

RIVER ROAD AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

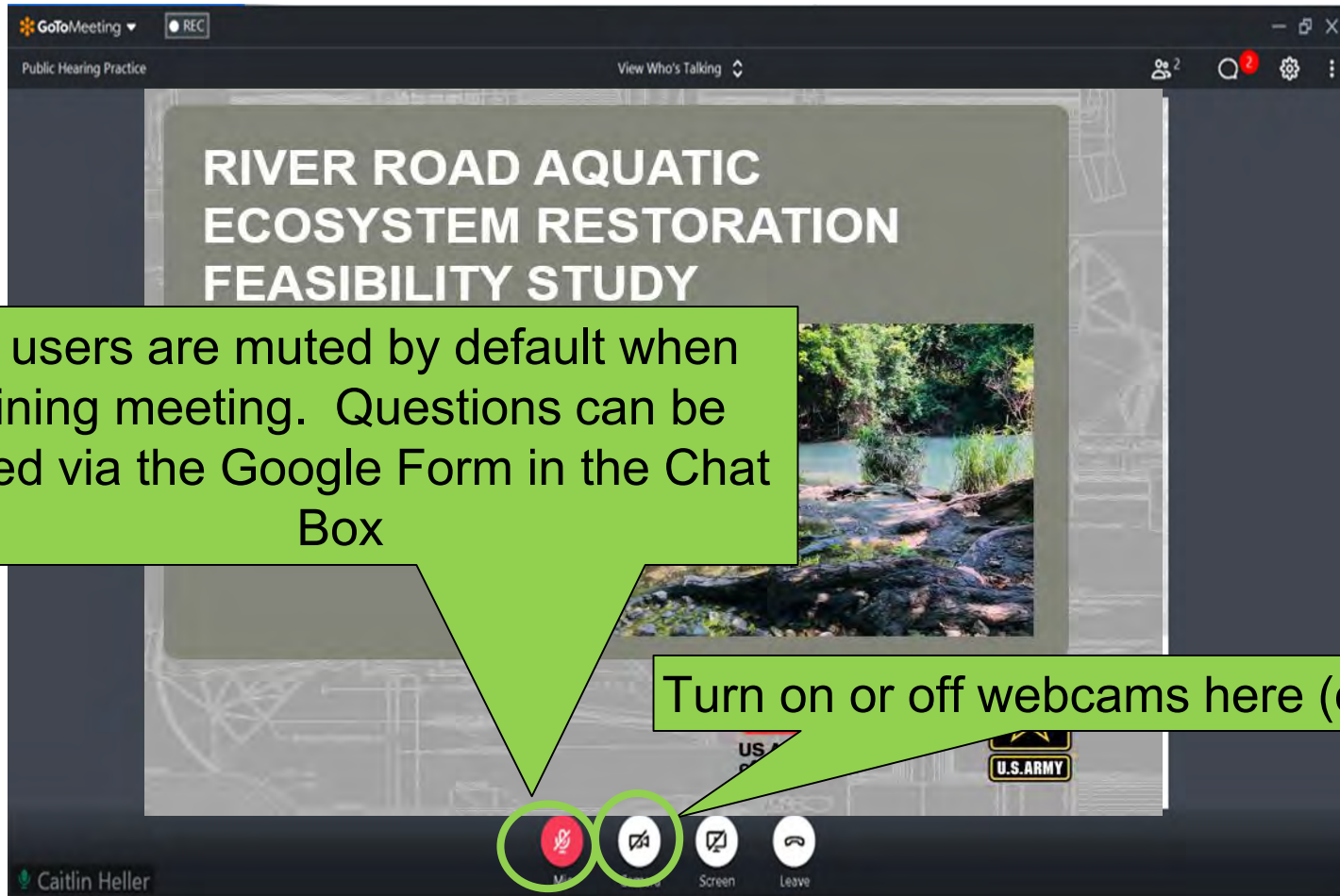
Continuing Authorities Program
Section 206



