

Federal, Commonwealth, and local agencies including but not limited to the following: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Coast Guard, Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources, Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board, Puerto Rico Planning Board, Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Officer, and other agencies as identified in scoping, public involvement, and agency coordination.

Other Environmental Review and Consultation: The proposed action would involve evaluation for compliance with guidelines pursuant to Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act, public interest review, application for Water Quality Certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, and determination of Coastal Zone Management Act consistency.

DEIS Preparation: We estimate that the DEIS will be available to the public on or about November 15, 2001.

Dated: August 20, 2001.

John R. Hall,

Chief, Regulatory Division.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for a General Reevaluation Study of Navigation Improvements at Miami Harbor, Dade County, FL

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers intends to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Navigation Improvements at Miami Harbor, Dade County, Florida. The study is a cooperative effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Miami-Dade County Seaport Department of the Port of Miami.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rea Boothby, 904-232-3453, Environmental Branch, Planning Division, P.O. Box 4970, Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Project Background and Authorization

The initial authorization for a Federal channel providing navigation access to the City of Miami occurred in 1902.

Later reports and documents recommended further improvement of the harbor's channels, turning basins, and jetties. A Resolution provided by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives dated October 29, 1997 provided the authorization for the current study.

2. Need or Purpose

Improvements, including channel deepening and widening, are required to accommodate future commercial fleet and to more effectively transit the existing fleet. Those improvements would allow commercial ships to call at the harbor with increased draft and cargo tonnage, resulting in transportation cost savings.

3. Proposed Solution and Forecast Completion Date

Widen and deepen the harbor's container ship channels and turning basins. Extend the Federal channel to the west end of Dodge Island. Construction is forecast to begin around October 2003.

4. Prior EAs or EISs

An EIS was prepared in 1985 to accommodate dredging in the Port of Miami.

5. Alternatives

Alternatives currently under consideration include no action, one nonstructural, and five structural alternatives. Six alternatives identified by the Biscayne Bay Pilots and the Miami-Dade County Seaport Department include:

- The first involves flaring the existing 500-foot wide entrance channel to provide an 800-foot wide entrance at buoy 1. Deepening of the entrance channel along Cut-1 and Cut-2 from an existing depth of 44 feet in one-foot increments to a depth of 52 feet will receive consideration.

- The second alternative will consider adding a turn widener between buoys 13 and 15 and deepening to depths of 50 feet.

- Alternative three involves extending the existing Fisher Island turning basin to the north. A turning notch (1600 feet by 1450 feet) extending approximately 500 feet to the north of the existing channel edge along the West End of Cut-3 would require evaluation. Depths from 43 to 50 feet at one-foot increments below the existing depth of 42 feet will receive consideration in the area of the turning notch.

- Alternative four consists of relocating the main channel (cruise ship

channel or Cut-4) about 175 feet to the south between channel miles 2 and 3 over a two or three degree transition to the existing cruise ship turning basin. No dredging is expected for alternative four since existing depths allow for continuation of the authorized depth of 36 feet.

- Alternative five proposes to increase the width of the Lummus Island Cut (Fisherman's Channel) about 100 feet to the south of the existing channel. Deepening would include examination of depths below the existing 42-foot depth at one-foot increments from 43 to 50 feet along the proposed widened channel from Cut-3, Station 0+00 to Cut-3, Station 42+00.

- Alternate six includes deepening of Dodge Island Cut and the proposed 1200-foot turning basin from 32 and 34 feet to 36 feet. It also involves relocating the western end of the Dodge Island Cut to accommodate proposed port expansion.

6. Issues

The EIS will consider impacts on seagrasses (including Johnson Seagrass, a threatened species), mangrove, and hardbottom communities, other protected species, Essential Fish Habitat, shore protection, health and safety, water quality, aesthetics and recreation, fish and wildlife resources, cultural resources, energy conservation, socio-economic resources, and other impacts identified through scoping, public involvement, and interagency coordination.

7. Scoping Process

a. A scoping letter was sent to interested parties on January 6, 2000. In addition, all parties were invited to participate in the scoping process by identifying any additional concerns on issues, studies needed, alternatives, procedures, and other matters related to the scoping process.

b. A local, state, and Federal resource agency scoping meeting occurred on March 13, 2000, to determine the areas of coverage for an environmental baseline resource survey. A meeting followed on November 1, 2000, with those resource agencies to review preliminary results.

c. No public scoping meeting is planned at this time.

8. Public Involvement

We invite the participation of affected Federal, state and local agencies, affected Indian tribes, and other interested private organizations and parties.

