

## **WHNIP 203 Stakeholder Group Meeting**

**20 November 2019**

**CFCC Union Station, Rm 512**

Introductions (see attendance sheet)

Presentation given by Emily Hughes, Corps Biologist

PowerPoint presentation and other project information can be found at:

[https://www.saw.usace.army.mil/Missions/Navigation/Dredging/Wilmington-Harbor/WHNIP\\_203\\_Study/](https://www.saw.usace.army.mil/Missions/Navigation/Dredging/Wilmington-Harbor/WHNIP_203_Study/)

The presentation covered the purpose of the meeting, the Purpose and Guidelines for the Stakeholder Group, the Section 203 Process and a NEPA Overview

Q&A:

Q: (Kerri Allen, Coastal Federation) Is this the Ports' or the Corps' study? At what point does it become Federal?

A: It is currently the Ports' study. If/when it is authorized by Congress, it will become a Corps' (Federal) project. The Corps is currently conducting Federal environmental compliance activities for the project as proposed by the Ports, using funds provided by the Ports.

Q: (Chris McCall, Village of Bald Head Island) What is the timing for the release of the Draft EIS?

A: To be determined. The Corps had some significant concerns on the Feasibility and Environmental report the Port submitted to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA(CW)) and the Port is working now to address those concerns. Once we see the revised report, we'll have a better idea regarding the EIS timeline. It's anticipated that the EIS will be released in 6-12 months.

Q: Mitigation planned? Any specific projects discussed?

A: Mitigation planning is ongoing, but it's too early to discuss specifics at this time.

Q: Is this the format to discuss concerns? (i.e. erosion related to deepening?)

A: Yes, the group will be working with the Ports and Corps to address concerns raised during the scoping process. We want your input to help us determine if we are on the right track, wrong track or if more analysis is needed. Our goal is to address all identified concerns in the Draft EIS.

Q: (Lindsay Addison, Audubon) The feasibility Study Report is the Ports'? And the EIS will be the Corps' (separate documents)?

A: Correct. The Port submitted their feasibility/Environmental report to ASA (CW) in July 2019. The Corps is responsible for completing the EIS and all environmental compliance requirements for the study. Information from the Ports' report will be used by the Corps in the developing the Draft EIS.

Ultimately, the feasibility report and EIS will be integrated into one document, a Feasibility Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Q: Is the Ports' Report being revised? Will it be available for review?

A: The Ports' report is being revised based on comments from the Corps (Headquarters and Wilmington District). The report will be submitted by the Ports for approval by the ASA (CW), and ASA (CW) will make determinations of releasability for public review. Most of the information in the Ports' report will be incorporated into the Corps' integrated report that will be available for public review.

Q: What additional analyses will be done?

A: To be determined. We are currently waiting on the Ports' revised report to determine what other analyses may be needed.

Handouts of Scoping Comments Summary were distributed (also available on the website)

Discussion of future meetings and topics to be discussed:

1. Shoreline erosion to beaches and river
2. Mitigation for impacts to bird islands (ie. Battery Island). How will mitigation be enforced? There needs to be away to make sure mitigation carries through the life of the project.
3. Mitigation for mitigation -- never know what is going to happen until after it happens...are unanticipated impacts going to be taken into consideration for the cost of mitigation? Yes, this can be part of a Programmatic Agreement and funding can be included for unanticipated impacts.
4. Sea level rise and its unanticipated effects on all resources
5. Cumulative energy impacts – increased number of trucks on the road; overall energy footprint and emissions on air quality
6. Brunswicktown wave attenuators (Jim McKee has offered to present on this)

Next Meeting: 18 December 10 – 11:30

Where: Same floor different room at CFCC (subject to change; there have been discussions about making this next meeting a webinar).

Q: Can more than 1 representative attend?

A: Due space constraints in meeting rooms, we'd like to limit representation to one person per agency/entity; however, others are welcomed to call in and will be kept on the distribution list for future meetings/webinars.