

the latest update is included with the Final PEIS as Appendix A. As individual site-specific projects are initiated to implement various DMMP goals individual NEPA and/or permit documents will continue to be prepared by the implementing agencies.

DATES: The formal comment period for the Final PEIS has been extended to February 1, 2009. Comments received will be considered by the District in decision-making for the Final PEIS's Record of Decision.

ADDRESSES: Additional requests for the DMMP and Final PEIS can be made by post card to the following address: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, Planning Division-Environmental Analysis Branch, Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, 26 Federal Plaza—Room 2151, New York, NY 10278-0090.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher Ricciardi, Ph.D., Environmental Coordinator can be contacted at (917) 790-8630 or by e-mail at christopher.g.ricciardi@usace.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Several authorities exist to conduct navigation studies and maintain the New York Harbor, these include the Rivers and Harbors Appropriation Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 401-466n), the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (Clean Water Act-CWA), and the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (MPRSA). With respect to the preparation of the DMMP, District planning guidance stated in EC1165-2-200 requires each district to maintain responsibility for preparation of long-term plans to maintain navigation projects.

The New York/New Jersey Harbor encompasses approximately two-dozen separately authorized and maintained Federal navigation channels. These projects, which range in authorized depth from 8-50 feet, combined with privately operated berthing areas have historically generated 2-4 million cubic yards of dredged material annually from maintenance of required depths. Further, several of these channels are either under construction or in the planning phase for deepening in the upcoming years to accommodate larger vessels that will need to use the Port. The construction of these deeper channels will generate substantial amounts of dredged material. The 2008 DMMP Update seeks to identify options to manage the material generated from both the Federal and non-Federal maintenance and deepening of the Port through the year 2065.

The District held scoping meetings with the public on this plan during February and April 1997. A Notice of Intent (NOI) to produce a PEIS including an outline of the scope was published in the **Federal Register** on February 24, 1998. Subsequently, meetings on the topics to be covered in the Draft PEIS were held during April 1998. Written comments were considered in the promulgation of the Draft PEIS.

After distribution of the Draft PEIS to the public during September 1999, four public meetings on the document were held during November 1999. Written comments and taped verbal statements gathered at these meetings, letters and e-mails received during the comment period were considered in the promulgation of the Final PEIS.

The DMMP also considered the Harbor Estuary Program (HEP) and its Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) that was signed by the agencies with responsibilities for the Port and its environment. Further, for the last several years the New York/New Jersey Regional Dredging Team (RDT), comprised of representatives from the District, PANY/NJ, the States of NY and NJ, and the USEPA, has been meeting monthly to discuss current and future needs and disposal/management options. The RDT will continue to coordinate in order to keep abreast of current and developing placement opportunities and technologies as the DMMP is implemented.

The 2008 DMMP Update and Final 1999 PEIS are available on CD in PDF format and are downloadable through the District's Web page: <http://www.nan.usace.army.mil/business/prjlinks/dmmp/index.htm>.

Printed copies of the DMMP and Final PEIS are also available upon request.

Brenda S. Bowen,

Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA)—Louisiana, Small Diversion at Convent/Blind River Project

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

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) intends to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA)—Louisiana, Small Diversion at Convent/Blind River restoration project. This restoration project involves a small diversion (less than 5,000 cubic feet per second [cfs]) from the Mississippi River into the Blind River through a new control structure. This SEIS will be tiered off of the programmatic EIS for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA)—Louisiana, Ecosystem Restoration Study, November 2004. The record of decision for the programmatic EIS was signed on November 18, 2005.

DATES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for scoping meeting dates.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions concerning the draft SEIS should be addressed to Dr. William P. Klein, Jr., CEMVN-PM-RS, P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, LA 70160-0267; telephone: (504) 862-2540; fax: (504) 862-1583; or by e-mail: william.p.klein.jr@usace.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. *Authority.* This SEIS will be tiered off of the programmatic EIS for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA)—Louisiana, Ecosystem Restoration Study, November 2004. The record of decision for the programmatic EIS was signed on November 18, 2005. The Water Resources Development Act of 2007 (WRDA 2007) authorized the LCA program. The authority includes requirements for comprehensive planning, program governance, implementation, and other program components. The LCA restoration program will facilitate the implementation of critical restoration features and essential science and technology demonstration projects, increase the beneficial use of dredged material and determine the need for modification of selected existing projects to support coastal restoration objectives. The LCA near-term plan includes fifteen elements authorized for implementation contingent upon meeting certain reporting requirements. Specifically, Section 7006(e)(3) instructs the Secretary of the Army to submit feasibility reports to Congress on six elements of the LCA near-term restoration plan by December 31, 2008. The six elements are: (1) Multipurpose Operation of Houma Navigation Lock, (2) Terrebonne Basin Barrier Shoreline Restoration, (3) Small Diversion at Convent/Blind River, (4) Amite River Diversion Canal Modification, (5) Medium Diversion at Whites Ditch, and (6) Convey Atchafalaya River Water to

Northern Terrebonne Marshes. The Congressional language further authorizes construction of these six elements contingent upon completion of a favorable report of the Chief of Engineers, no later than December 31, 2010, and subsequent submission to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate.

