containing mud and inadvertent return fluids? If yes, describe measures that will be taken during construction activities to prevent impacts to groundwater resources. If boring or directional drilling will not require pits, please describe why these will not be required and how fluids will be contained.	Yes. The project may involve horizontal directional drilling and may require pits. Construction crews would be required to contain all inadvertent returns of drilling fluids via pits, vacuum truck, or other methods and dispose of them properly.
Will the project potentially involve a site(s) contaminated by hazardous waste? Sites identified	No. Based on review of reviewed EPA's NEPAssist tool, numerous hazardous waste sites

as containing hazardous waste/materials can be identified through EPA's NEPAssist tool https://nepassisttool.epa.gov/nepassist/nepamap.aspx or local databases identifying Superfund, Brownfields, etc. If hazmat sites are identified in or near areas where work will occur, describe how the proposed work poses no risk or what mitigative measures will be used to avoid identified sites.	were identified near the project area, but no brownfield or superfund sites were identified within the project area.
Is there any indication that the pipeline was ever used to convey coal gas? If yes, PHMSA will work with the project proponent for required studies.	No.
Does the project have the potential to encounter or disturb lead pipes or asbestos?	No. Given the shallow depth of placement for gas main pipes compared to that of other utilities it is not likely that asbestos or lead pipes will be encountered during construction.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Groundwater and hazardous materials/waste.	No.

Conclusion:

PHMSA reviewed EPA's NEPAssist to identify any brownfield properties, hazardous waste sites, and superfund sites. There were numerous hazardous waste sites identified near the project area; however, there were no brownfields sites or superfund sites identified in the project area. Hazardous waste information is identified in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act Information (RCRAInfo), which is a national program that includes an inventory of all generators, transporters, treaters, storers, and disposers of hazardous waste that are required to provide information about their activities to state environmental agencies.

Mitigation Measures:

- Develop and adhere to a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan;
- Avoid boring/drilling, staging and laydown areas within EPA superfund sites or areas containing known waste;
- Adhere to applicable groundwater and soil management plans; and
- Develop and implement an HDD Inadvertent Return and Contingency Plan to establish operational procedures and responsibilities for the prevention, containment, and clean-up of inadvertent returns associated with the directional drilling on the Project.

Biological Resources	
Question	**Information and Justification**

Based on review of IPaC and NOAA Fisheries database, are there any federally threatened or endangered species or critical habitat potentially occurring within the geographic range of the project area?	Yes, based on review of the USFWS's Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC). In addition, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries resources were inventoried to identify state listed species.
Are there any known State or Federally, listed threatened or endangered species or habitat areas for State or Federally listed species present in or immediately adjacent to areas where work will occur? If yes, describe how project proponent will avoid impacts to listed species or habitat. If there are potential impacts to federally listed species or critical habitat, PHMSA will work with the project proponent to conduct necessary consultation with resource agencies.	No. Due to the nature of construction no impacts are expected. Shallow excavation will be conducted in previously disturbed and developed areas. Minimal sapling tree clearing is foreseen as part of this project. No endangered or threatened species will be impacted.
Will there be any tree clearing or removal of woody vegetation involved with the proposed work?	No.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Biological Resources?	No.

Conclusion:

The project area is built out and is comprised of previously disturbed developed and residential areas. PHMSA requested an official species list through the USFWS's IPaC website. The following species were identified as potentially occurring in the project area:

- West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*): threatened
- Pallid sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*): endangered
- Tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*): proposed endangered
- Alligator snapping turtle (*Macrochelys temminckii*): proposed threatened
- Monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*): proposed threatened

There was no critical habitat identified within the project area.

Several state-listed species also occur within the geographical range, however based on the disturbed nature of the project area, no habitat is present for these species.

