



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

**Port Everglades Navigation Improvement Project
IWG Meeting - October 30, 2018
10:00 – 12:00 AM
Final Meeting Notes**

Location: Call in information: 1-877-336-1831 Passcode: 3709243 Security Code: 1234; Webinar: <https://usace.webex.com/meet/lacy.s.pfaff>

Purpose: Convene the monthly meeting of the IWG to discuss environmental activities, scheduling and any other items of interest to the IWG.

Goals:

1. Inform the IWG of the impact of the funding process on the PE schedule.
2. Review of the status and next actions of the environmental requirements and their precursors.

Attendees:

Jenny Peterson – DEP	Jocelyn Karazsia - NMFS
Lainie Edwards – DEP	Mark Lamb – NMFS
Greg Garis – DEP	Kelly Logan – NMFS
Brendan Biggs – DEP	Jason Spinning – USACE
Ann Lazar – DEP	Terri Jordan-Sellers - USACE
Shelby Wedelich – DEP	Xaymara Serrano – USACE
Jeff Howe – FWS	Gina Ralph – USACE
Erin McDevitt - FWC	Lacy Pfaff – USACE
Fritz Wettstein – FWC	Deborah Scerno – USACE
Lisa Gregg – FWC	Erik Neugaard – Port Everglades
Marie Burns – Ecologix Group/Fac.	Matt Harold – Port Everglades
	David Miller – David Miller & Ass./Port Evergl.

A. Revised Schedule Discussion – Lacy Pfaff: Lacy advised the group that the Port Everglades deepening project has been placed on the eligibility list of new starts in the 2019 work plan. This unexpected development has occurred because things are moving faster at the DC level than expected. The Corps is looking at a Work Plan verification as early as December. In order to have a New Start construction contract there is an expectation that all environmental requirements are met prior to the signing of a Project Partnering Agreement with the Port. Corps leadership has directed that this will occur with the goal of signing a PPA no later than September 30, 2019. This makes all approvals, permits etc. needed prior to the signing of the PPA by September 30, 2019. In order to make this schedule all environmental consultation will need to be complete by June 1, 2019. If the deadlines are not made to put a new construction start in place the Port could proceed forward by entering into an Advanced Funding agreement with the Corps. The desire of the Corps is to be ready for a FY 19 new start. Jason is in the process of putting together a schedule to lay out when permits etc. are needed and will provide when it is complete.

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- Lainie: What is the timing of submittal of a WQC permit application? Answer: January timeframe. The calendar being developed by Jason will show the date for the application submittal. It will also include a target for a pre-application meeting.
- DEP would expect to see the Biological Assessment (precursor to the Biological Opinion by NMFS), the NEPA document, and Blasting Plan.
- DEP noted that a blasting plan will be part of the conditions of any permit or at the least specific conditions on blasting procedures.
- The Corps is currently making sure that everything is in compliance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act prior to submittal of a permit application.
- Question on the definition of complete. Answer: Anything necessary to lead to all necessary Environmental permits/certifications/requirements.
- Question on when the draft NEPA will be circulated. Answer: Expect to have a public meeting in mid-March and a goal of circulating the draft NEPA document for review at the end of March.
- Note that the next manager meeting is November 13th where there will be an update of the status of the topics listed below and publication of the revised schedule.

B. Review of Topics, Status and Next Steps

Topic	Status	Next Steps
Base Habitat Map	Completed. Final product provided to IWG members	No additional action needed.
Seagrass Survey:	IWG has outstanding concerns	COE response at October 29 th IWG mtg, objections proceed to Conflict Resolution Process;
<p>Discussion: The 2016 seagrass survey is considered the best available information to use as a snapshot in time of the presence of seagrasses in the project area. Another approach is to look at a cumulative approach to use documentation of all seagrasses that have existed in the area with the thought that these areas could still support seagrasses whether they are currently growing or not; these areas would represent viable seagrass habitat. This would reduce the concern from IWG members over not having a 2018 survey. DEP noted that whatever approach is taken to determine impacts the same approach must be taken for mitigation with credit for unvegetated portions; be consistent on both sides of the ledger.</p> <p>Outcome: The Corps has currently not made a decision on which approach to take but will take into account the concerns of the IWG.</p> <p>Tasker(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DEP will provide information it has on unmapped seagrass areas (done 10/30/2018) 2. Corps will review IWG comments and provide its decision on taking a snapshot or cumulative approach to the seagrass survey. 3. Corps will look at how to incorporate seagrass and mangrove monitoring. 		
Particle Tracking Model	Model and output completed	Summary to be crafted by Marie, coordinated with Mark and Corps and provided to IWG.
Environmentally Friendly Bulkhead	Agency input being summarized in meeting notes	Revised drawings and final meeting notes to be provided to IWG.