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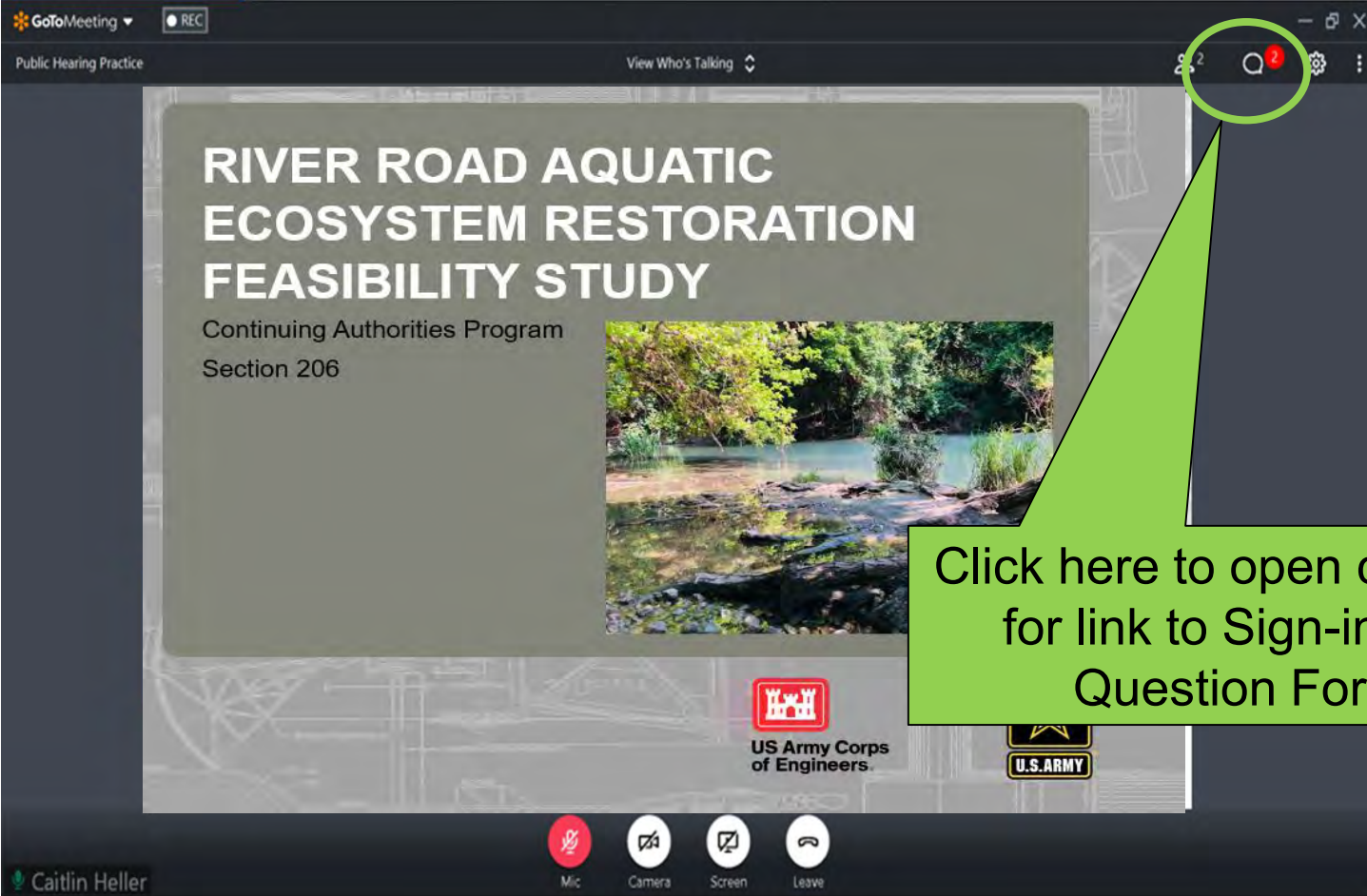
GETTING ORIENTED TO GOTO MEETING



All users are muted by default when joining meeting. Questions can be asked via the Google Form in the Chat Box

Turn on or off webcams here (optional)

GETTING ORIENTED TO GOTO MEETING



The screenshot shows a GoTo Meeting window titled "Public Hearing Practice". The main content is a presentation slide with the following text:

RIVER ROAD AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION FEASIBILITY STUDY
Continuing Authorities Program
Section 206

The slide includes a photograph of a river with rocks and greenery. At the bottom of the slide, there are logos for the "US Army Corps of Engineers" and "U.S. ARMY".

