



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
SAVANNAH DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
100 W. OGLETHORPE AVENUE
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31401-3640**

Planning Division

December 17, 2013

**PUBLIC NOTICE
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

SUBJECT: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for 2015 Tybee Island Shore Protection Project, Georgia.

Notice of the following is hereby given:

a. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, notice is hereby given that the US Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District has selected to perform periodic beach renourishment on Tybee Island, Georgia.

b. The Savannah District announces the availability to the public of a Draft EA and Draft FONSI concerning the action involving the Tybee Island Shore Protection Project. The plan calls for placement of approximately 1,748,750 cubic yards (c.y.) of material on the beach at Tybee Island within the limits of the Federal project. The exact quantity to be placed and the final project template will be determined based on physical conditions and funds available at the time of construction. The proposed construction is scheduled to occur between November 2015 and April 2016. Copies of the Draft EA and unsigned FONSI can be obtained through email request to the following address: CESAS-PD@usace.army.mil, or contacting Ms. Ellie Covington at (912) 652-5578. Copies may also be downloaded from the District website <http://www.sas.usace.army.mil/About/DivisionsandOffices/PlanningDivision/PlansandReports.aspx>

c. Written statements regarding the Draft EA and FONSI for the proposed action will be received at the Savannah District Office until

12 O'CLOCK NOON, JANUARY 17, 2014

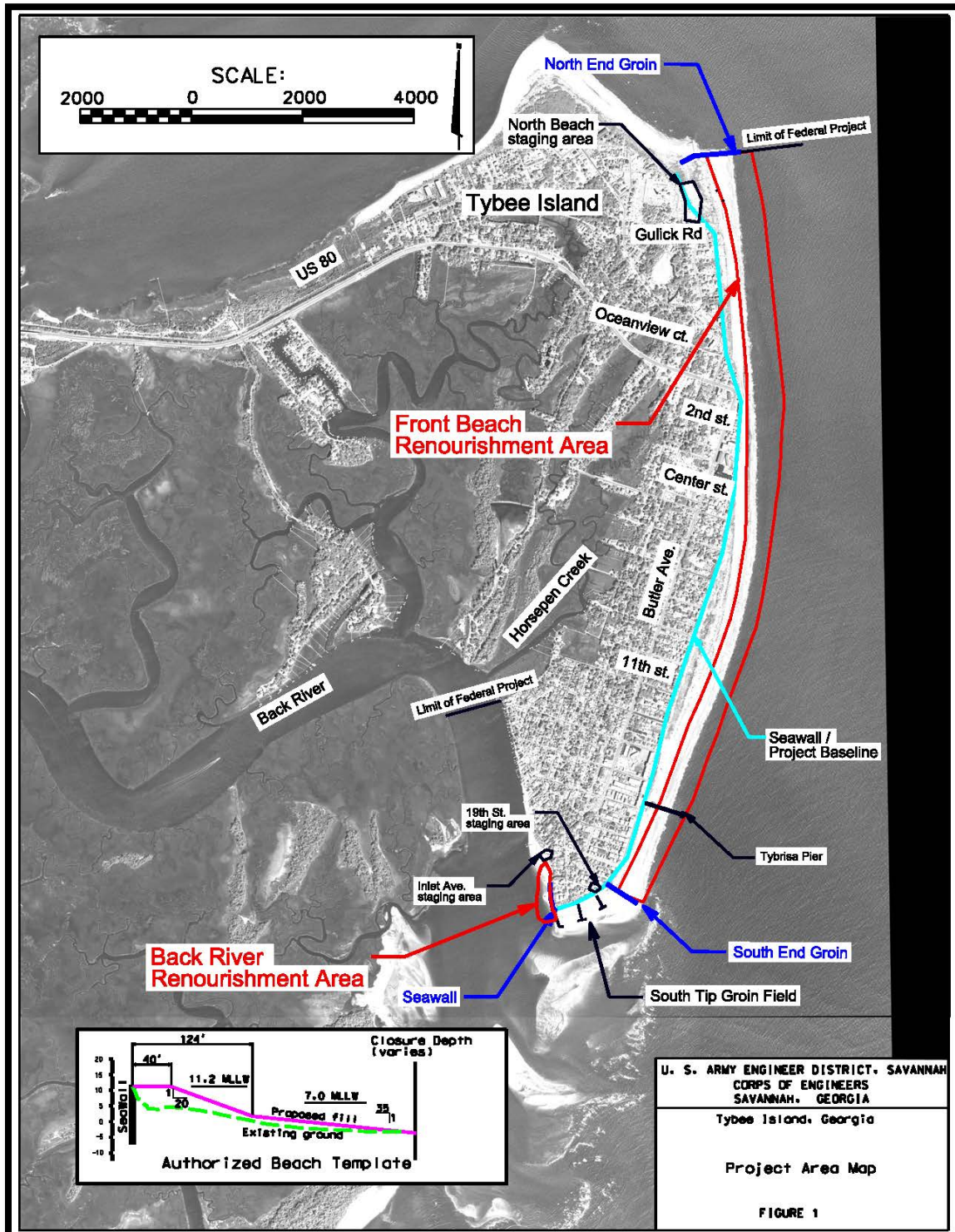
from those interested in the activity and whose interests may be affected by the proposed action.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: This authorized 3.5 mile long project was initially constructed in 1974 with a 50-year project life and periodic renourishments to occur every 7 years. The beach was last renourished in 2008 and is scheduled to be renourished again in 2015. In 2015, there will be 9 years left in the project life (i.e. Federal participation). The Savannah District, with the non-Federal sponsor's concurrence, selected to perform the 2015 periodic renourishment for the remaining 9 years of the 50-year project life. The renourishment volume to be placed includes the volume needed to restore the project plus an additional 312,000 cubic yards to account for potential erosion through 2024. The beach template will be slightly modified to include placement of the additional material by extending the berm up to the North terminal groin of the template. This area has been nourished during previous renourishment cycles, but not during the 2008 renourishment. In addition, the berm will be extended seaward up to 50 feet beyond the previously constructed template to account for erosion during the additional 2 years for a 9 year cycle. The same borrow area that was used for the 2008 renourishment, Borrow Area 4, will be used for this final renourishment.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action were developed as part of the planning process. The alternatives that were considered were as follows:

- a. Alternative 1: Without Project Condition/No Action Alternative - no beach renourishment. This alternative would result in continued erosion to the Tybee Island Shore Protection Project, including potential loss of property and structures. Since December 2008 an average loss of approximately 164,000 cy/yr has occurred on the oceanfront beach. The majority of erosion occurred at the Second Street "hot spot" with a lesser degree of erosion in the vicinity of the Tybrisa Pier. With no renourishment, the beach would continue to erode, with a concomitant loss in storm damage protection and recreational benefits. In addition, if erosion were to be allowed to continue unimpeded, seawall and dune damage would be expected to occur at an accelerated rate.
- b. Alternative 2 (Selected Alternative): Beach Renourishment. The proposed project template design is based on project performance and erosion rates since the last renourishment project in 2008. Beach fill will primarily be placed in areas included in the previous renourishment in 2008. These areas include the Oceanfront North Beach from the north terminal groin to Center Street, the Oceanfront South Beach from 11th Street to the South End Terminal (Federal) Groin, and the Back River Beach from Inlet Avenue to Southernmost end of Groin G-1 in the South Tip Groin Field. Additional fill will be placed between these areas to provide a more stable beach profile and to avoid some of the excessive losses in the 2nd Street "hot spot" from project end losses and offshore losses that resulted from the wide beach constructed at this location during the last renourishment. Constructed beach widths on the Back River Beach vary from 30 feet to 110 feet at +11.22 MLLW. Beach widths on the Oceanfront Beach will vary from a 25 foot width berm, to a berm approximately 350 feet wide at the elevation of +11.22 MLLW. Based on natural angle of repose on the existing beach, and experience with previous placement, a beach slope of 1 vertical (V) on 25 horizontal (H) will be required on the oceanfront beach. The Back River will have an 11.2 foot elevation MLLW and a 1V:15H slope. The constructed berm width is calculated to

protect the authorized template for 9 years. The figure below illustrates the template proposed design.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY EVALUATION:

Environmental Assessment: Savannah District has prepared a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) and found that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be required for this action. The Draft EA is being coordinated concurrently with this Notice to Federal and State natural resource agencies for review and comment. No wetlands would be impacted by the proposed action.

Threatened and Endangered Species: The District reviewed the most recent information on Federally-listed endangered or threatened species and determined that the proposed action may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect Wood storks, Sea turtles, Manatees, Right whales, Atlantic and Shortnose sturgeon due to the time of year construction is scheduled. These species are not likely to be present in the construction area during 1 November through 30 April. The District determined the proposed project may affect, and is likely to adversely affect the Piping plover and its' wintering Critical habitat Unit GA-1 due to construction activities which may result in incidental take in the form of harassment. Overall positive net benefits to this species critical habitat are expected. This proposed action is being coordinated with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act.

Cultural Resources: The Area of Potential Effect includes the beach face to be renourished, construction access areas, and the borrow area. Consultation conducted under 36 CFR, Part 800, for previous Tybee Beach renourishment projects has established that placement of sand on this beach face and reuse of previously used access areas will have no effect upon significant historic properties. Archaeological remote sensing surveys were conducted to identify and evaluate historic properties in a large offshore area. The results of these surveys and supplementary diver investigations were used to define the borrow area limits in a manner that will avoid impacts to magnetic anomalies and/or sonar targets that may represent potentially significant historic resources. The results of these investigations and the finding that the proposed project will have no effect upon historic properties are being coordinated with the Georgia State Historic Preservation Office.

Essential Fish Habitat: Savannah District evaluated the proposal's potential effects on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). No significant impacts to essential fish habitat are expected. An EFH appendix is provided in the draft Environmental Assessment. This determination is being coordinated with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Water Quality Certification: Water Quality Certification for the proposed work is being requested from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division.

Coastal Zone Consistency: The Savannah District has evaluated the proposed project and found it is consistent with the Georgia Coastal Zone Management Program to the maximum extent practicable. The District is coordinating its consistency with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Resources Division in Brunswick, Georgia.

Clean Air Act: This action is being coordinated with the United States Environmental Protection Agency. No violations of air quality standards are expected.

Application of the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines:

The District has conducted an evaluation of the proposed impacts in accordance with Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act and determined that the proposed discharge complies with the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines. That evaluation is included as an appendix to the draft EA for the proposed work.

Public Interest Review: The decision whether to proceed with the project as proposed will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both the protection and use of important resources. The benefits which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal will be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors that may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof. Among these are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife, flood hazards, flood plains, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion/accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership, environmental justice, and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Consideration of Public Comments: The US Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Native American Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the US Army Corps of Engineers in its deliberations on this action. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, wetlands, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of the Environmental Assessment pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Comment Period: Anyone wishing to comment to the Corps on this proposed action should submit comments no later than the end of the comment period shown in this notice, in writing, to the US Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District, Planning Division, ATTN: Ms. Ellie Covington, 100 West Oglethorpe Avenue, Savannah, Georgia 31401-0889, by FAX to 912-652-5787, or by emailing the comments to the following address: CESAS-PD.SAS@usace.army.mil.



William G. Bailey
Chief, Planning Division