Because these areas are within ROW that has been previously impacted (pipeline laid in the ground in close proximity to the location where new pipes would be laid and subsequently paved), the immediate project area has very limited biological resources present. Therefore, in accordance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) PHMSA's assessment is that the project would have no effect to West Indian manatee and the Pallid sturgeon. Under Section 7(a)(4) of the ESA, federal agencies must

confer with the USFWS if their action would jeopardize the continued existence of a proposed species; therefore, PHMSA's assessment is that the project is unlikely to jeopardize the continued existence of the tricolored bat, alligator snapping turtle, or monarch butterfly. PHMSA's assessment is that the project would have no adverse impacts to state listed species and would not cause more than minor adverse impacts to other biological resources in the project area.
Mitigation Measures: No mitigation measures needed.

Cultural Resources	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Please describe all ground disturbing activities associated with the project (including pipeline installation, service line installation, gas meter replacements, metering station construction or demolition, etc.). What is the maximum depth, width and length of excavations for each activity involving ground disturbance?	Excavations would be required where the horizontally directional drilled segments are connected to other pipes. Connection of main distribution pipes would occur at street intersections requiring 4-foot long by 4-foot wide by 4-foot deep pit which would be open for approximately 8 hours then would be immediately backfilled with the soil that was excavated. Other 3-foot long by 3-foot wide by 4-foot deep pits would be required along the length of the gas mains for connection of new MDPE service pipes to the new MDPE gas mains and would normally be open for a 4-hour duration then backfilled with the excavated material. Where excavations require pavement removal, temporary limestone surface material would be placed until the pavement restoration can be completed.
Will ground disturbance take place entirely in existing ROW or utility easements? Will it be restricted entirely to paved areas or will some disturbance take place in grassy, undisturbed, or natural areas?	Yes, ground disturbance would take place entirely in existing ROW or utility easements Yes, there would be some disturbance in grassy areas for replacement of service pipes.
Has the entire project area (width, length and depth) been previously disturbed by the original installation or other activities? If so, provide documentation or a description of prior ground disturbances, such as road or utility cross sections, plans or as-builts. If documentation is not available provide justification for how the ground was previously disturbed.	Yes. Existing water, sewer, and telephone has been installed underground within the project area. While grassy areas would be disturbed, those grassy areas have already been previously disturbed. The pipe in this area would be installed using HDD methods, so ground disturbance would be minimal.

Does the project involve any physical impacts to buildings or structures? Please provide a description of the work that may affect buildings or structures and provide addresses and a map showing the locations.	No.
Please describe the project area and provide several photographs to show the character of the project area and surrounding properties. Is it a residential or commercial area? Are the nearby properties old or modern? Streetscapes and views looking down the ROW to show flanking properties are preferred. Please provide a photo key or captions to identify where the photos were taken and what they are showing.	Project area is scattered throughout the city of Donaldsonville and its natural gas service area. The area is a mixture of residential and commercial. Properties are both old and modern.
Does the project involve construction or installation of any new aboveground components? If so, describe the components, identify their location and provide representative images of the components.	No.
Are there any nearby properties or resources that either appear to be or are documented[6] to have been constructed more than 45 years ago? Does there appear to be a group of properties of similar age, design, or method of construction? Or are there any designed landscapes such as a park or cemetery? Please provide photographs of any properties that may be more than 45 years in age and would have the potential to be affected by the project (such as properties that include meter replacements, service line replacements or buildings within 10 feet of the areas proposed for pipeline main replacement under pavement). Multiple properties may be photographed together in a streetscape view and if there are many properties over 45 years in age, representative photos may be provided of a neighborhood rather than individual photos of each property.	Yes, the nature of the project is such that existing structures would not be affected by the construction work. Yes, there appear to be a group of properties of similar age, design, or method of construction. Yes, there are a few cemeteries in the project area, but they would not be affected by the construction.
Will project implementation require removal or disturbance of any stone or brick sidewalk, roadway, or landscape materials or other potentially old or unique features? Please provide	No.

[6] Local tax and property records or historic maps may indicate dates of construction.

a handful of representative photos of the project area to show the character of the roadway and sidewalk materials in the project and staging areas. Include a photo key or captions of what the photos are showing and where they were taken.	
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Cultural Resources?	No.

