

STEVE WATKINS, MAYOR  
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Colonel Jeremy J. Chapman, P.E.  
Commander, Mobile District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
ATTN: CESAM-PD-FP  
Post Office Box 2288  
Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001

RE: Archusa Dam Failure-Critical Planning Assistance to the States Application, City of Quitman, MS.

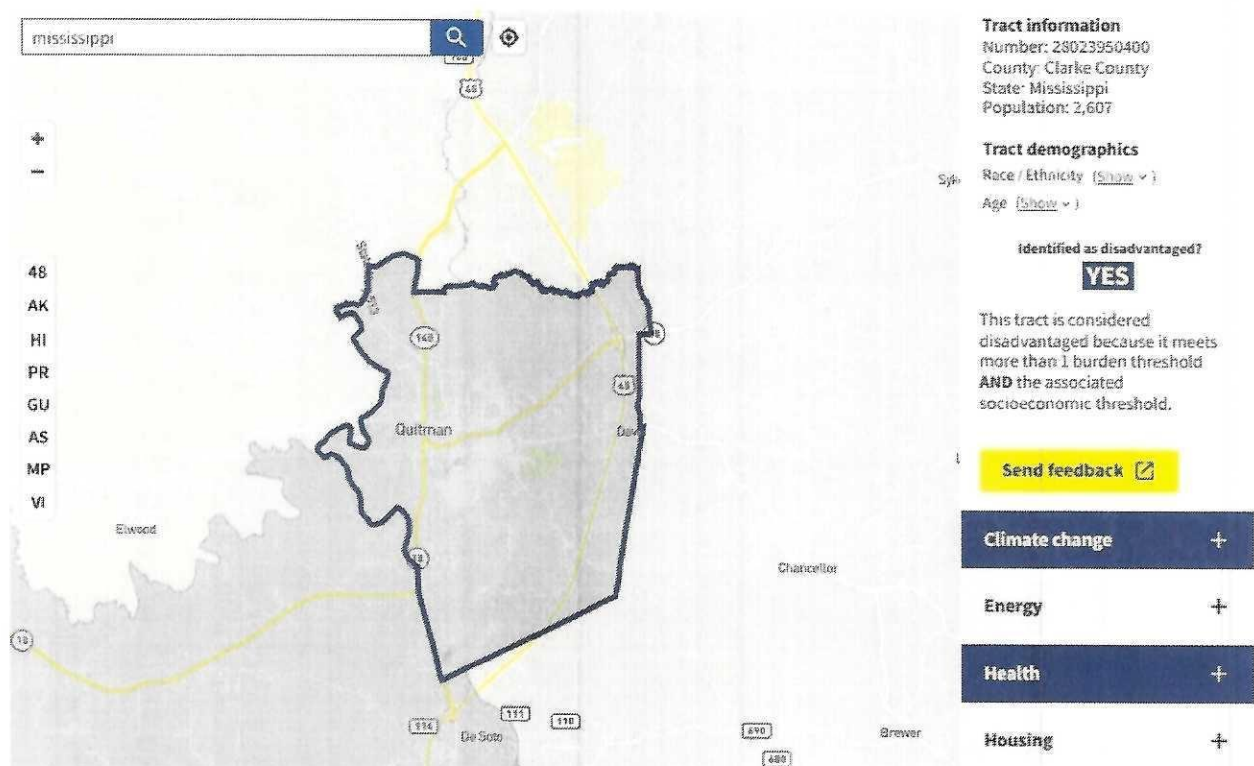
Colonel Chapman:

This letter is in reference to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Program. The City of Quitman, in cooperation with the Clarke County Board of Supervisors and the Pat Harrison Waterway District is requesting the USACE provide technical services including comprehensive watershed planning in accordance with Section 22 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974. We need technical assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' and to the maximum extent possible the expertise of the Engineer Research and Development Center to evaluate the low hazard, Archusa Dam (federal ID #MS01402) which failed on July 16, 2023. The failure included a portion of the earthen dam collapsing on the west end of the emergency spillway causing a breach and breakup of the emergency spillway which caused the complete discharge of all water held in Archusa Lake. The dam had failed previously in January 1998 from a breach of the emergency spillway (See Newhouse, Scott, "Earth Dam Failure by Erosion, A Case History (2013) International Conference on Case Histories in Geotechnical Engineering. 15. <https://scholarsmine.mst.edu/icchge/7icchge/session03/15>).