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<p>Discussion: Marie mentioned that there are revised drawings based on past IWG discussions. It should be provided to the IWG shortly. A question was asked about State guidance on performing a jurisdictional determination (i.e., wetland delineation) on mangroves. Answer: Greg noted that Jenny has compiled documents to look at mangrove information and will send. Lisa noted that in the FWC original comments on the EIS, FWC stated there were deficiencies in how the Corps addressed mangroves. Erik mentioned their upcoming contract for a delineated mangrove survey and asked if there is a minimum interval between surveys points. Fritz stated that they see no reason to object to the information on mangrove delineation supplied by the DEP.</p> <p>Outcome: The IWG still needs to see the revised EFB drawings to ensure they are in line with their previous requests for clarification on how the EFB will be constructed. The Department will provide the Corps with the state’s “The Florida Wetland Delineation Manual”, which contains information on how to delineate wetland boundaries, including mangroves. The Department does not have a standard field protocol for functional assessments of mangroves, but all information required by the UMAM rule (62-345 F.A.C.) should be collected by the Corps / Port and provided to DEP and the IWG. . There has been historic concerns over the accurate assessment of mangrove impacts by the project in the past.</p> <p>Taskers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lisa will resend the FWC comments on mangroves initially provided for inclusion in the EIS. 2. Marie will forward the Corps EFB drawings to the IWG. 3. DEP will provide information they have compiled on mangrove delineations. (done 10/30/2018) 		
<p>Minimization Methods</p>	<p>Agency input received from IWG members (except EPA)</p>	<p>Corps response to IWG due.. d.</p>
<p>Discussion: More specific made progress to implement a spill budget.</p> <p>Outcome:</p> <p>Taskers: Try and get to the IWG next Friday week Spill budget</p>		
<p>Benthic Monitoring Plan</p>	<p>Reviewing products and comments from 10/23-24/18 meeting; Draft notes on Biol. Monitoring Plan provided 10/28/2018</p>	<p>Revise Benthic Monitoring Plan and provide to IWG.</p>
<p>Discussion: Brendan – The final version of the Benthic Habitat Map should be included with stations overlaid on that map instead of what is in the draft. The new map should plot the same positions using the distances provided. As a lessons learned from the Recon Survey, there should be language to move the station out of a sand channel to a hardbottom area. NMFS will pull together comments on the Benthic Monitoring Plan.</p> <p>Outcome: Recommend to revise the basic map to use the project’s benthic habitat map; include the same language used in the Recon. Survey to ensure stations are placed on hard bottoms.</p> <p>Tasker(s): IWG members will provide comments on the draft meeting notes sent out last Sunday night.</p>		
<p>WQ Monitoring Plan</p>	<p>Reviewing products and comments from 10/23-24 meeting</p>	<p>Revise WQ Monitoring Plan and provide to IWG. Write a WQ monitoring plan.</p>

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Topic	Status	Next Steps
<p>Discussion: There was minimal discussion on this topic. Outcome: None Taskers: Corps to revise WQ monitoring plan based on IWG input at meeting on October 24th.</p>		
<p>Adaptive Management Plan (thresholds, triggers and resulting actions)</p>	<p>Reviewing AMP provided by the transparency contractor.</p>	<p>Provide AMP to IWG.</p>
<p>Discussion: The Corps transparency contractor has been tasked with preparing a draft AMP which contains thresholds and triggers. The Corps expects to see the draft in the next two weeks. This will be followed by an internal review, and revisions if needed after which it will be released to the IWG. It was suggested that the Corps query industry, ERDC and other Districts to see what actions are available if something is triggered. Because the Corps has not yet received the document from the contractor, the release to the IWG is unknown as of this meeting. Outcome: Waiting upon the Corps transparency contractor for the draft document. Taskers: None</p>		
<p>Project Impacts</p>	<p>Corps preparing impact summary</p>	<p>Provide to IWG for November IWG Mtg</p>
<p>Discussion: Terri is preparing a draft for internal review. The Corps time frame to review internally and send out as soon as possible. The goal is to provide the draft to the IWG by November 9th and list it as a topic at the November 27th IWG monthly meeting. Outcome: Updated the IWG on the status of the Project Impacts paper and the next steps. Taskers: Corps to provide draft to the IWG on November 9th.</p>		
<p>Functional Assessment</p>	<p>Corps preparing path forward to address UMAM and HEA</p>	<p>Coordinate with DEP and NMFS.</p>
<p>Discussion: Ascertaining impacts is a precursor to the functional assessment. As soon as the review of Impacts is completed, the next step is to will look at the Functional assessment in terms of UMAM and HEA coordinating with DEP (UMAM) and NMFS (HEA). Outcome: Waiting upon completion of project impacts determination. Taskers: None</p>		
<p>Mitigation Plan -</p>	<p>Corps preparing plan based on functional assessment and input from Artificial Reef Meeting</p>	<p>Provide plan to IWG; Xaymara reaching out to the IWG for their input.</p>
<p>Discussion: The mitigation plan should include mitigation for impacts to Corals, benthic habitat organisms, seagrasses and mangroves including direct and indirect effects. Outcome: A lot of the group's focus has been on hardbottom corals; however, DEP reminded everyone that mitigation is for ALL impacts. Taskers: None</p>		
<p>Section 103 and ODMS Expansion</p>	<p>Application complete for 103 Permit.</p>	<p>Resubmit to EPA and request authorization for ODMS expansion.</p>
<p>Cultural Resources</p>	<p>Review final SHPO approval</p>	<p>No additional action needed</p>

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Topic	Status	Next Steps
Blasting Plan/Guidelines (Added)		DEP noted that a blasting plan will be part of the conditions of any permit or at the least specific conditions on blasting procedures.
Biological Assessment (Added)		Resubmittal to NMFS
WQC permit application submittal (Added)		Schedule a pre-application meeting with DEP.
NEPA (Added)		Schedule is looking like a Public Meeting in mid-March with a Draft NEPA document published at the end of March.

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