Conclusion:

PHMSA identified properties based on available information on previously identified historic properties in the Area of Potential Effects (APE), including the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) database and data received from the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development. PHMSA also conducted research to determine if there are any previously unidentified properties within the APE that are 45 years of age or older and may be eligible for the NRHP. This research revealed two historic properties as defined in 36 CFR § 800.16(l) within the APE.

PHMSA sent a letter on April 8, 2025 to the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and all consulting parties outlining the Section 106 process, including a description of the undertaking, delineation and justification of the APE, identification of historic properties and an evaluation and proposed finding of effects. Based on this consultation, PHMSA proposed a finding that the Proposed Action would not adversely affect historic properties with the condition that an SOI qualified archaeologist will monitor the four bore pit excavations proposed in the sensitive area. PHMSA has requested comments on the Section 106 process, identification of historic properties, and proposed finding within 30 days of receipt of the letter. Concurrence was received from the Louisiana Office of Cultural Development on April 28, 2025.

PHMSA also invited the following federally recognized tribes to participate in consultation by separate letter on April 8, 2025:

- Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma
- Jena Band of Choctaw Indians
- Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
- Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas
- Seminole Tribe of Florida

Mitigation Measures:

- If, during project implementation, a previously undiscovered archaeological or cultural resource that is or could reasonably be a historic property is encountered or a previously known historic property will be affected in an unanticipated manner, all project activities in

the vicinity of the discovery will cease and the City of Donaldsonville will immediately notify PHMSA. This may include discovery of cultural features (*e.g.*, foundations, water wells, trash pits, etc.) or artifacts (*e.g.*, pottery, stone tools and flakes, animal bones, etc.) or damage to a historic property that was not anticipated. PHMSA will notify the State Historic Preservation Office and participating federally recognized tribes and conduct consultation as appropriate in accordance with 36 CFR § 800.13. Construction in the area of the discovery must not resume until PHMSA provides further direction. The City of Donaldsonville will strictly adhere to PHMSA's Unanticipated Discoveries Protocols.

- In the event that unmarked human remains are encountered during permitted activities, all work shall halt and The City of Donaldsonville shall immediately contact PHMSA as well as the proper authorities in accordance with applicable state statutes to determine if the discovery is subject to a criminal investigation, of Native American origin, or associated with a potential archaeological resource. At all times human remains must be treated with the utmost dignity and respect. Human remains and associated artifacts will be left in place and not disturbed. No skeletal remains or materials associated with the remains will be photographed, collected, or removed until PHMSA has conducted the appropriate consultation and developed a plan of action. Project activities shall not resume until PHMSA provides further direction.

- All work, material, equipment, and staging to remain within the road's existing right-of-way or utility easement or other staging areas as identified in the environmental documentation. If the scope of work changes in any way that may alter the effects to historic properties as described herein, the grant recipient must notify PHMSA, and consultation may be reopened under Section 106.

- An SOI qualified archaeologist will monitor bore pit excavations proposed in the sensitive area.

Section 4(f)	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Are there Section 4(f) properties within or immediately adjacent to the project area? 4(f) properties include publicly owned parks, recreational areas, wildlife or waterfowl refuges, and historic sites. If yes, provide a list of properties and a map of 4(f) properties as an attachment.	No.
Will any construction activities temporarily impact use of the park including but not limited to access to any portion of the park, parking lots, trails, recreational fields, etc.?	No. The project would not intersect with or be adjacent to any public parks.

Will any construction activities occur within the property boundaries of a Section 4(f) property? If so, please detail these activities and indicate if these are temporary or permanent uses of the Section 4(f) property.	No.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Section 4(f)?	No.

Conclusion:

Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation (USDOT) Act of 1966 as amended (Section 4(f)) (49 U.S.C. § 303(c)); is a federal law that applies to transportation projects that require funding or other approvals by the USDOT. Section 4(f) prohibits the Secretary of Transportation from approving any program or project which requires the use of any publicly owned land from a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, state, or local significance, or any land from an historic site of national, state, or local significance unless:

- There is no feasible and prudent alternative to the use of the land; and
- The program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to such park, recreational area; wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site, resulting from such use.