The dam and the four hundred fifty (450) acre Archusa Creek Lake are both located completely within the city limits of Quitman Mississippi with a population of 2,061 which is an economically disadvantaged community as defined by Section 160 of WRDA 2020 (Figure 2). The Pat Harrison Waterway District operates and maintains the dam and the Archusa Creek Water Park for various water dependent and water enhanced recreational amenities. Archusa Creek Lake and water park, draw visitors and tourists from across Mississippi, neighboring states and indeed the entire United States. Businesses in Quitman benefit greatly from and depend on visitors to Archusa Water Park year around. The dam failure has drastically reduced the number of visitors to Archusa Creek Water Park which adversely impacts virtually every business in Quitman. This drastic drop in business revenue will also quickly lead to a catastrophic drop in city-wide revenue from the loss of sales tax revenue.

Visit Our Website: [www.cityquitman.net](http://www.cityquitman.net)  
POST OFFICE BOX 16 • 101 E. CHURCH STREET • QUITMAN, MISSISSIPPI 39355-0016  
PHONE: 601.776.3728 • FAX: 601.776.4016  
*"A Great Place To Live, Work, and Play"*

On August 1, 2023, the City of Quitman passed a resolution declaring a City Emergency because of the economic hardship being imposed until there is necessary state and federal assistance to plan and reconstruct the Archusa Creek Lake dam and emergency spillway allowing the Archusa Creek Water Park to return as an essential component of Quitman's business community (attached). The City of Quitman is the applicant for this project in close cooperation with the Clarke County Board of Supervisors and the Pat Harrison Waterway District. **Time is of the essence to initiate this project as quickly as possible to evaluate alternative solutions to this problem, identify a preferred solution and establish an approximate cost estimate for the preferred solution as soon thereafter as possible.**



Given that the dam failed in January 1998 and again in July 2023 we request technical assistance to; 1) a Hydrologic and Hydraulic Study of Archusa Creek downstream of the dam; 2) a technical dam assessment and evaluation including a geo-technical assessment if allowable, to evaluate the feasibility of repairing the existing dam, and evaluate alternative dam repairs and associated estimated costs; and 3) an evaluation of Archusa Creek Lake to identify potential opportunities to increase storage capacity (dredge), improve fish habitat (put in some deep holes, spawning habitat, fish attractors, etc.). Again, we request technical assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' and to the maximum extent possible the expertise of the Engineer Research and Development Center to develop recommendations and preliminary cost estimates on the most effective solutions to ensure the dam's long-term safety and quickly return Archusa Creek Water Park to an economic engine for the City of Quitman.



The City of Quitman will serve as the sponsor for the project in cooperation with the Clarke County Board of Supervisors and the Pat Harrison Waterway District. **It is our understanding that the study would be 100% Federally funded and that the project is limited to investigations and technical assistance.** We are committed to this effort and are willing to support the study. Thank you for your assistance with this much needed project. Please contact Mayor Steve Watkins ([swatkins@ci.quitman.ms.us](mailto:swatkins@ci.quitman.ms.us); 601/776-4002) or Jeff Ballweber (601/927-0883; [jballweber@pickeringfirm.com](mailto:jballweber@pickeringfirm.com)) for further information or assistance.

Sincerely,



Steve Watkins, Mayor  
City of Quitman, MS

8-17-2023

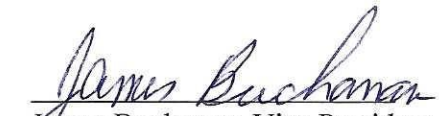
Date



Joel Speed, President  
Clarke County, MS  
Board of Supervisors

8-21-2023

Date



James Buchanan, Vice President  
Pat Harrison Waterway District

8-17-23

Date

CC: Governor Tate Reeves  
United States Senator Roger Wicker  
United States Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith  
United States Congressman Michael Guest