2. *Proposed Action.* The Small Diversion at Convent/Blind River restoration project proposes the construction of a small diversion (less than 5,000 cfs) from the Mississippi River into Blind River through a new control structure. The objective of this restoration project is to introduce sediments and nutrients into the southeast portion of Maurepas Swamp. This project is intended to operate in conjunction with the Hope Canal diversion to facilitate organic deposition in the swamp, improve biological productivity and prevent further swamp deterioration.

3. *Public Involvement.* Public involvement, an essential part of the SEIS process, is integral to assessing the environmental consequences of the proposed action and improving the quality of the environmental decision making. The public includes affected and interested Federal, state, and local agencies, Indian tribes, concerned citizens, stakeholders, and other interested parties. Public participation in the SEIS process will be strongly encouraged, both formally and informally, to enhance the probability of a more technically accurate, economically feasible, and socially and politically acceptable SEIS. Public involvement will include but is not limited to: Information dissemination; identification of problems, needs and opportunities; idea generation; public education; problem solving; providing feedback on proposals; evaluation of alternatives; conflict resolution by consensus; public and scoping notices and meetings; public, stakeholder and advisory groups consultation and meetings; and making the SEIS and supporting information readily available in conveniently located places, such as libraries and on the World Wide Web.

4. *Scoping.* Scoping, an early and open process for identifying the scope of significant issues related to the proposed action to be addressed in the SEIS, will be used to: (a) Identify the affected public and agency concerns; (b) facilitate an efficient SEIS preparation process; (c) define the issues and alternatives that will be examined in detail in the SEIS; and (d) save time in

the overall process by helping to ensure that the draft SEIS adequately addresses relevant issues. A Scoping Meeting Notice announcing the locations, dates and times for scoping meetings will be mailed to all interested parties in January 2009.

5. *Coordination.* The USACE and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have formally committed to work together to conserve, protect, and restore fish and wildlife resources while ensuring environmental sustainability of our Nation's water resources under the January 22, 2003, Partnership Agreement for Water Resources and Fish and Wildlife. The USFWS will provide a Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report. Coordination will be maintained with the USFWS and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regarding threatened and endangered species under their respective jurisdictional responsibilities. Coordination will be maintained with the NMFS regarding essential fish habitat. Coordination will be maintained with the Natural Resources Conservation Service regarding prime and unique farmlands. The U.S. Department of Agriculture will be consulted regarding the "Swampbuster" provisions of the Food Security Act. Coordination will be maintained with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency concerning compliance with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Action to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations." Coordination will be maintained with the Advisory Counsel on Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Officer. The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources will be consulted regarding consistency with the Coastal Zone Management Act. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries will be consulted concerning potential impacts to Natural and Scenic Streams.

5. *Availability of Draft SEIS.* The earliest that the draft SEIS will be available for public review would be in spring of 2010. The draft SEIS or a notice of availability will be distributed to affected Federal, state, and local agencies, Indian tribes, and other interested parties.

Dated: December 11, 2008.

Mark D. Jernigan,

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army, Deputy District Commander.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA)—Louisiana, Amite River Diversion Canal Modification Feasibility Study

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

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) intends to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA)—Louisiana, Amite River Diversion Canal Modification restoration project. This restoration project will introduce additional nutrients and sediment into the western Maurepas Swamp to facilitate organic deposition in the swamp, improve biological productivity and prevent further swamp deterioration. This SEIS will be tiered off of the programmatic EIS for the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA)—Louisiana, Ecosystem Restoration Study, November 2004. The record of decision for the programmatic EIS was signed on November 18, 2005.

DATES: See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for scoping meeting dates.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions concerning the draft SEIS should be addressed to Dr. William P. Klein, Jr., CEMVN-PM-RS, P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, LA 70160-0267; telephone: (504) 862-2540; fax: (504) 862-1583; or by e-mail: william.p.klein.jr@usace.army.mil.

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