PHMSA conducted a review of the Project Area and confirmed that there are no publicly owned public parks, recreation areas, national, state, or local significant wildlife and waterfowl refuges, or any historic sites of national, state, or local significance affected by the project. Therefore, there would be no use of Section 4(f) resources.

Mitigation Measures:

No mitigation measures needed.

Land Use and Transportation	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Will the full extent of the project boundaries remain within the existing right-of-way or easements? If no, please describe any right-of-way acquisitions or additional easements needed.	Yes, all work on mains would take place within the existing ROW.
Will the project result in detours, transportation restrictions, or other impacts to normal traffic flow or to existing transportation facilities during construction? How long are construction activities estimated to last?	Yes, minor traffic interruptions are anticipated. No permanent changes to transportation facilities would occur. Construction for the project is anticipated to last 57 months.

Will there be any permanent change to existing transportation facilities? If so, what are the changes, and how would the changes affect the public?	No, the project would not result in any permanent changes to transportation facilities.
Will the project interrupt or impede emergency response services from fire, police, ambulance or any other emergency or safety response providers? If so, describe any coordination that will occur with emergency response providers? How long will service interruptions last, if applicable?	No, the project would not interrupt or impede emergency response services.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Land Use and Transportation?	No.

Conclusion:

There will be no permanent changes to land use. The project is replacing/upgrading the existing pipe and would not include new pipeline to serve any additional areas. During construction, there may be short-term impacts to adjacent residences, businesses and normal traffic patterns. Potential impacts include an increase in noise, dust, and transportation accessibility, as a result of construction and construction staging.

Local and state regulations guide the transport of machinery, equipment, and automobiles around the construction areas. Temporary traffic impacts may occur on the local road network and adjacent pedestrian routes. Any impacts will be coordinated with local and state agencies.

Mitigation Measures:

- Restore all Impacted areas to pre-construction conditions;
- Maintain traffic flows to the extent possible;
- Use traffic control measures to assist traffic negotiating through construction areas, as needed;
- Coordinate with state and local agencies regarding detours and/or routing adjustments during construction;
- Notify potentially impacted residents and business owners (access, parking, etc.); and
- Have a traffic control plan in place, prior to construction, and coordinate with the appropriate agency well in advance of any impacted emergency services or essential agency functions.

Noise and Vibration	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Will the project construction occur for longer than	No.

a month at a single project location?	
Will the project location be in proximity (less than 50 feet.) to noise sensitive receivers (residences, schools, houses of worship, etc.)? If so, what measures will be taken to reduce noise and vibration impacts to sensitive receptors?	Yes, construction specifications require that sound levels from Contractor operations shall not exceed 45 dBA 7 P.M. to 7 A.M. or 55 dBA 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. This sound level shall be measured at the exterior of the nearest exterior wall of the nearest residence. All measures necessary to ensure that the sound does not exceed those levels at those times will be taken.
Will the project require high-noise and vibration inducing construction methods? If so, please specify.	No.
Will the project comply with state and local ordinances? If so, identify applicable ordinances and limitations on noise/vibration times or sound levels.	City of Donaldsonville Code Section 8-5. Construction specifications require that sound levels from Contractor operations shall not exceed 45 dBA 7 P.M. to 7 A.M. or 55 dBA 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. This sound level shall be measured at the exterior of the nearest exterior wall of the nearest residence.
Will construction activities require large bulldozers, hoe ram, or other vibratory equipment within 20 feet of a structure?	No.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to noise and vibration?	No.

Conclusion:

The project is located in the city of Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Ambient noise consists of a combination of environmental noise primarily from road traffic, construction, industry, population density and other sources.

