



Quantum Environmental & Engineering Services, LLC

EXAMPLE PROJECT

Morgan County Regional Correctional Facility
NEPA Assessment

The Tennessee Department of Correction proposed to build a 1,428-bed expansion to the Morgan County Regional Correctional Facility (MCRCF) in 2003. Expanding the space at MCRCF allowed the State to close the historic and architecturally significant, yet most maintenance-intensive prison in the state system, Brushy Mountain State Penitentiary. QE² was retained by the State of Tennessee to conduct a NEPA assessment and to prepare permits related to the alteration of streams and wetlands caused by the prison expansion with a contract amount of approximately \$600,000.

This project was subject to NEPA review because it was financed, in part, with federal funding available under the Violent Offender Incarceration/Truth-In-Sentencing Initiative Grant Program from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance (OJP/BJA). Although the scope of the project likely warranted an Environmental Impact Statement, preliminary work that QE² performed and presented to the OJP/BJA was used to justify only performing an environmental assessment, as long as public meetings were incorporated. QE² coordinated and conducted a Public Meeting in Wartburg, Tennessee, early in the planning process. This meeting was intended to inform the public of the proposed project. Elected officials, local residents, stakeholders, and other interested groups (such as the Emory River Paddling Club) participated in the meeting and comment period following the meeting.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) were also required to conduct their own NEPA reviews of the project because of impacts to wetlands and streams, and work performed in the TVA jurisdiction. Both the USACE and the TVA agreed to participate as cooperating agencies with OJP/BJA and allow the Environmental Assessment that QE² prepared for OJP/BJA stand for their agencies. QE² coordinated with all three Federal agencies to address each agency's individual requirements and concerns, and prepared one Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project. Several secondary agencies commented on the Draft EA, including the Tennessee Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Officer), the Environmental Protection Agency, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. QE² met with all commenting agencies and responded to all of their concerns. QE² developed a mitigation plan for



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environmental impacts including relocating almost one mile of a secondary stream, and impacting seven acres of jurisdictional wetlands. A Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was awarded in Fall 2005.

QE² coordinated permit applications for a Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit, a United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Section 404 Permit, and a Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) 26a Permit.



The design and placement of the proposed prison required 4,800 feet of Winchester Branch to be relocated and seven acres of wetlands to be mitigated. QE² designed the relocation of the stream, and conducted a floodplain study and stream analysis to ensure that the relocated stream would not adversely affect upstream or downstream of the prison site. To mitigate for lost reach of stream, QE² designed further stream restoration activities on a separate on-site stream to fulfill all stream mitigation requirements. QE² also designed a mitigation project of approximately 30 acres of wetlands to be restored, created, or enhanced to compensate for the wetlands disturbed during the construction of the new prison expansion and stream relocation.

The mitigation plans were approved by the TDEC, the USACE, the USF&W, the TWRA, the Environmental Protection Agency (Region IV) and the TVA. The permits were issued once all three federal agencies individually issued FONSI.