



**US Army Corps of Engineers
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

SAN JUAN HARBOR, PUERTO RICO NAVIGATION IMPROVEMENTS STUDY INTEGRATED FEASIBILITY REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District (Corps), has conducted an environmental assessment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The Corps assessed the effects of the following actions in the Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment (IFR/EA), dated August 2017 for the San Juan Harbor Navigation Improvements Study, Puerto Rico. This IFR/EA is incorporated herein by reference. The Preferred Alternative consists of the following:

- Widening
 - Widen Army Terminal Channel 50 feet on each side (100 feet total) from an existing width of 350 feet to provide a total width of 450 feet.
 - Provide eastern and western flares at the intersection of the Army Terminal Channel and the Army Terminal Turning Basin.
- Deepening
 - Deepen Cut-6 to project depth of 46 feet.
 - Deepen Anegado Channel to a project depth of 44 feet.
 - Deepen Army Terminal Channel to a 44-foot project depth.
 - Deepen Army Terminal Turning Basin to a 44-foot project depth.
 - Deepen the San Antonio Channels and Cruise Ship Basin East to a project depth of 36 feet.
- Dredged Material Placement Options
 - Base Plan - Place dredged material at the existing Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site (ODMDS).
 - Estimate includes use of a mechanical clamshell dredge in combination with a hydraulic dredge to excavate approximately 2,110,000 cubic yards of material for transport to the ODMDS.

- o Beneficial use of dredged material includes filling artificial depressions in Condado Lagoon to restore and enhance sea grass habitat.

In addition to the “no action” alternative, a final array of three alternatives with varying levels of benefits and costs were evaluated, including the Preferred Alternative. The alternative with the highest net-benefits (Preferred Alternative described above) has a BCR greater than 1.0 and it becomes the National Economic Development Plan. There is not a locally preferred plan. The Preferred Alternative is also the environmentally preferable alternative.

I have reviewed the IFR/EA for the Preferred Alternative. This Finding incorporates by reference all discussions and conclusions contained in the IFR/EA enclosed hereto. Based on the information analyzed in the IFR/EA, which reflects pertinent information obtained from agencies having jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise, I conclude that the Preferred Alternative will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and does not require an Environmental Impact Statement. Reasons for this conclusion are in summary:

- a. All practicable means to avoid and minimize adverse environmental effects have been incorporated into the Preferred Alternative. Environmental commitments, as detailed in the IFR/EA, will be implemented to minimize impacts.
- b. Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended, any discharge of dredged or fill material associated with the Preferred Alternative has been found to be compliant with Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR 230). This evaluation can be found in Appendix I of the IFR/EA.
- c. The Puerto Rico Planning Board reviewed the Federal consistency determination concurrently with the public review of the draft IFR/EA. The Corps determined the proposed action is consistent with the enforceable policies of the Puerto Rico Coastal Management Program, per the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act. The Puerto Rico Planning Board concurred with Corps’ Federal consistency determination via letter dated January 4, 2018 (See Appendix H). A water quality certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act will be obtained from Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board prior to construction. All conditions of the water quality certification will be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts to water quality.
- d. Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service has been completed. The Corps has determined that the project may affect swimming sea turtles if a hopper dredge is used during construction, but would not likely adversely affect all

other listed species. The National Marine Fisheries Service concurred with these determinations in their biological opinion dated May 29, 2018 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in their final Coordination Act Report and informal consultation letter dated June 21, 2018.

- e. Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), as amended, the project has been coordinated with the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Officer and the National Park Service in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act and considerations given under the National Environmental Policy Act. The Corps has determined that the proposed action will have no effect to historic properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

In view of the above, and the attached IFA/EA, and after consideration of public and agency comments received on the project, I conclude that the Preferred Alternative would not result in a significant effect on the human environment. This Proposed Finding of No Significant Impact incorporates by reference all discussions and conclusions contained in the IFA/EA enclosed herewith.

Jason A. Kirk, P.E.
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Commander

Date