2 September 2016

Lower Guadalupe River Basin Feasibility Study
Options Paper

The Lower Guadalupe River Basin Interim Feasibility Study was initiated in September 2011 and has identified three key areas with merit for Federal participation. The study was scheduled to be completed in September 2015, but the path to study completion has encountered additional hurdles from the Federal perspective. This paper provides the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority with several options for proceeding as a partner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on studies for the Lower Guadalupe River Basin.

Option 1 – Complete the current Interim Feasibility Study. This would require amending the existing Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement (FCSA) to include sufficient time and funding to complete the feasibility study and issue a Chief's Report that would potentially recommend projects for authorization. Immediate actions include conducting the Alternative Milestone Meeting (AMM), and requesting an exemption to exceed $3M total study costs and for additional time to complete the Chief's Report. Upon approval of the exemption, the FCSA must be amended to document the revised scope, cost, and schedule.

a) Estimated time and Cost:
   1. Study costs: $1.8M ($1M Federal including IEPR/$800K non-Federal)
   2. Time: An additional 33 months
   3. The following is the revised schedule:

Milestone	Date
AMM	20-Oct-16
TSP	24-Oct-17
ADM	30-Apr-18
Final Report Complete	27-Nov-18
Chief's Report	10-May-19

**** These dates based on a 20 October 2016 AMM****

b) PROS:
   1. Will identify potential projects to reduce the risk of flooding within the basin in the timeliest manner.
   2. Will build on existing data and information collected on the study.
   3. Available Federal funds (~$593K) can be used to fund the Federal share of scheduled FY2017 activities.
   4. AMM and exemption could be scheduled for Oct 2016, which will allow initiation of remaining feasibility study activities.

c) CONS:
    1. Approval by the Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations to continue the feasibility study is highly uncertain, as the study was originally scheduled to be completed in Sep 2015.
    2. The study is not in the President's budget. Additional Federal funding (approximately $420,000) would have to come from future Work Plan funding. There is no guarantee that the future Energy &Water D Appropriations Bills will have additional pots of funds to cover Federal requirements.
    3. If the additional Federal funding not be made available, GBRA would have to commit to funding the shortfall as required to maintain the schedule approved at the exemption (earliest may be FY2018). A formal GBRA commitment by letter would need to be provided prior to formally submitting the exemption request to HQ USACE.
    4. If sufficient Federal funds are not made available, the need for GBRA to contribute funds in excess of their 50% share would require Congressional notification. This may result in an additional delay of 3-4 months to obtain approval prior to amending FCSA unless it is included in the next modification as a precautionary measure.

Option 2 – Terminate and start a new cost shared feasibility study. Under this option, the current Lower Guadalupe River Interim Feasibility Study would be terminated. Existing data, information, and summary report would be provided to GBRA, and the cost sharing for the study would be closed out. Actions would include 1) completing a cost estimate of the proposed projects; 2) completing assessment of project benefits, completing a preliminary benefit-cost analysis, and 3) preparation of a summary report of the findings, and hold a public meeting to present the findings. If GBRA desired to restart the study in the future, it would be considered a new start feasibility study.

a) Estimated Time and Cost:
    1. Study Costs: $3M ($1.5M Federal/$1.5M non-Federal)
    2. Time: 3 years after study initiation
b) PROS:
    1. GBRA would obtain the final reports and data from the ongoing study required to complete the commitments with the Texas Water Development Board (Flood Planning Grant)
    2. Studies could be accomplished with budgeted Federal funds, cost shared 50/50 with non-Federal funds.
c) CONS:
    1. The existing study would be completed without recommending project(s) for Federal construction authorization.
    2. Any future feasibility study to identify potential Federal projects will require selection for budgeting as a new start feasibility study. The earliest fiscal year that the Corps could even budget for a new study is FY2019, resulting in a completion date no earlier than the end of FY 2021.

3. There have been no new start feasibility studies in the President's budget since FY2014. The likelihood of being selected for a new start in the near future is very low.
4. Existing studies might be outdated and would have to be refreshed again.

Option 3 – Federal funding supporting alternative authorizations such as the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP), Planning Assistance to States, and Floodplain Management Studies (FPMS) (identify non-structural plans for non-Federal implementation).

a) PROS:
   a. These authorities can be implemented quickly.
   b. Activities and projects do not require specific Congressional authorization.
   c. Funding is normally provided annually for these programs.
   d. FPMS has been expanded in recent years to fund studies focused on identifying non-structural solutions. Provides ability to leverage funding from other Federal and State agencies to implement non-structural projects.
   e. While the existing alternatives identified in the study may be too large for CAP, there are other damage areas identified that could meet CAP limits.

b) CONS:
   1) CAP Flood Risk Management projects cannot exceed $10M Federal, and are relatively small projects. The 3 areas identified as potential project sites are well over the threshold for CAP projects.

Current Federal Funding: As of 30 Aug, and assuming a total Work-in-Kind of $290,000, Federal funds in the amount of $579,775.66 remain for this study after balancing.