

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

For Clayton County Archery Range, Clayton County, Georgia

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has prepared this document in accordance with the procedures for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) as it applies to the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, as amended (50 Stat. 917, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 669 et seq.). The Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division (GAWRD) requests Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) grant funding to build a public ADA accessible archery range to improve and enhance opportunities for hunters and target shooters to sight-in and practice with their archery equipment and provide a place for hunter education, archery instructional clinics, and the safe practice of archery handling and live fire exercises. This Proposed Action (PA) would be completed in Jonesboro, Clayton County, Georgia. Specific activities would include constructing an archery trail with seven stations and an archery field with a classroom pavilion, an equipment storage structure, four family pavilions, two prefabricated restroom buildings, and a community plaza

In compliance with NEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) titled “Environmental Assessment for Proposed Construction of Huie Nature Preserve Archery Facility, Clayton County, Georgia”, dated January 8, 2023, was prepared by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin to assist in agency decision-making in determining whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. The EA discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed expansion of the existing public shooting range.

GAWRD coordinated the proposed project with the Service’s Georgia Ecological Services Field Office through an official species list from the Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) website to evaluate potential impacts of the PA on listed species for Clayton County. According to IPaC, there is one federally listed candidate species, the monarch butterfly, that is known to occur or have the potential to occur within the vicinity of this project. Suitable monarch butterfly habitat occurs statewide, and monarch butterfly habitat was identified during an October 2022 field survey. Many open areas of ruderal habitat with herbaceous plants were encountered during the survey; however, no milkweed populations were observed. Since monarch butterfly is federally listed as a candidate species, no avoidance and minimization measures would be required for project implementation, and no programmatic coordination with USFWS would be warranted. WSFR has determined that the PA will have no effect on any federally listed endangered species, their formally designated critical habitat, or species currently proposed for listing under the Act at the site. Therefore, the requirements under Section 7(a)(2) of the Act are fulfilled.

GAWRD also coordinated the proposed project with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs - Historic Preservation Division (HPD). In a response dated February 26, 2024, HPD found that the subject project, as proposed, will have no adverse effect to historic properties within its area of potential effects (APE), as defined in 36 CFR Part 800.5(d)(1), due to the scope of work. Pursuant to Section 106, NHPA, the Service consulted with eleven Native American tribes with interest in the project area; no concerns were raised during these consultations.

Based on the review of the EA, the Service believes the following reasonable and prudent measure is necessary and appropriate to minimize impacts. As part of this approval, the GAWRD must commit to implement the reasonable, prudent measure described below:

- Pursuant to Section 106, NHPA, if archaeological deposits (including but not limited to pottery or ceramics, stone tools, projectile points, dugout canoes, metal implements, historical building

material that could be associated with Native American, early European, or American settlements), bones, or human remains are encountered during implementation of the proposed project, the applicant will stop all work immediately in the vicinity of the discovery and take reasonable measures to avoid or minimize harm to the finds. The GAWRD will inform WSFR immediately, and the SHPO will be consulted. Any construction plans and work orders must stipulate that work be stopped immediately, and the Agency and the WSFR be contacted immediately, if any archaeological deposits are uncovered. Work in any areas identified will not resume until consultation is completed, and appropriate measures have been taken to ensure that the project is in compliance with the NHPA. Additional conditions may apply.

Provided that the recommended reasonable and prudent measure described above is followed, the Service/WSFR Program accepts the January 8, 2023, EA that was prepared in accordance with relevant provisions under NEPA and other relevant Federal, State, and local regulations. Based on a review of the EA and evaluation of the effects of the PA, I conclude that the PA is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(c) of NEPA of 1969, as amended. Consequently, no Environmental Impact Statement is required.

This FONSI will be advertised by GAWRD to the public via a Notice of Availability in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations 40 CFR 1501.4(e)(1). The posting will provide a method by which any member of the public can request a copy of this FONSI. This FONSI incorporates by reference the project record and the EA.

APPROVAL:

Paul Wilkes, Manager
Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 4