

FEMA PUBLIC NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
DRAFT PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND DRAFT FINDING
OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
JEFFERSON DAVIS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
HURRICANE LAURA REPAIR, REPLACEMENT, AND RESTORATION PROGRAM
CAMERON AND CALCASIEU PARISHES, LOUISIANA

Interested parties are hereby notified that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has prepared a Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) and a Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The purpose of the draft PEA is to assess the effects on the human and natural environment from the proposed Jefferson Davis Electric Cooperative, Inc. (JDEC) Hurricane Laura repair, replacement, and restoration program under the major disaster declaration (FEMA-4559-DR, as amended) signed by President Donald J. Trump on August 28, 2020.

FEMA has determined that the Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) and JDEC are eligible to receive FEMA Public Assistance (PA) funding. GOHSEP and JDEC have submitted a combined request for FEMA funding, referred to as the JDEC Hurricane Laura Repair and Restoration Program. FEMA is administering this assistance pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), PL 93-288, as amended. Section 406 of the Stafford Act authorizes FEMA's PA Program to repair, restore, and replace state and local government and certain private not-for-profit facilities damaged as a result of the declared event.

The need for this action is to repair, improve, or replace storm-damaged electrical system critical infrastructure and utility lines throughout the JDEC system, create redundancies within the system, and make the system more resilient against future storm events. Under the proposed preferred alternative, FEMA would provide funding for JDEC to conduct a series of projects that would replace existing system infrastructure with a single 230kV transmission line which would replace the existing 69kV and 138kV transmission lines that were temporarily repaired following Hurricane Laura. This alternative includes utility improvements and upgrades as well as realignment or relocation of JDEC infrastructure. Activities may include, where necessary, repairing or removing existing emergency repair poles and associated hardware as needed; installing new utility poles, conductors, conduit routing, towers, and underground waterway crossings; and repairing and elevating substations.

In accordance with NEPA, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 1500-1508), FEMA's Instruction 108-1-1 for implementing NEPA, the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and 44 CFR Part 9, a Draft PEA was written to evaluate the potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives on the human and natural environment. The draft PEA evaluates Alternative 1 (No Action Alternative), Alternative 2, the Preferred Action Alternative (230 kilovolt (kV) Resiliency and Redundancy), and Alternative 3 (69kV/138kV Repair/Resiliency). The draft FONSI is FEMA's finding that the Preferred Action Alternative would not have a significant effect on the human and natural environment.

This public notice will run in the journal of record for the State of Louisiana, *The Advocate*, and in the *American Press* in Calcasieu Parish for five (5) days on Mondays, July 25, 2022; August 1, 2022; August 8, 2022; August 15, 2022; and August 22, 2022; and in *The Cameron Parish Pilot*

in Cameron Parish for four (4) days on Thursdays, July 28, 2022; August 4, 2022; August 11, 2022; and August 18, 2022.

The draft PEA and draft FONSI are available for review at the following locations during business hours:

- Vermilion Parish Library, 405 E. St. Victor Street, Abbeville, LA 70510;
- Calcasieu Parish Public Library, Central Branch, 301 W. Claude Street, Lake Charles, LA 70605; and
- Cameron Parish Library, Grand Lake Branch, 10200 Gulf Highway, Lake Charles, LA 70607

The draft PEA and draft FONSI can also be viewed and downloaded from FEMA's website at <http://www.fema.gov/resource-document-library>.

A 30-day comment period will begin on July 25, 2022, and conclude on August 24, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. Written comments may be mailed to: DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY-FEMA EHP - "Jefferson Davis Electric Cooperative, Inc. Hurricane Laura Repair, Replacement, and Restoration Program", 1500 Main Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. Comments may also be emailed to fema-liro-ehp-pa@fema.dhs.gov. If no substantive comments are received, the draft EA and associated draft FONSI will become final.

All other questions regarding disaster assistance should be directed to FEMA's Helpline at 1-800-621-3362 or visit the website at www.DisasterAssistance.gov.