In the top right corner of the meeting window, there is a chat icon (a speech bubble with a question mark) circled in green. A green callout box points to this icon with the text: "Click here to open chat box for link to Sign-in and Question Form".

At the bottom of the meeting window, there is a control bar with icons for "Mic", "Camera", "Screen", and "Leave". The name "Caitlin Heller" is visible in the bottom left corner.



SIGN-IN AND QUESTION FORM



River Road Sign-In & Question Form

Please sign in and provide your questions for the presenters here. Only questions will be read during the Q&A portion of the presentation. All comments will be formally recorded. The presentation can be found here: <https://www.sariverauthority.org/riverroad>

* Required

Full Name *

Your answer

Email *

Your answer

Your Question

Your answer

Submit

Please use the Google Form link located in the Chat Box to Sign-in and ask questions during the presentation



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AGENDA

Meeting purpose: Describe the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP)

- Project Information
- Description of Area
- Public Comments
- Alternatives Evaluated
- Tentatively Selected Plan
- Recreational Features
- Public Review Period



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PROJECT INFORMATION

- River Road is a Continuing Authorities Program (CAP) project, Section 206 Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration
- CAP to plan and implement projects of limited size, cost, scope, and complexity in an accelerated rate
- San Antonio River Authority is the non-federal sponsor (NFS)
- Project is in the feasibility study phase



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FUNDING

- Feasibility phase cost shared 50/50 with the Non-Federal sponsor
 - Federal funds first \$100,000 of the feasibility stage
- Design and Construction cost shared 65/35
- Recreation features cost shared 50/50.
 - Recreation features can only be a maximum of 10% of the Federal share of project cost
- Operations & Maintenance costs are 100% **Non-Federal** responsibility
- Total first project cost: \$5,999,000



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STUDY AREA




Legend

 Study Area



River Road Study Area
San Antonio, Texas
July 2019

0 0.075 0.15 0.3 Miles



PROBLEMS, OBJECTIVES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Problems

- Severe lack of vegetation adjacent to the river
- Lack of pool, riffle, run features for aquatic habitat
- Limited habitat diversity due to an abundance of invasive species
- River Road and Avenue A that run parallel to the channel have constrained the river
- Reduced bank protection due to human disturbance to the riparian (vegetation near water) corridor.

Opportunities

- Restore function and structure to the aquatic ecosystem
- Provide additional recreation benefits to the community
- Improve water quality in the San Antonio River through ecosystem restoration
- Reduce erosive threat to public infrastructure

Planning Constraints

- Avoid removing pedestrian access to the study area
- Avoid removing access to the golf course maintenance building



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Figure 1:
Existing
Erosion in
Project Area



Figure 2:
Existing
Project
Area



Figure 3:
Future
Example
(Instream
Structures)



TOP 3 PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENTS

Maintain access across river (stepping stones, constructed foot bridge).

- Concur. Access across the San Antonio River will not be impacted by this study. One of the constraints upon this study is the requirement to maintain access across the river for recreationalists within the project area. Upon implementation of the project, the low water crossings will be removed and replaced with pedestrian bridges.

Use native plants during implementation of project (drought tolerant, site-specific).

- Concur. The restoration plan includes the planting of site-specific native vegetation. Locally sourced seeds, saplings, and container plants would be collected and planted as part of the restoration project. Native herbaceous and shrub species would be incorporated into the planting design to mimic the successional progression of the vegetative community and provide fish and wildlife habitat as the restored area matures.

Recommendations regarding designated parking within the project area (stay out of the western boundary of the study area or within the northernmost section of Avenue A).

- Noted. Additional designated parking locations were evaluated within the study area. However, there were no viable sites that would not impact restoration efforts and cultural resources on either boundary of the San Antonio River. Additional designated parking was screened out of further consideration.