The pipeline replacement project would result in temporary construction noise impacts; however, no vibration impacts should occur. Excavators, dump trucks, skid steers, rollers, pavers, and other similar construction equipment would be used to excavate a trench, lay pipe, compact soils and re-pave the affected areas. Construction for the project is anticipated to last 57 months. There are numerous sensitive noise receptors (*i.e.*, residences, schools, houses of worship, etc.) located adjacent to the

streets where work would occur. Noise impacts experienced by these receptors would be minor and temporary, and no adverse vibration impacts would result from the proposed work. Construction activities would be required to abide by local noise control ordinances in the City of Donaldsonville Noise control measures would be chosen by the contractor and could include the following, as necessary:

- Use low noise emitting equipment;
- Implement noise-deadening measures for truck loading and operations;
- Conduct monitoring and maintenance of equipment to meet noise limits;
- Use acoustic enclosures, shields, or shrouds for equipment; and
- Minimize the use of generators or use quiet generators to power equipment.

Mitigation Measures:

Adhere to all local, city and/or state noise regulations.

Community Effects	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Will the project displace existing residents or workers from their homes and communities? If so, what is the expected duration?	No.
Will the project require service disruptions to homes and communities? If so, what is the expected communication and outreach plan to the residents and the duration of the outages?	Yes, temporary gas service disruption would occur when service is transferred from the existing metallic pipes to the new MDPE pipes. The Contractor is required by the specifications to place door hangers 24 hours before the scheduled disruption of service notifying residents of the scheduled service disruption.
Are there populations with limited English proficiency located in the project area? If so, what measures will be taken to provide communications in other languages?	No.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Community Effects?	No.

Conclusion:

The proposed project would result in an overall reduction in leaking natural gas pipelines. Construction activities would result in minor temporary air quality impacts, including the intentional venting of existing distribution lines prior to replacement. Noise impacts associated with construction are anticipated to be minor. The removal of leak prone pipe would reduce leaks and the potential for

incidents, will result in an increase in pipeline safety across the system while also improving operation and reliability. PHMSA determined the project would not impact the local community.
Mitigation Measures: • Provide advanced notification of service disruptions and construction schedule to all affected parties including residents and businesses adjacent to the project area; • Coordinate service disruptions and construction schedule with local community leaders and groups, as applicable; • Maintain service at temporary facilities, if appropriate; • Promote public engagement to reduce project delivery delays and public controversy; and • Develop outreach plans to involve and engage all populations.

Safety	
Question	**Information and Justification**
Has a risk profile been developed to describe the condition of the current infrastructure and potential safety concerns?	Yes, as described in the Distribution Integrity Management Program (DIMP). Leaks and hazardous conditions have been identified within the existing system.
Has a public awareness program been developed and implemented that follows the guidance provided by the American Petroleum Institute (API) Recommended Practice (RP) 1162?	Yes, the City of Donaldsonville follows guidance provided by the API RP 1162 for public awareness and outreach.
Does the project area include pipes prone to leakage?	Yes. The pipes schedules for replacement under this project are aging leak prone pipes installed in the 1920s and 1930s.
Will construction safety methods and procedures to protect human health and prevent/minimize hazardous materials releases during construction, including personal protection, workplace monitoring and site-specific health and safety plans, be utilized? If yes, document measures and reference appropriate safety plans.	Yes, this construction would be completed by a third-party contractor who will be required to submit a health and safety plan to the City of Donaldsonville prior to construction for review and approval.
Has an assessment of the project been performed to analyze the risk and benefits of implementation?	Yes. An assessment of the project has determined that it would have a large benefit to the community given the current risk caused by the

	existing leak prone pipe.
Is there any other information relevant to the project area or the proposed work as it pertains to Safety?	No.

Conclusion:

The project would reduce the risk profile of existing pipeline systems prone to leakage from the natural gas pipeline system and would also benefit the local community with the safe provision of natural gas. The project responds to the need to address the aging and leaky natural gas distribution system of pipelines. The repair, rehabilitation, or replacement of pipelines would be constructed in accordance with industry best practices and would comply with all local, state, and federal regulations, including those for safety.