9. Coordination

The proposed action is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, with the FWS under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, with the NMFS concerning Essential Fish Habitat and with the State Historic Preservation Officer.

10. Other Environmental Review and Consultation

The proposed action would involve evaluation for compliance with guidelines pursuant to Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act; application (to the State of Florida) for Water Quality Certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act; certification of state lands, easements, and rights of way; and determination of Coastal Zone Management Act consistency.

11. Agency Role

The Corps and the non-Federal sponsor, the Miami-Dade County Seaport of the Port of Miami, will provide extensive information and assistance on the resources to be impacted, mitigation measures, and alternatives.

12. DEIS Preparation

It is estimated that the DEIS will be available to the public on or about November 2001.

Dated: August 10, 2001.

James C. Duck,

Chief, Planning Division.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) to the 1996 Final Environmental Impact Statement for Coast of Florida Erosion and Storm Effects Study, Region III, Palm Beach, Broward, and Dade County, FL, To Address an Application for a Department of the Army Permit to Nourish Phipps Beach in Palm Beach County, FL

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has regulatory

authority to permit the discharge of dredge and fill material into waters of the United States. In compliance with its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers intends to prepare a SEIS as a result of the dredge and fill permit application for the Phipps Ocean Park Beach Restoration project located within the Town of Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Brice McKoy, 561-683-0792, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, Regulatory Division, South Permits Branch, 400 North Congress Avenue, Suite 130, West Palm Beach, Florida 33401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Town of Palm Beach, Florida is seeking a Department of Army permit to construct a 1.9-mile beach restoration project located in the Town of Palm Beach, Florida, between Florida Department of Environmental Protection reference monument R-116 and R-126 in the vicinity of Phipps Ocean Park.

Approximately 1.5 million cubic yards of sand would be dredged from two borrow areas located approximately 3,500 feet offshore and approximately 1.5 and 2.6 miles south of the fill area. The beach fill profile consists of a +9 ft. NGVD berm elevation with an average construction berm width varying from 190 to 455 ft, with a projected life of 8 years. The shoreline within the project area contains rock outcrops located at and below the mean low water line. This project is located within project segment "6" in Palm Beach County and referred to as the "South-end Palm Beach Island Segment" in the Coast of Florida Erosion and Storm Effects Study, which was authorized on 16 July 1984, by Section 104 of the 1985 Appropriations Act (Public Law 98-360). The specific study area for this Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is approximately 1.9 miles of beach, between Sloans Curve and the Ambassador South II Condominium including Phipps Ocean Park and the Palm Beach Par 3 Golf Club, located within the Town of Palm Beach, Florida, in Sections 11, 14, and 23, Township 44 South, Range 43 East.

Alternatives: Alternatives are being considered in the study and will be addressed in the Draft SEIS. These alternatives include: no action alternatives, non-structural alternatives, revetment, beach fill with periodic nourishment, beach fill with periodic nourishment stabilized by an offshore breakwater or submerged artificial reef, beach nourishment with maintenance

material from updrift inlet, beach fill and periodic nourishment stabilized by groins, seawalls, beach fill with periodic nourishment and hurricane surge protection sand dune, beach fill with periodic nourishment and hurricane surge protection—offshore breakwaters or submerged artificial reefs, nearshore berms, beach fill with nearshore berms, stabilization of beaches and dunes by vegetation, feeder beach: beach fill strategically located to nourish downdrift erosion problem areas, relocation of structures, flood proofing of structures, abandon or modify navigation projects, sand tightening of jetties, upgrading on construction of sand transfer plants for renourishment; dune restoration, PEP reef, and various combinations of the above.

Issues: The Draft SEIS will consider impacts on protected species, health, conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands (and other aquatic resources), historic properties, fish and wildlife value, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people, and other issues identified through scoping, public involvement and interagency coordination.

Scoping: The scoping process will involve Federal, State, county, municipal agencies, and other interested persons and organizations. A scoping letter will be sent to interested Federal, State, county and municipal agencies requesting their comments and concerns. Any persons and organizations wishing to participate in the scoping process should contact the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at the above address. Significant issues that are anticipated include concern for nearshore and offshore hard bottom communities, fisheries, water quality, threatened and endangered species, and cultural resources.

Public Involvement: We invite the participation of affected federal, state and local agencies, affected Indian tribes, and other private organizations and parties by submitting written comments to the information contact provided in this notice.

Coordination: Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed in compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service will be accomplished in compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Coordination