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PLAN FORMULATION PROCESS

- The focus of this meeting is to discuss the Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP); however, there were a plethora of options that we had to evaluate and consider before selecting this Plan. As well considering all of the adverse impacts in the study area.
 - Low water crossings
 - Human disturbance
 - Erosion and sedimentation
 - Reduced riparian corridor
 - River Road and Avenue A
- The conditions will continue into the future if the project is not implemented.
- All of the public comments from the previous meetings were considered and some will be implemented into the project.



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ALTERNATIVE 1 – INSTREAM MODIFICATION

Alternative 1 – Instream Modification

- This alternative was considered to address the significant pooling, stress on the river banks, and lack of pool, riffle, run features in the study area.
- The options evaluated for this alternative involve removing 1-3 low water crossings and replacing them with pedestrian bridges.
- This alternative evaluated the placement of instream structures, native species plantings, invasive species management, and geolifts (features to assist with bank and vegetation stabilization).



ALTERNATIVE 2 – AVENUE A MODIFICATION

Alternative 2 – Avenue A Modification

- This alternative was considered to address human disturbance and width of the riparian corridor. Vehicular access will not be permitted and will be restricted to hiking and biking.
- Any portion of road that is removed would be replaced with native soil and replanted with native species. It would also include invasive species management.
- The alternative evaluated the addition of an 8' wide ADA compliant asphalt path, beginning where Avenue A has been removed and ending at E Woodlawn Avenue.
- Expansion of the existing golf course path for maintenance vehicles.



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ALTERNATIVE 3 – RIVER ROAD RELOCATION

Alternative 3 – River Road Relocation

- This alternative was considered because of Davis Park's inclusion within the floodplain and the opportunity to expand the riparian corridor.
- This alternative includes native species plantings and invasive species management in Davis Park.
- The team compared the effects of relocating a portion of River Road to the original alignment of Allison Drive.



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TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN



TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN

The TSP includes:

- **Alternative 1 – Instream Modification**
 - Replacement of all three low water crossings with bridges
 - Installation of instream structures
 - Native species plantings and invasive species management within the river and along its banks
- **Alternative 2 – Avenue A Modification**
 - Replacing Avenue A with soil and native vegetation
 - Golf cart path expansion within Brackenridge Golf Course
- **Alternative 3 – River Road Relocation**
 - Native species plantings and invasive species management in Davis Park
 - River Road will not be relocated

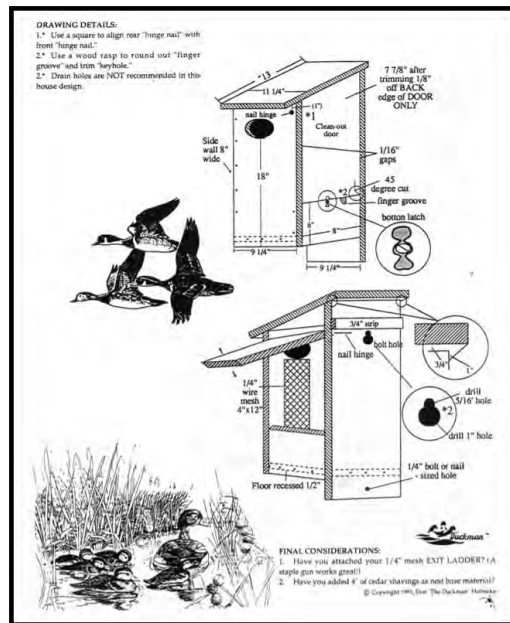


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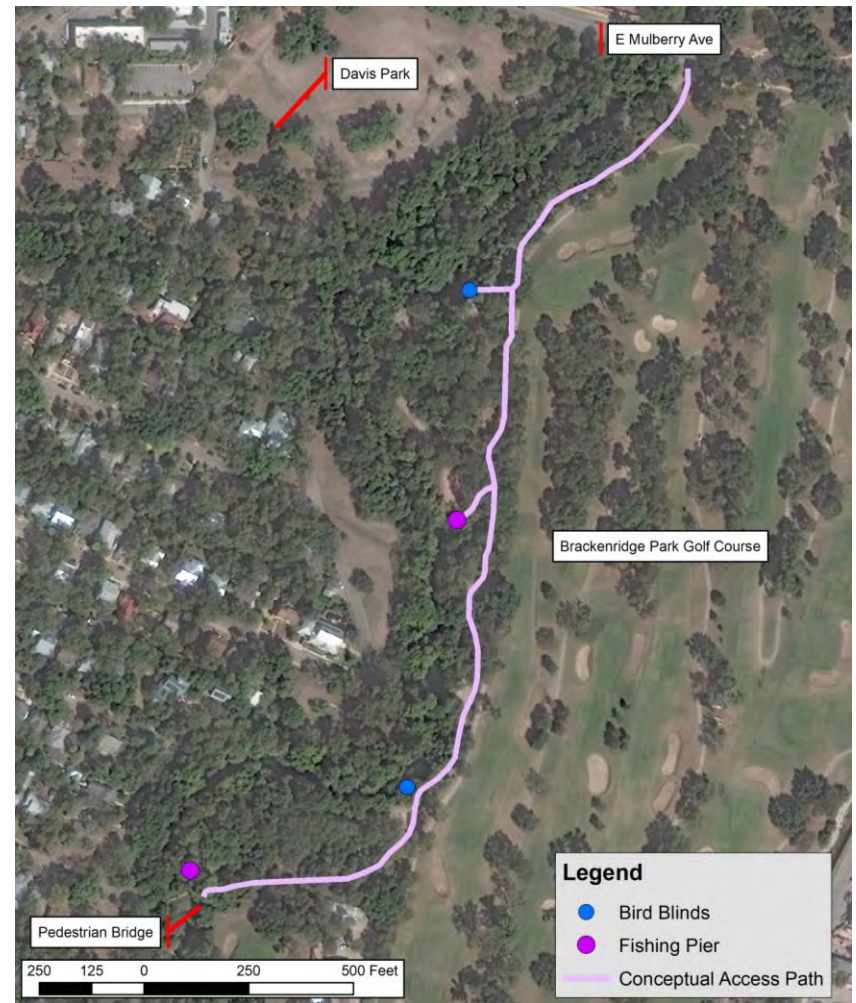
BENEFITS OF THE TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN

- Open stream bed provides better habitat for aquatic organisms and improved river flow.
- Improved cover and foraging opportunities for aquatic and terrestrial life.
- The restored riparian corridor will decrease impacts from stormwater runoff, pollution, erosion, and sedimentation.
- Nesting structures for wildlife including waterfowl, bats, and non-game migratory birds will be added throughout the project area.
- Instream structures will mimic natural “babbling” brook sounds.



RECREATION FEATURES

- Pedestrian Access Path
 - 8' wide ADA compliant asphalt path
- Bird Blinds
 - Added throughout the project area to increase wildlife viewing ability for the public.
- Fishing Decks
 - Assist with directing usage of the area while also enhancing recreation opportunities.
- Educational signs
 - Directions, interpretive, and park use guidelines
- Trash cans



NEXT STEPS

- ✓ Alternative Plan Formulation
- ✓ Economic & Environmental Analysis of Alternative Plans
- ✓ Selection of Tentatively Selected Plan
- ✓ Legal and Internal Review of Decision Document
 - Public Review of Draft Decision Document
 - Complete Feasibility Phase



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PUBLIC REVIEW

There will be a 45-day public comment period
Public Review

- Began November 10, 2020
- Ends December 28, 2020

Draft documents, comment forms, and the presentation can be found here:

- <https://www.swf.usace.army.mil/Missions/Water-Sustainment/River-Road/>



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SUBMITTING COMMENTS & MEETING BREAK

Submit your written comments by December 28, 2020

- You do not have to utilize the USACE comment form, it is available for your convenience.
- Email to:
 - RiverRoadER@usace.army.mil
- Or Mail to:
 - Justyss Watson, Biologist, Environmental Branch, Regional Planning and Environmental Center, 819 Taylor Street, P.O. Box 17300, Room 3A12, Fort Worth, TX 76102-300

We will take a 5-minute break to submit your questions through Google Form.

- The presenters will review the questions and answer at the conclusion of the presentation.



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