The abandonment of the existing pipeline would be conducted in accordance with PHMSA requirements found in 49 CFR 192.727 and 195.402(c)(10). These requirements include disconnecting pipelines from all sources and supplies of gas, purging all combustibles and sealing the facilities left in place. These requirements for purging and sealing abandoned pipelines would ensure that the abandoned pipelines are properly purged and cleaned and pose no risk to safety in their abandoned state. Therefore, PHMSA's assessment is that this replacement project would improve the overall safety of the existing pipeline infrastructure.

Mitigation Measures:

- Incorporate public awareness programs, as necessary;
- Use standard construction safety methods and procedures;
- Ensure DIMP procedures are updated as necessary;
- Ensure work is constructed in accordance with industry best practices; and
- Comply with all local, state, and federal regulations.

3. Categorical Exclusion Determination

Categorical Exclusions to be Applied:

As the proposed action is repair, replacement, upgrading, rebuilding, or minor relocation of pipelines within existing rights-of-way to an existing natural gas pipeline, the following Categorical Exclusion, as listed in the DOE NEPA implementing procedures, 10 CFR 1021, adopted by PHMSA effective July 3, 2024[7] applies:

> B5.4 Repair or Replacement of Pipelines
>
> Repair, replacement, upgrading, rebuilding, or minor relocation of pipelines within existing rights-of-way, provided that the actions are in accordance with applicable requirements (such as Army Corps of Engineers permits under section 404 of the Clean Water Act). Pipelines may convey materials including, but not limited to, air, brine, carbon dioxide, geothermal system fluids, hydrogen gas, natural gas, nitrogen gas, oil, produced water, steam, and water.

Eligibility Criteria:

The proposed activity meets the eligibility criteria of 10 CFR 1021.41O(b) because the proposed action does not have any extraordinary circumstances that might affect the significance of the environmental effects, is not connected to other actions with potentially significant impacts [40 CFR 1508.25(a)(l)], is not related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts [40 CFR 1508.27(b)(7)], and is not precluded by 40 CFR 1506.1 or 10 CFR 1021.211 concerning limitations on actions during environmental impact statement preparation. The "Integral Elements" of 10 CFR 1021 are satisfied because the proposed action will not:

1. Threaten a violation of statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health, including requirements of DOE and Executive Orders;
2. Require siting and construction or major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment facilities (including incinerators), but the proposal may include categorically excluded waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities;
3. Disturb hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that would be uncontrolled or un-permitted releases;
4. Have the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources, which includes (i) property (sites, buildings, structures, and objects) of historical, archeological, or architectural significance; (ii) federally-listed and state-listed threatened or endangered species or their habitat, federally-protected marine mammals and essential fish habitat and otherwise federally-protected species; (iii) floodplains and wetlands; (iv) federally and state designated areas (wilderness areas, national parks, national monuments, national natural landmarks, wild and scenic rivers, wildlife refuges, scenic areas, and marine sanctuaries); (v) prime or unique farmland; (vi) special sources of water (sole-source aquifers, wellhead protection areas, and other vital water resources); and (vii) tundra, coral reefs, or rain forests); or

[7] Federal Register :: Adoption of Department of Energy Categorical Exclusion Under the National Environmental Policy Act

5. Involve genetically engineered organisms, synthetic biology, governmentally designated noxious weeds, or invasive species.

Compliance Action:

