FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

2025 CONCHAS LAKE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN
CANADIAN RIVER BASIN
SAM MIGUEL COUNTY, NM

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Albuquerque District (USACE) has conducted an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The final Environmental Assessment (EA) dated May 2025, for the Conchas Lake Vegetation Management Plan addresses the implementation of the Vegetation Management Plan.

The final recommendation is contained in the EA. The final EA, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. The Proposed Action Alternative would implement the Vegetation Management Plan, which would then identify and implement effective vegetation management strategies that promote the health of upland, wetland, and riparian ecosystems of the USACE-owned land at Conchas Lake. Implementation of the vegetation management plan would preserve the native habitat mosaic that supports the diversity and abundance of native flora and fauna, manage the establishment and spread of invasive species, and conserve the aesthetic and historic character of the landscaping and viewpoints of the Lake Project Office, Adobe Bell area and the surrounding environment.

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the recommended plan are listed in Table 1:

Table 1. Summary of Potential Effects of the Recommended Plan

Resource	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects because of mitigation	Resource unaffected by action
Aesthetics	☒	☐	☐
Air quality	☐	☐	☒
Aquatic resources/wetlands	☒	☐	☐
Invasive species	☒	☐	☐
Fish and wildlife habitat	☒	☐	☐
Threatened/Endangered species/critical habitat	☒	☐	☐
Historic properties	☐	☐	☒
Other cultural resources	☒	☐	☐
Floodplains	☐	☐	☒
Hazardous, toxic & radioactive waste	☒	☐	☐
Hydrology	☐	☐	☒
Land use	☐	☐	☒
Socioeconomics	☐	☐	☒
Soils	☒	☐	☐
Water quality	☒	☐	☐

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. Table 2. provides a summary of Best Management Practices (BMPs) as detailed in the Vegetation Management Plan and EA that would be implemented, if appropriate, to minimize impacts:

Table 2. Summary of Best Management Practices

BMP	BMP Description
Erosion and sediment control	Erosion and sediment control BMPs would be implemented at sites where mechanical control of invasive species is being conducted and at locations being treated with herbicides where stormwater runoff is likely to occur. BMPs may include silt fences, check dam, wattles, erosion control blankets, mulch, stabilized equipment entrances/exits, or other appropriate methods. All BMPs would be inspected and maintained to ensure they remain securely in place and removed only after native vegetation is established and the risk of erosion is minimized.
Good Housekeeping Practices	• Keep the management area site free of debris, litter, and waste materials. Use covered containers for waste disposal. • Store construction materials, chemicals, and waste in designated areas with secondary containment to prevent spills and leaks.
Spill Prevention Response	• Equip the site with spill response kits and ensure that all personnel are trained in their use. If a spill occurs, follow the Conchas Lake Project spill prevention plan. Any equipment in disrepair shall be removed from the site immediately. • All fueling of the equipment or maintenance work will be performed at the maintenance yard.
Dust Control	• Apply water to exposed soil and unpaved roads to minimize dust generation. • Limit vehicle speed on unpaved areas to reduce dust.
Migratory Birds	Treatment of woody invasive species (trees/shrubs) would occur outside the migratory bird nesting season.
Herbicides	• Approved herbicides would be applied that minimize effects to wildlife, soil, and water, as well as minimizing risks for those applying the herbicide and the public.
Waters of the US and water quality	• Areas below the Ordinary High-Water Mark (OHWM; 4196.69 NGVD29) are considered Waters of the United States (WOTUS) and subject to the requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Pesticide General Permit (PGP). • Only herbicides approved for use near water will be applied within 50-feet of the shoreline

No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the recommended plan. Public review of the Draft Vegetation Management Plan, and draft EA, was completed on March 1, 2025. All comments submitted during the public review period were responded to in the final Vegetation Management Plan and final EA.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the USACE determined that the recommended plan will have no effect on federally listed species or their designated critical habitat.

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, USACE determined that the recommended plan has no adverse effect on historic properties. The New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer concurred with this determination on 27 November 2024 (HPD Log # 123954). Tribes with interests in the area expressed no concerns regarding the Conchas Vegetation Management Plan.

All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed.

All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in evaluation of alternatives. Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State, and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my team members, it is my determination that the recommended plan would not cause significant adverse impacts on the quality of the human environment, therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

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Date

Matthew T. Miller
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
District Commander