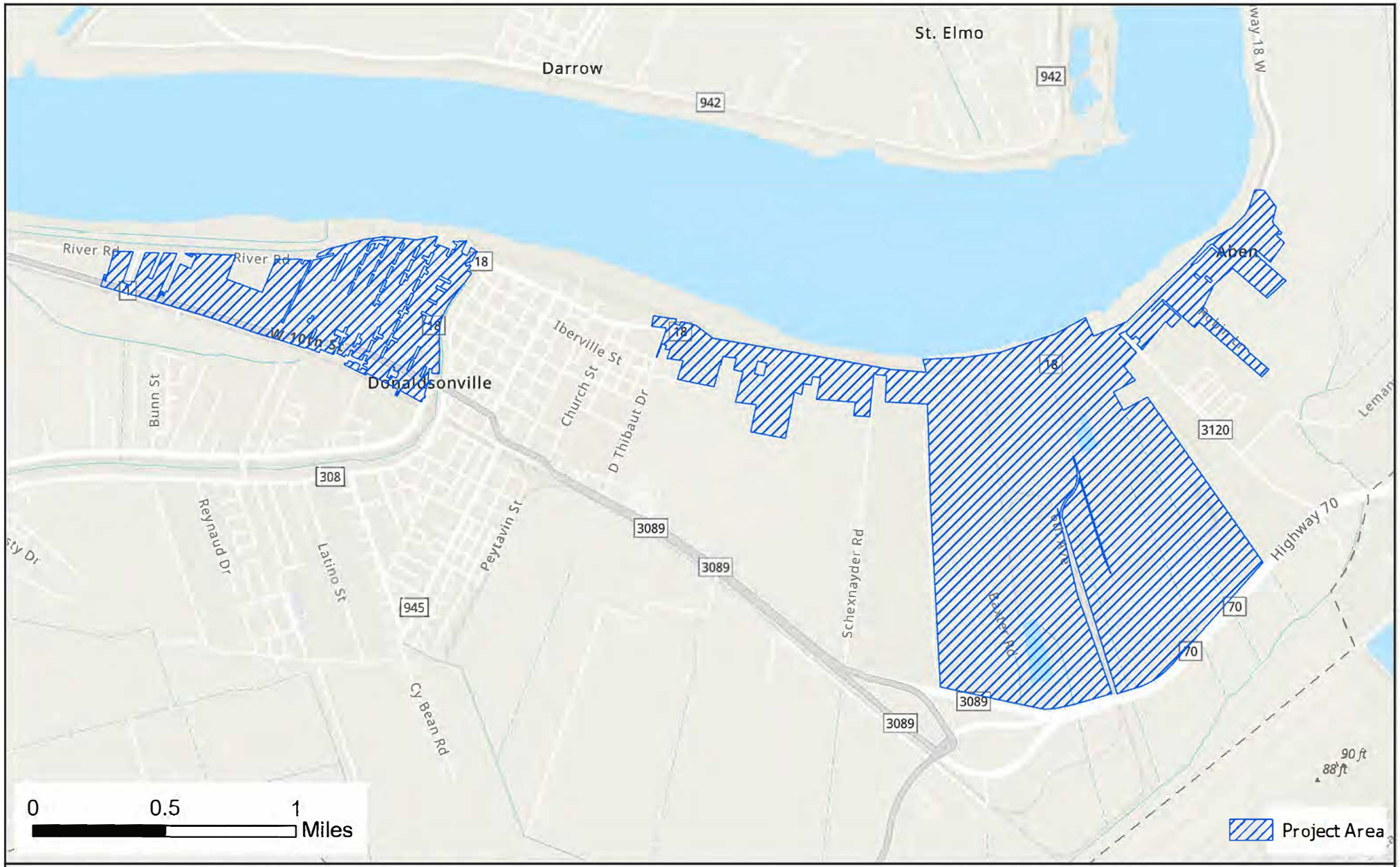
The proposed action satisfies the DOE NEPA eligibility criteria and integral elements, does not pose extraordinary circumstances, or includes conditions that must be implemented to ensure significant effects are avoided, and meets the requirements for the CE referenced above. Based on my review of the proposed action, I have determined that the proposed action fits within the specified categorical exclusion, the other regulatory requirements set forth above are met, and the proposed action is hereby categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

PHMSA Approval:

AMANDA LAUREN MURPHY

Digitally signed by AMANDA LAUREN MURPHY
Date: 2025.05.28 11:34:04 +02'00'

Project Area Map



Name: City of Donaldsonville Pipeline Replacement
Scale: 32,000
Total Acreage: 1,283
Donaldsonville, Ascension Parish, Louisiana

N

Service Layer Credits: Ascension Parish Assessor's Office, Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, FEMA, CONANP, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS