

In the Matter Of:

Miami Harbor Navigation Improvement Study Public Meeting

MEETING

November 07, 2018

Volume II



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MIAMI HARBOR NAVIGATION
IMPROVEMENT STUDY PUBLIC MEETINGS

Wednesday, November 7th, 2018
6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Esquire Deposition Solutions
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VOLUME II

Reported by:

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1 APPEARANCES :

2 MR. TIM MURPHY
3 MR. JASON SPINNING
4 MS. LAUREL REICHOLD
5 MS. ERICA SKOLTE

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THEREUPON:

MR. MURPHY: I would like to say good afternoon but since the time change has started outside, so it's truly good evening. I'm Tim Murphy. I'm the senior civilian out of our Jacksonville District Corps of Engineers. I appreciate you coming out.

I got to ask, how many people were here for the afternoon session? Okay. Not too many repeat offenders. Thank you for coming out the second time. I appreciate the interest. I've got to thank you again for taking time out of your schedule, whatever you were going to do tonight, for spending some time with us. It's very important that we hear from you. Not only is it just a good thing to do, it's also the law that we have public scoping and public type meetings to solicit inquiry. So it's a big deal for us to be able to do this.

The Corps of Engineers purposely chooses a public meeting type of format to do that. Some people do it online. Some people send out letters. We prefer to look people in the eyeball and have a discussion. Tonight's the public meeting format for us so it's pretty -- it's a little cold from a standpoint that

1 we'll give a presentation. Please fill out a comment
2 card. You'll have an opportunity to speak. We won't
3 get in to a debate with you. We'll take your
4 comments. We have a court reporter with us who will
5 record your exact statements. And then we'll address
6 them as we finish our NEPA document.

7 This is a three-year study so we're not going to
8 answer the mail tomorrow. You won't have answers to
9 all your questions that quick. It will take us a
10 while to get -- 'cause we're serious about it. We're
11 not just going to give an off-the-cuff number or an
12 off-the-cuff answer. We want to give you an analysis
13 and do it right.

14 This is not the only public meeting going on. We
15 have started 20 new feasibility studies in Florida,
16 Puerto Rico, and the Virginia Islands, and we're
17 following this format for all of those type studies.
18 There's one tomorrow for Miami Back Bay. Our sister
19 district in Norfolk is doing that one so there's an
20 opportunity to participate in that public engagement
21 as well. Four of the studies of those twenty are
22 here in Miami-Dade County, a navigation project for
23 Miami Harbor.

24 You also have Dade County Beach project, Miami
25 Beach, and what we call the Miami Back Bay study.

1 That's the study that Norfolk's undertaken. In
2 addition to that, we have an Everglades Restoration
3 project associated with the C-111th now. So what's
4 going on? A lot of work for us. A lot of
5 opportunities to make improvements and it changes the
6 infrastructure to make things better all around.

7 I've got a few notes here. I want to make sure I
8 don't miss anything. I did talk about our four major
9 mission areas where environmental restoration. We
10 have float control. We have coastal storm damage.
11 We have navigation. Not in any particular order.
12 Most of the folks here are aware of our mission set
13 and we're working really hard right now.

14 Our coastal storm damages, we're working
15 Miami-Dade pretty much from Jacksonville, Dade
16 County, all the way down to Miami-Dade, including the
17 Keys and Monroe. We're doing the Gulf Coast and
18 we're doing an Island-wide study for Puerto Rico on
19 the coastal side, so it's a large amount of work, a
20 large footprint.

21 From a flood damage reduction, we're actually
22 building infrastructure in Puerto Rico to prevent
23 flooding as a result of Hurricane Maria. Terrific
24 damages down there. But I'm proud to say that if
25 you've lived behind a Corps of Engineers' project in

1 Puerto Rico, you were not impacted.

2 It withheld the flood waters and we were very
3 successful. I can't say that for some of the other
4 projects down there, but our stuff worked. No one
5 was flooded behind a Corps of Engineers levee in
6 Puerto Rico. So it was a big deal for us to be able
7 to say that, and it's because we take our jobs
8 seriously.

9 Navigation, it's a global economy. Things are
10 constantly coming and going. Everything that you
11 look around us at one point or another came in on a
12 ship of some sort. We have a global economy. It's
13 not just mainly in the U.S. We have commodities and
14 things that are made across the planet that all make
15 their way in to and out of Miami Harbor. That's why
16 we're here.

17 Little bit of history on Miami Harbor. Number
18 one, we don't do any of this stuff by ourselves. The
19 Corps of Engineers undertakes no effort without a
20 nonfederal sponsor. In this particular case the Port
21 of Miami is our sponsor. And we're arm in arm on how
22 we move forward with this study. They see a need.
23 And we have appropriated funds for it so we're ready
24 to charge out and see what the answer is.

25 It's a three-year study effort and we don't have

1 an answer. We just have a list of problems that
2 we're trying to solve. And through the next three
3 years we'll try to figure out what those answers are
4 and do tradeoffs and come up with what we think is
5 the best plan. And that best plan will be vetted
6 publicly again. So this is not your last shot in
7 having an opportunity to engage the Corps of
8 Engineers and engage our plan process.

9 Why we're here, I talked a little bit about NEPA
10 earlier. 1970. I think it's actually the National
11 Environmental Policy Act of 1969, signed by President
12 Nixon. It requires that anytime you do a federal
13 action that results in a federal project, the public
14 has to be consulted. And like I said earlier, the
15 Corps of Engineers purposely chose -- we choose a
16 public meeting type format. So it's not just a good
17 idea to do this. It's the law. So just passing that
18 along.

19 And I try -- I really butchered up. The court
20 reporter is going to have field day trying to retell
21 my story from this morning. The reason that we're
22 here, most of my team, all of the Corps of Engineers
23 and employees kind of raise your hand. We have
24 several in the room. And they're passionate about
25 what they do. They are excited to be here. They

1 don't live here. The folks in this room typically
2 live here.

3 We very much want to hear what is going on and
4 what's important in the local community and that's
5 not a term I use begrudgingly. I'm not doing that.
6 We really want to hear from you. An example I use
7 since this a navigation project is like a pilot.
8 When you come into a harbor you hire the local pilot
9 to come in and bring your ship in because you want it
10 done safely because he knows all of the little nuance
11 of coming in and out of Miami Harbor in this
12 particular case.

13 It's the same reason why we have these public
14 meetings. We want to hear all of the little nuance,
15 all of the important things that day-to-day that you
16 have that you're willing to share with us and we want
17 it because we want to make the best informed decision
18 that we possibly can. I mentioned that we do have a
19 court reporter. The transcripts are for the public
20 -- Jason, I'm asking. The transcripts will be made
21 public. I take charitable notes myself and so the
22 court reporter does a much better job than I do.

23 I encouraged you when you came in you signed in.
24 If you want to speak, fill out -- please fill out a
25 card and we will bring you up here in just a few

1 minutes and let you speak and, you know, we try to
2 limit it to two minutes. We ask that you respect
3 your neighbors and let everyone have an opportunity
4 to talk.

5 This is afternoon's session. We finished a
6 little early so if you wanted more time, you can come
7 back up and get a second or even a third shot. We
8 definitely allow that and we will try to keep going
9 to as close to 8 o'clock as possible before we need
10 to shut town because there is a cruise ship going out
11 of here tomorrow and there's guys outside waiting to
12 come in here and go to work as soon as we finish up
13 and get out.

14 I encourage you to take advantage of our team.
15 Even if we finish early here the guys in the back
16 with the posters, they're passionate about what they
17 do and they would very much like to hear from you.
18 And they'd also like to talk to you and tell you the
19 good things that they're doing but they also very
20 much want to hear from you about concerns that you
21 may have. So take advantage of the team while you're
22 here to get your point across.

23 And even if you don't want to come up here and
24 stand in front of a microphone -- and I understand
25 that completely -- take advantage of the team and

1 make sure that your concerns are heard. Phones, I
2 put mine on silent. Unless you want you ring tone to
3 be part the court record, I would go ahead and silent
4 your phone. Appreciate that. And then I have to go
5 into a little bit of history before I turn it over to
6 Jason.

7 For those of you who don't know -- I think the
8 folks in this room care enough to know -- we just
9 finished up a dredging job in 2015 here. We started
10 it in the 2013, two-year event, but those who want
11 who know, it's takes us a long time to actually get
12 to work. The processes that we go through, the legal
13 hurtles that we go through, congressional
14 authorization, all of those things take time.

15 We started that study in 1999. The economics
16 were finished in 2005. It was authorized in 2007.
17 And we started working in 2013. So if you're
18 wondering, well, jeez, you just finished, why are you
19 back already. That's a very valid concern. And
20 unless you know the history of why we started and the
21 state of the global economy when we started in 1999,
22 the Panama Canal wasn't lined at all. The largest
23 container ship that was going between Europe and
24 Africa or Asia was nowhere near the size that they
25 have now. So things have change d a lot.

1 The Port of Miami has been very progressive.
2 They normally start the feasibility study before we
3 even finish constructions of the previous job. This
4 time there are about two years, three years later
5 than what they've done in the past. So the Port of
6 Miami has a very good track record of continuous
7 improvement. This is just continuing that track
8 record of continuous improvement so as I said also
9 the opportunity for lessons learned while it's still
10 fresh in our mind.

11 Most of the team that's here also worked on the
12 feasibility study are also included in the dredging
13 work and the postwork that we've done afterwards. So
14 with that said, I appreciate your patience as we go
15 through. Again, if you've spoken this morning, I'm
16 going to ask that you come up with the cards and
17 maybe put you to the bottom of the deck just to make
18 sure that if someone new comes in that they have an
19 opportunity to speak. But with the crowd here today
20 I don't think we're going to have any issues running
21 through and making sure that everyone has an
22 opportunity to speak because that's very important.

23 Jason, I'll turn it over to you. Jason Spinning.
24 Jason has dual duty today. He will introduce the
25 project and go through the NEPA aspect of it.

1 There's Laurel Reichold, the project manager for
2 Miami Harbor. We'll also go through some lessons
3 learned what we did during the last dredging event.
4 Jason also has -- after we're done, he's the
5 microphone and the clock watcher. So he will start
6 walking towards you when your two minutes are up and
7 politely ask you to relieve yourself of the
8 microphone. So please be cognizant of that and
9 respect your neighbor's time.

10 Jason, the podium is yours, sir.

11 MR. SPINNING: Thank you, Tim.

12 Good evening. Let me personally welcome you to
13 the NEPA scoping meeting for the Miami Harbor
14 Navigation Improving Study. We're in the preliminary
15 stages of the study. The Corps is currently
16 formulating the project objectives and provide them
17 for you for consideration.

18 The objectives include reduce navigation
19 transportation costs to and from Miami Harbor to the
20 extent possible over a 50-year period of analysis
21 starting in 2025; reduce navigation transportation
22 costs attributable to delays from congestion in Miami
23 Harbor over a 50-year period of analysis starting in
24 2025; reduce navigation constraints such as variables
25 and unpredicted crosscurrents over a 50-year period

1 of analysis starting in 2025; and last, develop an
2 alternative that's environmentally acceptable over
3 the 50-year period of analysis starting in 2025.

4 So with the initial draft study objectives, again
5 let's talk about today's meeting. U.S. Army Corps of
6 Engineers is in Miami today in compliance with the
7 National Environmental Policy Act, or what we call
8 NEPA, a law requiring the federal agency to disclose
9 its actions and decision-making process and provides
10 the procedure to evaluate the effects of those
11 actions on the human environment.

12 NEPA requires federal agencies to cooperate with
13 other federal, state, and local governments,
14 concerned public, and private organizations, and the
15 general public. A fundamental purpose of the NEPA is
16 to consider the environmental consequences of federal
17 actions and analyze measures to avoid, minimize, and
18 mitigate proposed effects. The NEPA process requires
19 and promotes both soliciting, considering, and
20 responding to public views and proposals under the
21 federal action and how best to address environmental
22 concerns.

23 In addition, the process is used to streamline
24 consultations with tribes, states, local governments
25 concerning the alternative plans and addressing other

1 issues that aren't necessarily environmental but must
2 be addressed with applicable federal, State, and
3 local jurisdictional responsibilities. And an
4 example of that is the Endangered Species Act.

5 So we're here tonight at a NEPA scoping meeting.
6 But what is scoping? Scoping is defined as an early
7 and open process for determining the scope of issues
8 to be addressed and for identifying the significant
9 issues related to a proposed action. The Corps of
10 Engineers is the lead agency for the federal action
11 and that action we are here tonight to discuss is the
12 planning study. As part of the scoping process, the
13 leading agency has responsibilities.

14 All the scoping meeting early in the process
15 invite the participation of effected federal, state,
16 and local agencies and any affected tribe or
17 proponent of the action and also interests, anybody
18 in the general public that has an interest, eliminate
19 from detailed study the issues which are not
20 significant or which have been covered in prior
21 environmental reviews and to indicate the
22 relationship between the timing of the preparation of
23 the environmental analysis and the agency's tentative
24 planning and decision-making study and we'll go
25 through that in a few minutes.

1 The NEPA process. Federal agencies must prepare
2 a detailed statement addressing the potential
3 environmental effects related to the major federal
4 actions. Three levels of the overview are provided
5 by the -- by federal regulations. Those include
6 federal exclusions, environmental assessments,
7 environmental impact statements. Although exclusions
8 are for very minor actions and we're going to exclude
9 them as not applicable here.

10 An EA is a concise document. It should not
11 contain long descriptions or detailed data which an
12 agency may have gathered, rather it should contain a
13 brief discussion of the need for the proposal,
14 alternatives to be proposed -- of the proposal,
15 excuse me, and environmental impacts of the proposed
16 action, the alternatives and the list of the agencies
17 and personnel that were consulted.

18 Agencies must make a finding of no significant
19 impact, which is called a FONSI, and notice and
20 cannot take federal action within 30 days. EIS is a
21 detailed analysis that serves to ensure that the
22 policies and goals defined in the NEPA are infused
23 into the ongoing program and actions of the federal
24 agency. EIS is generally prepared for projects that
25 are -- that the proposing agency views as having high

1 significant impacts to the human environment.

2 EIS should provide a discussion of the
3 significant environmental impacts and reasonable
4 alternatives. And that includes the no action
5 alternative which would avoid and minimize adverse
6 effect -- impacts or enhance the quality of human
7 environment. The public review time frames for EIS
8 include 45 days for the initial draft and for a final
9 draft of 30-day public review. The regulations
10 provide indicators to assist us in determining the
11 level of NEPA review to be conducted.

12 This is based on project effects being deemed
13 significant.

14 NEPA regulations define significance based on two
15 criteria, context and intensity.

16 Context is the effected environment in which the
17 action would occur, and that could include the
18 society as a whole, a particular region, or a
19 specific event affected interest group.

20 So talking about tests for significance. There
21 are ten factors that are listed in the federal
22 regulations that help us to identify if we need to do
23 and conduct an EIS. And as you see those ten in
24 front of you, some of the ones that pop out in a lot
25 our projects include beneficial and adverse effects,

1 health and human safety, controversy, precedence,
2 human event impacts, and endangered and threat of
3 species.

4 Now that we understand significance, what the
5 project components -- what project components will we
6 be looking at, evaluating as potentially being
7 affected by this project.

8 And what you have in front of you are 16 scoping
9 -- 16 items appropriate that the Corps of Engineers
10 have deemed appropriate to be the initial concerned
11 components of this project. So if you look at this,
12 air quality, navigation, resources, socioeconomics,
13 turbidity, sedimentation, these are some of the
14 things that we've see here in the Miami Harbor, Miami
15 Harbor projects in the past and they are already on
16 our list of concerns that we want to evaluate at the
17 beginning of this study.

18 So with the general information regarding NEPA,
19 we also are here to kick off a planning study. NEPA
20 is only one part of that planning study. So what are
21 planning studies? The Water Resources Reform and
22 Development Act of 2014 changed the way the Army
23 Corps of Engineers conducted planning studies. This
24 federal law directs that studies take no more than
25 three years, cost more than \$3,000,000, and be

1 efficient, and efficient as far as coordination
2 amongst the three levels of Corps of Engineers. We
3 call this process the smart planning process.

4 But due to the nature and complexity of civil
5 works resource projects water resource projects
6 studies are able to apply for waivers to these
7 constraints but they must be approved in the
8 Washington level. The smart process includes the
9 process and outputs that have been and are decision
10 focused and maintain a six-step planning process.

11 Risks and uncertainty are also evaluated for each
12 decision and the report that is final needs to begin
13 from the very beginning of the study and go through
14 the document and document the decision-making from
15 the very beginning. So by law all new planning
16 efforts are integrated, meaning that the planning
17 document and the NEPA document will be combined.
18 This may be different than what you may be used to in
19 the past.

20 So let's go through these two different processes
21 and how they are now alike. The problem is an
22 opportunity, objectives, and constraints. Those
23 actually align with the purpose and need of an a NEPA
24 document for casting, existing and future conditions
25 aligns with the effective environment and no actual

1 alternative. Developing alternatives aligns with the
2 range of alternatives in the NEPA document.
3 Evaluating plans, comparing plans aligns with the
4 environmental effects analysis.

5 And at the end, the selected plan aligns with the
6 conclusions that are wrapped up in the NEPA document.
7 This will fix the integration of the study timeline
8 with NEPA. The slide is a scale small and inadequate
9 for you to view right now, but I wanted you to know
10 that it's in there. It's going to be in a slide deck
11 that will be posted online at the Corps' Website for
12 your review and evaluation. I've extracted pertinent
13 time frames, including the NEPA milestones and
14 allowing -- that allow a public venue for us to talk
15 with you.

16 So when can you actually help us? So the time
17 line in less than three months of our planning study,
18 we need to conduct a NEPA scoping letter, NEPA, and
19 send out a NEPA scoping letter to allow the public to
20 comment and provide their input and information to us
21 about the project.

22 Within three to twelve months from study
23 initiation, an EIS, if that is going to be our way of
24 going forward with NEPA, will be published. We will
25 publish a notice of intent, and that actually starts

1 a time clock of two years as directed by an executive
2 order. And we will hold a meeting to talk about
3 alternatives.

4 In approximately eighteen months from the
5 beginning of the study, we will actually release the
6 NEPA document for review, drafting of the document.
7 And so during that review, if it is an EA, as far as
8 environmental assessment, it will be for a 30-day
9 review. If it's an EIS, again the initial draft
10 review will be 45 days. Also having a public meeting
11 is one of the things that the Corps finds very
12 valuable during that time frame.

13 What's not on here is to reach our three years.
14 There are what's going on between 30 and 36 months.
15 During that time frame the study is basically up in
16 our Washington level being reviewed, and they are
17 defining if it actually meets the compliance
18 necessary to move forward with authorization.

19 How can you help?

20 You can provide knowledge and expertise on the
21 aspects of the new Miami Harbor Improvement study.
22 Your contribution, regardless of what it is, written,
23 verbal, it will be considered. Provide scientific
24 data on resources, maps, charts, location of
25 resources, potentially not currently known. We need

1 to evaluate all of the information pertinent to the
2 study and make sure that the best available
3 information is used for our decision-making process.
4 Provide a verbal or written actual statement today.
5 Recommend that if you do provide a verbal statement
6 that you also actually submit a written statement to
7 help us to ensure that the intent of your comment was
8 appropriately actioned.

9 And with that you can when those time frames
10 allow to review the NEPA document when it comes out
11 and then also with that NEPA document, you can
12 provide your comments and what we are potentially
13 missing or what you think is not necessary.

14 This is the last slide, and that slide is
15 actually providing you contacts that you can get in
16 touch with throughout the study, especially right now
17 for scoping comments. Additional information is
18 Laurel Reichold, the project manager, and for our
19 comment period and comments will be provided to Terry
20 Sullivan on that. There is a Website that I'll be
21 putting up here in a minute, and we would ask that
22 all comments be provided to that Website.

23 So one of the things I also want to mention on
24 this slide is it does state that the scoping period
25 will end November 26th so I want to make sure that

1 everyone keeps that in the front of their mind when
2 talking about potentially submitting a comment to us.

3 So with that that ends my presentation, and I'm
4 going to introduce laurel Reichold. She's the senior
5 project manager at the Corps of Engineers, along with
6 Miami Harbor study, and she's going to talk to you
7 about the past project and future.

8 MS. REICHOLD: All right. Good evening. Again,
9 my name's Laurel Reichold, project manager with the
10 Corps of Engineers. One thing I will say before I
11 launch into some of the history is that if you're
12 interested in learning more about the potential
13 problems that this study is scoping out, please visit
14 the posters in the back, talk with the engineers
15 because they will be able to kind of walk you through
16 the areas of the Harbor that we're going to be
17 looking at potential improvements on because we don't
18 really break that down in this presentation for you
19 today.

20 So what did we just complete? For those of you
21 that are in the Miami area, you are probably very
22 familiar with the project that was just undertaken.
23 And as Mr. Murphy mentioned at the beginning of this
24 presentation, that was a long process in the making,
25 starting in 1999 and finally completed in 2015. That

1 project consisted of a large amount of deepening
2 throughout the entire footprint.

3 We removed approximately five million cubic yards
4 of material from this harbor area that I'm showing
5 here. We also did routine -- oh, and maintenance of
6 the cruise ship terminal cut four. The outer
7 channels, cuts one and cuts two, were deepened from
8 44 feet down to 52 feet. And that's in reference to
9 mean lower low water. The inner harbor was also
10 deepened from 42 to 50 feet. We did some winding
11 along the Fishermans Channel. There was a widening
12 performed here at the confluence of cut two and
13 three, as well as widening to the north to facilitate
14 vessel turnings. In addition, there was widening in
15 the outer portion which we refer to as the flare from
16 500-foot width to 800-foot width.

17 So that was the full scope of the project. It
18 took us two years, and the material predominantly was
19 taken out to the ocean to our offshore dredge
20 material management site, approximately 75 percent of
21 that 5 million cubic yards. The remainder of the
22 material was used for beneficial reefs to build our
23 sea grass mitigation site which I'll show you in a
24 minute.

25 So, again, just some -- just kind of making sure

1 someone is on the same sheet of music with our
2 project footprint in here. We have inner reef tracts
3 offshore of Florida here. We have a near shore hard
4 bottom, habitat. And that's kind of what these
5 colors depict although there is a further breakdown.
6 We have what's referred to as our middle reef and
7 outer reef tract; that back when the port was
8 originally constructed in the early 1900s, those were
9 the original footprint of the channel was basically
10 decided at that time.

11 There were further improvements over the course
12 of the history of the port in the 20s, the 40s, and
13 1990s, and then obviously most recently a couple of
14 years ago. So we did construct some artificial reef
15 with limestone boulders, and those sites are located
16 here in the hashed areas. There's a breakdown at the
17 area that were created, lower leaf and higher leaf.
18 And that was done as a result of the widening that
19 was performed in the flare here.

20 The construction technique was basically to take
21 quarry limestone boulders approximately 3 by 3 feet
22 or greater in size, and those were basically pushed
23 off of the barge into these areas and surveyed to
24 ensure certain heights and dimensions were achieved.
25 After the actual rock was placed, divers relocated

1 corals to the artificial reef. And if you are
2 interested in a lot of those types of details, we
3 have lots of information available on that.

4 We also constructed, as I mentioned, sea grass
5 mitigation site as part of that previous project for
6 the widening of the Fishermans Channel into sea
7 grass. We constructed approximately 17 acres worth
8 of substrate, filling in an old borrow pit that was
9 used to actually build the causeway back in the 60s.
10 I don't know if I got that right.

11 That construction, basically we used the dredge
12 material to create the majority of the base and then
13 a select fill cap was barged in and then sea grass
14 was planted in a checkerboard fashion to cover that
15 full acre area, and we are monitoring that mitigation
16 ongoing. The equipment that was utilized for the
17 previous dredge project was actually a lot of
18 different types of dredges.

19 We had a very large backhoe dredge like this
20 (indicates). There was also a clam shell dredge
21 used. There were topper dredges used. And there was
22 also cutterhead dredgers used. And each of those
23 dredges sort of operates a little bit differently,
24 and that's important for what I'm about to talk about
25 because this is what we called means and methods.

1 How are you going to get all of this material out and
2 what are you going to use?

3 In, like, using different types of equipment you
4 have different types of potential influences with the
5 environment. So what did happen in our past project?
6 Well, during construction, the construction actually
7 resulted in sedimentation being observed in the areas
8 adjacent of the channel.

9 And our sister agencies or state boards with the
10 Florida Department of Environmental Protection and
11 the National Fisheries Service are still evaluating
12 the affected data that was collected preproject,
13 preconstruction, during construction, as well as
14 postconstruction to evaluate related impacts
15 associated with that sedimentation that was observed
16 on the coral habitat throughout the outer portions of
17 the channel.

18 So I'm going to kind of get in to some of the
19 lessons learned and how does it apply to this study
20 and where can you provide us with a little bit more
21 feedback. So first and foremost, the reporting of
22 monitoring data to agencies to the public was too
23 slow. More efficiency there is needed.

24 Contractual limitations. And that means our
25 construction contract and our ability to manage that

1 led to slow response times, and that needs to be
2 improved. What else did we learn? Well, dredging
3 resulted in sedimentation. We did know that already;
4 however, how can we better manage it? How can we
5 better minimize it?

6 Upfront mitigation for indirect impact so --
7 meaning you're not actually removing substrate, but
8 you're potentially influencing. That's called
9 indirect effect. Upfront mitigation for that
10 indirect effect out competes this postproject impact
11 assessment. So we find ourselves today still in an
12 evaluation of the project, and if you can better
13 define what those potential effects are up front,
14 mitigating for them, there's no surprises.
15 Everybody's on the same page. It definitely is the
16 better way to go.

17 Transparency with agencies and the public builds
18 confidence when getting information, having a solid
19 communication strategy, adaptive management plan that
20 is functioning well and can help with those
21 contractual flexibilities is obviously vital to
22 project success. And then dictating those
23 construction means and methods, figuring out which
24 types of equipment are more appropriate in different
25 types of environment is going to be important

1 application and review during this study.

2 Ensuring construction. Those construction
3 specifications, what we call basically our contracts.
4 Ensuring those enable a quick response time as we
5 observe things like sediment in places we don't want
6 it to be observed in, and that is extremely
7 important.

8 So how are we going to be applying this
9 particularly in this study? Well, first and
10 foremost, the geotech, the geology of the substrate
11 that's being dredged out is basically the key. You
12 know how you're sediment's going to act in your
13 environment. That will help predict what may or may
14 not happen.

15 So when you're thinking about how you might be
16 able to help, you can think about these types of
17 categories because this is where we need to dig in a
18 little bit further, better understanding geological
19 conditions, the modeling of sediment transport and
20 dispersion. Sediment transport pathways and then
21 connecting that back with our construction means and
22 methods and how different types of equipment with
23 different geological, you know, and how far is it
24 going to go and where is it going to go and what
25 depth and what residence time is it to have once it

1 gets there, and then upfront mitigation further
2 impacts -- I said that earlier.

3 So just in summary, wrapping up, developing a
4 clear strategy, contractual constraints for
5 minimizing sedimentation and sensitive environments,
6 upfront collaboration on the monitoring and the
7 assessment methods and making sure that those are
8 transparent, those are running efficiently. Response
9 time isn't so slow and bogged down. We're getting
10 information live essentially as to what's happening
11 and as construction is happening.

12 And that essentially for formulating steps to
13 assure those tighter controls and the management once
14 we go to construction. So that kind of wraps up the
15 lessons learned from the construction event that was
16 just performed. This is a study that we're doing.
17 We're not at a construction phase right now. So to
18 the extent you guys have input on these lessons
19 learned and can help expand on those, again
20 recommendations for different types of studying,
21 modeling, things of that nature, data collection too
22 so. That's where we were looking for feedback as well.

23 Now, with that I think we're ready to pass it
24 back for your comments. So -- and all of these
25 slides will be posted on our Website.

1 MR. SPINNING: Thank you, Laurel.

2 So we're going to move in to our comment phase.
3 I do, also like Tim said, recommend that you visit
4 our posters back in the back. The experts back
5 there, they're ready to answer your questions with
6 regard to the study. Any other questions you have
7 with regards to Miami Harbor, our process,
8 environmental and others. So please take advantage
9 of that while you're here.

10 Now, with a verbal comment we are allowing you
11 come up for two minutes. We want to hear from
12 everyone, like Tim was saying earlier. So we'll have
13 the timer going and we only ask that you please
14 adhere to that, so we can allow everyone that wants
15 to make a comment provide a comment. If everyone
16 makes a comment and you still have some things, we
17 welcome you to come back up and go for another two
18 minutes. So thank you very much.

19 And last, when you actually start to comment,
20 please say your name for the court reporter so he can
21 make sure that we document the comments you have.
22 Thanks.

23 MR. MURPHY: We'll get started with Rebecca
24 Willet (spelling), in the front row, front seat,
25 ready to go. Thank you.

1 MS. WILLET: Hi, everyone. My name is Rebecca
2 Willet. And I'll start by saying that one of the
3 main reasons that I'm here is that I spend my
4 weekends as a volunteer with the Coral Restoration
5 Foundation in Key Largo, taking my time to actually
6 try to restore those reefs so this is something that
7 I see every single weekend, working out with my own
8 hands. So it's very close to my heart. As you know
9 we are -- have lost over 80 percent of our coral
10 reefs in South Florida. We're the only nearshore
11 barrier reef on the continental United States, and
12 it's incredible to me to see some of the things that
13 are happening. I see that actually our public agency
14 are some of the ones that unfortunately are
15 contributing to some of that loss.

16 Trying to save my time here. The Army Corps of
17 Engineers is obviously a steward of a lot of our
18 country's natural resources and is more than capable
19 of taking on very complex environmental projects.
20 Yet somehow in the last project they failed to uphold
21 their environmental responsibility for properly
22 monitoring, surveying, and protecting the area they
23 were taking on. Dramatically underestimating the
24 effected corals in the area and failing to properly
25 monitor -- continue to monitor the area they're

1 working on, as well as communicate those with other
2 parties interested.

3 Now, I find it very difficult to believe that
4 good science is beyond the capacity of the U.S. Army
5 Corps of Engineers, so I have high hopes that that
6 will change moving forward, none of us have to see
7 some of the lessons learned. But I want to emphasize
8 that as a Miami taxpayer who knows the importance of
9 these reefs have in South Florida, I wouldn't want to
10 see that our own public agencies would be the ones
11 taking part in destroying those.

12 I assume that's my two minutes. Thank you very
13 much.

14 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Brent Bromman (spelling).

15 MR. BROMMAN: Good afternoon. Thanks for the
16 opportunity to speak today. My name is Brent
17 Bromman, and I work with Miami Waterkeeper, which is
18 a local nonprofit dedicated to keeping South
19 Florida's waters clean, fish bowls drinkable for all
20 of our community. Like we just heard, South Florida
21 has possibly in the United States only barrier reef
22 tract and this new tract is responsible for having
23 billions of dollars for South Florida's economy
24 through tourism. It certainly is a home for
25 recreational and commercially important fish species.

1 It also protects our shores from the dangers of
2 hurricanes and storm surge by reducing the effects on
3 our beaches.

4 And since the 1970s South Florida's reefs have
5 climbed over 80 percent by various factors. And
6 recently in the last dredge project, sedimentation is
7 responsible for killing a large portion of those
8 corals as well. The Army Corps as the regulator and
9 the federal agency in charge is responsible for
10 destroying over 250 acres of critical habitat for
11 threatened corals and damaged -- destroyed habitats
12 for fish species and other commercially and
13 recreationally important resources to South Florida.

14 So our coral reefs deserve better, and it should
15 not be subjected to the same stressors again so it's
16 important that going forward the Corps is fully
17 evaluated by our own impacts of the last project and
18 fully consider other impacts less direct than
19 sedimentation, including things like vessel strikes,
20 increased water pollution from the increased vessel
21 traffic that will be using the dredge channel.

22 And it's not like history should repeat itself.
23 So I urge the Army Corps to fully consider all of
24 these impacts again to prevent what happened in the
25 past. Thank you.

1 MR. MURPHY: Mr. John Dom (spelling).

2 MR. DOM: I'm John Dom. I'm a local resident. I
3 have 70 years here. I'm also going to speak a little
4 differently from economic point of view. Although I
5 will say economically South Florida and the
6 environment are part of the same thing. They really
7 are. You really can't look at South Florida without
8 looking at the environment. That's what's given us
9 the tourists, the commerce industry. We have some
10 extraordinary things.

11 We just expended about ten billion dollars and
12 two international airports, two sea ports, and an
13 entire expressway grid. Basically that's moved goods
14 from the ships that come in. Everyone probably has
15 heard that and decided what you consume and use was
16 brought in by ocean freight. Basically ocean freight
17 is almost everything in your house besides you. It
18 includes all the electronics and all that. In the
19 last couple of years we built 12 million square feet
20 of industrial property.

21 Miami-Dade has about 242 million square feet.
22 Broward County has about 131 square feet, in total
23 about 374. That's about a quarter of what Chicago
24 has, about a third of what Atlanta has. So by the
25 big picture it's not very large but it's the largest

1 amount of industrial anywhere in the state of
2 Florida. What we've got is a lot more coming. We've
3 got the potential for another 40 million in Miami and
4 another 30 million in Broward. So in the tri-county
5 area looks a lot to Miami-Dade County as being an
6 industrial hub.

7 To get to those places we're going to need the
8 expressways. We need really a continuation of the
9 deep dredge which allows us to go ahead and continue
10 this process of all the economic growth we've had.
11 Hopefully, it can be done simultaneously.

12 MR. MURPHY: Lucia Speroni (spelling).

13 Did I pronounce your name right?

14 MS. SPERONI: Yes.

15 Good evening and thank you for giving me the
16 opportunity to come and talk on this important issue.
17 As a Miami-Dade resident, scuba diver, and scientist,
18 I would like to express my concern about redredging
19 the Port of Miami. The 2013 and 2015 dredging
20 impacted 250 acres. That's about 189 football fields
21 of corals. This fine dredge sediment spread across
22 an area about 14 times bigger than what was allowed
23 on the Army Corps of Engineers permit causing corals
24 to die. So the reefs can also reduce coral
25 recruitment and settlement of coral larvae.

1 Those are the early stages of corals, meaning
2 that it will be hard for corals to repopulate in the
3 affected areas. The full scope of the impacts of
4 coral reefs and sea grass habitat from that dredging
5 is yet unknown. I'm glad that it was mentioned
6 during the presentation. And the full scope of
7 mitigation for unpermitted damage has yet to be by
8 the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
9 This formation is crucial to avoid underestimating
10 both disparity and to the extent of impact of any
11 future operation.

12 I understand and appreciate the critical role of
13 the Army Corps of Engineers' dredging operations
14 maintaining out critical maritime infrastructure for
15 commerce and security. However, it seems there is to
16 redirecting operation that will continue to strip
17 Miami of its natural defenses against storms
18 tomorrows and hurt the fishing and snorkeling and
19 diving industries that depend on healthy coral reefs.
20 I ask the Army Corps to statement and full best
21 practices in environmental management future
22 operations in the Port of Miami.

23 MR. MURPHY: Ms. Fredericks actually told me how
24 to pronounce this and I'm still going to mess it up.
25 Ms. T-R-A Fredericks (spelling).

1 MS. FREDERICKS: Hello, everyone. My name is Tra
2 Fredericks, and I am a master's student at UM Miami.
3 I came down here from New York because of the beauty
4 of South Florida and its corals and natural
5 environment. And I just can't believe that after all
6 of the damage caused by the last dredging that there
7 would be another project already being planned. The
8 corals have been covered by sediment, and they're not
9 going to come back.

10 The fact that they're willing to dredge again not
11 knowing the extent of the damage is just ridiculous
12 to me, and I think that you should all consider
13 deciding not to do the dredging. And that's all I
14 have. So that's it.

15 MR. MURPHY: Kelsey (spelling) Johnson Sat
16 (spelling).

17 MS. JOHNSON SAT: My name is Kelsey Johnson Sat.
18 I'm a graduate student at the University of Miami.
19 And I know what you're thinking. Here is an
20 environmentalist once again here to tell you why we
21 should save the corals. And to some of you it may be
22 the last thing that I want to do is to continue
23 speaking into an echo chamber.

24 That's what I do every day, working in a lab.
25 And that's why I'm here to my terror of public

1 speaking and that we're actually considering this
2 project, hoping that my message doesn't fall on deaf
3 ears because I am an environmentalist, but above all
4 I'm a realist. We all are. I know these problems
5 are real; that families rely on the Miami economy and
6 the progress of the Port. But I also have to say
7 that it's easy for us to take for granted what
8 resources are at stake because we don't see them. We
9 rarely, if ever, directly interact with them. And to
10 be frank we don't fully understand them. The
11 ecosystem services that we talk about, that can be
12 just scratching the surface of what they provide for
13 us.

14 These systems are delicate and complicated. We
15 are just barely beginning to understand them and
16 despite our lack of knowledge about a system that
17 continues to only prove valuable to us, we are so
18 willing to destroy it. We don't know how this
19 behavior will affect our humanity in the future
20 because it is behavior, because we have made this
21 mistake time and time again as a nation.

22 Fisheries, tourism, protection from storm surges,
23 biomedical uses, all of these are ecosystem services
24 that reefs provide. People keep telling me to look
25 at the big picture, but the reefs are the big

1 picture, the possibilities, the potential of
2 discovery that could benefit us, humanity, in the
3 long-term. All of that goes away when we are looking
4 through a key hole of what the Miami Port could bring
5 us.

6 We're again true to form so dismissive of our
7 ecosystem and develop and destroy them just to end up
8 spending money on bringing them back to a fraction of
9 their potential. And this is a slippery slope. To
10 that said on how much we are willing to give up. I
11 stand here not as a warrior but as a warrior asking
12 when will we stop.

13 MR. MURPHY: Joe Unsworth (spelling).

14 MR. UNSWORTH: Thank you. My name is Joe
15 Unsworth. I'm a student like all of these beautiful
16 people at the University of Miami studying ecology.
17 Like Rebecca, I also worked at the Coral Restoration
18 Foundation down in Key Largo. And I want to continue
19 taking part in restoration in the future. As a
20 result of the last Port of Miami dredge, hundreds of
21 thousands of coral colonies were impacted and
22 significant funds were awarded to restorations
23 efforts in Miami.

24 Therefore, theoretically, I stand to benefit from
25 any mitigation needed for this project. However, I

1 believe in the importance of being proactive instead
2 of reactive. Why we would destroy this resource and
3 pay no attempt to repair it when we can focus on
4 conserving it. Significant evidence shows that this
5 project will impact our coral reefs and I cannot
6 stand by while this short set of projects moves
7 forward. Thank you.

8 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Alonzo Luft (spelling).

9 MR. LUFT: Thank you, everyone. I'm Alonzo Luft
10 and I own and operate Virginia Key Outdoor Center on
11 Virginia Key so we're in those waters every day. We
12 actually started while the project was still ongoing
13 so we know what it did to the area. We know how it
14 affected everything, and we know the aftereffects
15 firsthand. I understand that there's certain needs
16 for commerce, but we're part of commerce too. We
17 might be able to do a little fish, but we need those
18 waters to thrive and so does the rest of our society.

19 And it's really nice to see all the young people
20 come out here because I'm at a later stage in life
21 now. I'm looking at what I'm going to leave for the
22 generations to follow. And most of you that are
23 planning for this project are there as well. So when
24 you are evaluating and when you're considering what
25 you're doing to our coastlines, to our coral reefs,

1 and to our environment consider the long-term cost of
2 destroying the ecosystem.

3 You know, I don't understand how it's come back
4 this quickly. That shows me that there was poor
5 planning, and whoever was responsible for that
6 hopefully will be held accountable, or whatever
7 group, or hopefully learn from it so that it isn't
8 repeated again.

9 But we can't continue to make the same bad
10 mistakes, and we can't continue to ruin our
11 shorelines and our coastlines and expose ourselves to
12 greater storm damage which is also a reality from
13 losing the coral reefs. And with that being said,
14 please do better. Thank you.

15 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Drew Martin.

16 MR. MARTIN: I'm Drew Martin. I'm with the CR
17 Club. I'm part of the conservation committee for the
18 state of Florida. I came down from Lake Worth to be
19 here, and I commend the students that are of the
20 future, and I appreciate that you came out today to
21 speak on behalf of the reefs.

22 I think that the reef benefits are being
23 underestimated in the cost benefit analysis. Reefs
24 provide huge metabolic diversity. They provide storm
25 surge protection and I brought the map which you were

1 handed out. And I think it's important when we look
2 at this map to see that you're going to go through
3 many of the reef tract. It looks like going through
4 it three or four times. So that is huge and
5 damaging.

6 And we know from the dredging that you did in the
7 previous project that there was a tremendous amount
8 of sedimentation. And that stays in the currents for
9 many, many years. It does not go away quickly, and
10 that is a problem because corals are extremely
11 sensitive. The turbidity alone will block sunlight
12 which corals need. You also see from your map that
13 you're creating an ability for a storm surge to move
14 up this channel into the city of Miami.

15 And in New York they're having the same problem.
16 They showed a demonstration of how the way the
17 channel was formed it creates a confluent of the
18 storm surge after pushing it together and get a much
19 more dangerous storm surge than we normally get. So
20 this will provide the opportunity to put much more
21 storm surge and force it up that channel. The deeper
22 the dread the more likely that the storm surge will
23 be more powerful.

24 So you're creating a much more powerful storm
25 surge. At the same time you're weakening the reef

1 trap which will block the base power on the way back.
2 Further, reefs provide a huge amount of biodiversity
3 through our nursery so the ability to feed ourselves
4 is going to be greatly damaged as we move this reef
5 system that is a nursery for many of our fish docks
6 which are much more important providing food than the
7 benefit of a deeper dredge for shifts. Thank you.

8 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Andrew Baker.

9 MR. BAKER: So I thought I would just expand a
10 little bit on my comments from this afternoon. I
11 apologize for those of you who didn't hear, but it
12 was to do with the benefits of coral reefs in natural
13 dollar values. As I mentioned before they're
14 estimated to being worth \$6 billion a year to the
15 local economy in South Florida. And part of that
16 comes from coastal protection.

17 In fact we're starting to appreciate just how
18 valuable that is from a dollar perspective, just
19 recently in fact. April of 2018 sold a publication
20 to a paper in Nature Communications puts a dollar
21 value on the assessment. And after listening I think
22 to a gentleman early on today who expressed a concern
23 that reefs don't really protect coastlines from
24 storms because the storms come in.

25 They roll over the coastline and there is very

1 little a reef can do. I sympathize with that
2 opinion, but I wanted to point out that the estimates
3 that most coastal protection are based on are really
4 only estimating the incremental decrease in the
5 penetration to the land caused by having coral reef
6 that prevents water from making it further onshore.

7 And so I brought along some printouts from that
8 major conservation group that actually put numbers on
9 this. And they show that in fact for the United
10 States and Puerto Rico the annual flood damages
11 averted just on average \$94 million and an additional
12 \$118 million averted flood of build capital. And
13 most of this in large part is due to South Florida
14 because we have so much building construction very
15 close to the land at low elevation.

16 And I think the real striking thing from this
17 handout -- and I welcome you to come up and get
18 them -- is that the amount of actual flooded land
19 estimated from losing one square, one meter of reef
20 height on an average basis per year is only four
21 kilometers square. So to your point reefs don't
22 prevent -- they're not like a seawall or act as a
23 buttress to prevent any water from coming in. They
24 reduce the energy.

25 They increase the friction of the sea floor that

1 prevents more energy from building up. And by just
2 protecting 4 square kilometers we're actually paying
3 over \$200 million in averted damages. And who pays
4 the cost of those damages? It's paid by insurance
5 companies and ultimately paid by us. So those costs
6 are very much cost that we as taxpayers and U.S.
7 citizens have to pay. So if anybody wants those
8 handouts, I brought along 30 copies or so and I've
9 got a lot more. Thank you.

10 MR. MURPHY: Ms. Rachel Silverstein.

11 MS. SILVERSTEIN: Like Andrew I made a lot of
12 comments earlier today but happy to be here again for
13 another opportunity to talk about reefs. And, you
14 know, I have been battling for the last several years
15 to get some accountability for the reefs that were
16 damaged during the last deep dredge project. As has
17 been mentioned I'm somewhat shocked to be here in
18 this room talking about dredging the Port of Miami
19 again when we don't even know the scope of the
20 impacts that have occurred from the last dredge, it
21 is also not yet been mitigated for.

22 What we do know is that during the project over
23 250 acres or about 200 football fields worth an area
24 of coral reef was covered in sediment NOAA found that
25 95 percent of that area was no longer functioning as

1 reef habitat. That is devastating to our reefs'
2 ability to survive, to recover, and to thrive. And
3 it may never recover from this injury. This new
4 project is just rubbing salt in the wound of that
5 injury, and it doesn't give us a lot of hope for the
6 future.

7 The lessons learned, I'm happy that there are
8 lessons learned being discussed from the last project
9 because I think a lot went wrong. However, there is
10 lot missing from that lessons learned list. One of
11 the major categories that I'm not seeing is
12 enforcement and compliance. And that was one of the
13 things that was missing big time in the last project.
14 We knew when the project was going on how much damage
15 was being done and how much reef was being impacted.

16 And dredging was not shut down for one single day
17 to remedy it. Nothing was done to stop that damage.
18 And in fact when the Army Corps paid NOAA over
19 \$400,000 to come in to rescue the coral that were at
20 risk that are listed as threatened on the endangered
21 species list, under the Endangered Species Act, the
22 dredge refused to move out of the way so that the
23 divers could get in and rescue the coral, actively
24 preventing the rescue from taking place.

25 And then the Corps has also repeatedly denied

1 that any damage took place in particular distributed
2 materials Port Everglades and in other written
3 materials. We feel that's completely inaccurate. We
4 estimate that over 560,000 corals at least were lost
5 in that project and we want to see some serious
6 mitigation done before any new project is considered.

7 MR. MURPHY: Ms. Kelly Cox.

8 MS. COX: Good evening, everyone. My name is
9 Kelly Cox. I'm a staff attorney and program director
10 at Miami Waterkeeper. I'm here today to ask that the
11 Corps pursue a new action alternative to this project.
12 We believe that this project is a gross misuse of
13 public funds and directly affects our coral reefs.

14 The original dredging project cost taxpayers
15 hundreds of millions of dollars and thousands of
16 corals lost. We don't have a full accounting of the
17 full amount of harm that was caused by that project
18 and we don't even have beach requirements yet but
19 still we're moving forward to dredge because
20 apparently we didn't go deep or wide enough the first
21 time.

22 We've vehemently oppose this project. That said,
23 looking at this existing proposal, we have a lot of
24 grave concerns. How many of you have ever paddled in
25 that critical wildlife area? Well, that's accurate

1 because you are not allowed to paddle in that area
2 because in fact it is so incredibly sensitive that
3 you are not allowed to have paddlecraft in the area.

4 But apparently it's not sensitive enough because
5 we're going to dredge right next to it. And where is
6 all that sedimentation going to go? It's going to go
7 right into that area. How is that going to impact
8 our sea grass? How is it going to impact the species
9 in the area? It's hard to say at this point. There
10 are a lot of additional concerns related to this.

11 And also I just want to point out that we are not
12 asking for this project to be stopped completely at
13 the expense of our economy or our jobs. The Port is
14 still operating and functioning as an economic driver
15 for this community should this project not go through
16 and the position that our economy will all but
17 collapse without this project is a complete fallacy.

18 What will collapse are the few remaining coral
19 colonies that have been crippled by the Corps'
20 previous project in this area. Thank you.

21 MR. MURPHY: Mr. Andrew Carter.

22 MR. CARTER: Thank you for giving me an
23 opportunity to speak again. My name is Andrew
24 Carter, and I'm a scientist and a research director
25 at Miami Waterkeeper. I'm not going to go through

1 everything I said before. I'm not going to repeat
2 myself and everything I would say has been already
3 said and very eloquently. I would point out that at
4 the beginning of this presentation the Corps
5 indicated the willingness to be open, a willingness
6 to see what went wrong last time.

7 However, when I'm looking at this document, it's
8 talking about what occurred at the last dredging. I
9 see a lot of stuff that is not scientifically
10 supported and is incorrect. And if the Corps is
11 going into this project assuming this, that's a big
12 problem. I'd also like to make one point about the
13 potential for the reefs to protect for storm surge.
14 I would point out that one speaker noted that, well,
15 this is one little section of reef.

16 This section of reef protects some of the
17 wealthiest and most expensive real estate in the
18 world. And it's really a problem if more is
19 destroyed. We're going to see more storm surge.
20 We're not going to lose that national protection.
21 And like the other speakers I urge you not to do this
22 project, to follow the no action alternative. Thank
23 you.

24 MR. MURPHY: Captain John Denkin.

25 MR. DENKIN: John Denkin. I'm a pilot, Biscayne

1 Pilots. We are the real waterkeepers of Miami.
2 We've been here since 1911 bringing ships safely in
3 and out of these channels so the environment and the
4 public interest to protect them. That's a fact.

5 Stu, I'm so glad you're here. Any of you UM
6 Propellor Club people? You should. You're students.
7 You need to see all sides. We have a very large UM
8 Club that comes and they come every month, and they
9 learn about the industry, about that the Army Corps
10 is extremely responsible, very patriotic, very human.

11 They care about the environment as much as we do.
12 They have children, grandchildren, et cetera. So I
13 do too and the other 18 pilots also. But we do care.
14 We are asking for adjustments. The -- most of this
15 conversation I'm hearing should have happened before
16 1999. This channel is here. It exists. We are
17 doing some small tweaks. Alterations might be a
18 better word to it. It's not the major project that
19 you're talking about. That was pre1999.

20 So I just want to let you know that. And you
21 need to know all facets of everything. You're
22 students. Don't just go down the one path where you
23 are -- I don't want to use brainwash -- you are
24 indoctrinated. There is a lot out there and a lot of
25 different things. So really give it a chance and

1 listen. This economic engine of the seaport is \$42.3
2 billion of economic in 2016. It's grown considerably
3 since that.

4 Our numbers are almost doubled in 2018. So it's
5 upwards of 65 billion economic engine, and everything
6 you, every phone, everything that you have comes
7 through it and the 6 billion versus 65 plus billion.
8 Facts.

9 MR. MURPHY: I apologize, I'm going to mess up
10 the last name here, Melanie Volderama (spelling).

11 MS. VOLDERAMA: Hello. Good afternoon. So I
12 came here to support a friend and listening to you
13 guys speak really inspired me to go on a whim and
14 speak my mind. But we are part of the world economic
15 form. We're young professionals that try to address
16 issues that are happening on a global level at a
17 local level. And we try to uphold the sustainable
18 developing goals that are addressed by the United
19 Nations.

20 And goal no. 13 Climate Action. Goal no. 14 is
21 Life Below Water. And I think these pertain to the
22 issues that we're talking today. So I am currently
23 new at the -- well, dredging but I did do some
24 research and I really appreciate the space that you
25 guys provided us to speak to the issues today. And

1 I'm also a realist and I know that this project is
2 not going to stop and it's going to continue. But
3 some things for you to consider are stuff that we
4 should be avoiding.

5 And these are some things that you should
6 consider in the future project. So please provide a
7 baseline data that provides not only information of
8 the facets but also consider the worst-case scenario.
9 Consider the worst-case scenario and be transparent
10 with us on what information that could -- provide to
11 us and how it impacts our community. Also consider
12 storms occurrence. They are not proxies for
13 estimating the potential sediment impacts.

14 Hurricanes suspend already the coral from
15 growing, and it lasts for a day. This project's
16 going to last more than one day. It's going to last
17 two years so please consider this when fulfilling the
18 project. And another goal that the United Nations
19 provide is no. 17. It's Partnerships to achieve the
20 Goal. So I would encourage the Army Corps of
21 Engineers to really connect with the organizations
22 that are here today and work together as a
23 partnership, and together we can probably not only
24 fulfill the projects and the goals of the project but
25 also consider the community and the people here.

1 MR. MURPHY: Ms. Melanie is our last speaker. If
2 no one else needs to speak right now, I'd be fine to
3 let her continue until she finishes her list. If
4 that's okay with everyone.

5 Please.

6 MS. VOLDERAMA: Thank you.

7 Okay. But I want to mention two other things to
8 consider. When doing these projects, please survey
9 the coral species that are newly listed on the ESA
10 and also consider having a multimonth pause during
11 coral spawning in early recruiting periods to avoid
12 impacting the reproductive process. That's it.
13 Thank you sow much.

14 MR. MURPHY: We've gone through our list of
15 speakers. We still have a little bit of time left,
16 if somebody wants to come back up and continue. As
17 we did today this afternoon, you are more than
18 welcome to for at least, say, until -- we'll cease at
19 7:30.

20 I saw Ms. Rachel's hand first, then Mr. Drew in
21 the back.

22 Ms. Rachel.

23 MS. SILVERSTEIN: Well, actually I just have a
24 quick question. The past few weeks noted the end of
25 the public comm period was Monday the 11th, but the

1 slide said November 26th. So I'm looking for some
2 clarity.

3 MR. MURPHY: It's been extended.

4 MS. SILVERSTEIN: Extended, excellent.

5 MR. MURPHY: At your request.

6 MS. SILVERSTEIN: Oh, so the earlier meeting,
7 it's been extended?

8 MR. SPINNING: Yes. I just remember you
9 requested it. I noticed that.

10 MR. MURPHY: Drew.

11 And please don't forget to identify yourself for
12 the court reporter and hold the mic close; otherwise,
13 you'll be like me and nobody can hear what I'm
14 saying.

15 MR. MARTIN: Drew again of the CR Club. I came
16 down from Lake Worth for this meeting. One of the
17 things that concerns me is this statement that this
18 deep dredging -- additional deep drudging which has
19 already cost so much damage. The previous project is
20 required for the economy. But I really think this is
21 actually an intent to expand the Port, and there is a
22 plan right now to take U.S. Highway 27 and create a
23 whale line on there.

24 And the purpose of that is to create more
25 business for the Port of Miami so I don't think that

1 this project is necessary for the existing business.
2 What this is an attempt to do is increase the Port
3 and get more business so they can use the excuse to
4 build this inner mobile system along U.S. Highway 27
5 which impact everybody's restoration.

6 The other thing to remember is that there are
7 many ports along the East Coast that are much more
8 strategically located for the use of trade. You have
9 Jacksonville. You have Savannah, Georgia. You have
10 ports that are more strategically located as far as
11 transportation. Why would you put all of your port
12 resources at the very tip of Florida where you have
13 to move all this cargo north. That means you'll have
14 to create a new infrastructure further because of the
15 risks of storm surge and flooding because the sea
16 level rises.

17 Now you're putting all this infrastructure and
18 spending all this money in an area that may be
19 eventually inundated by sea level rise. So it's
20 really not a good investment for the government. And
21 that concerns me tremendously. I think that you
22 already had your bite at the apple. You already had
23 the opportunity to dredge this port, and I think you
24 should be satisfied with what you've done. I think
25 this project should be a no action alternative. It

1 should be reduced so that you should not move forward
2 with the project.

3 I also would like to see much more analysis of
4 the benefits of the reef system as part of the cost
5 analysis, particularly the fact that reefs provide 40
6 percent of the nursery system for the fish and the
7 other species out in the ocean. I think that should
8 be included in the cost benefit analysis of what they
9 are referring to us, not just the analysis of cargo.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. MURPHY: Please approach.

12 MS COX: Thank you. So my first two minutes I
13 got a little distracted because I had way too much to
14 say so I'm throwing away the paper now.

15 And I wanted to bring up something that I think
16 is important for those from the Army Corps of
17 Engineers who are not from this area so it's very
18 important to understand. In what seems like almost
19 every major project, the South Florida population is
20 usually given a switch about how it's going to be XYZ
21 and it's going to be great, and then it is something
22 completely different. And those things are not met.

23 I think that's something very important to keep
24 in mind here because we all smell it a mile away
25 because it happens, like, every single project that

1 goes up. And I think that's one of the sentiments
2 that's really strong, definitely that I'm feeling
3 personally. I know a lot of good people too that
4 we're told everything is going to be fine. It's
5 going to be like this, this, and this, and then in
6 reality that is not what happens.

7 And so I very strongly agree with the person who
8 called for more enforcement and compliance because,
9 frankly, you've been -- and it happens to us here in
10 Miami every day. The folks in charge sit here and
11 tell us exactly what's going to happen, how it's
12 going to be great. And things come out looking very,
13 very differently. And so I'd ask the Army Corps of
14 Engineers to take that comment very, very seriously
15 and all the lessons learned, add a compliance and
16 enforcement component because we're very, very tired
17 of having projects go through that are bait and
18 switch. Thank you.

19 MR. MURPHY: Anyone else? Ma'am? I forgot your
20 name.

21 Have you already spoken tonight?

22 Do you have a comment card? We really need a
23 comment card.

24 MS. MCDUGAL: I have a card. Yeah, but I wasn't
25 sure I was going to speak.

1 MR. MURPHY: But do you have it?

2 Ms. Erica, do you have her card?

3 MS. SKOLTE: Take a seat and we'll be happy to do
4 that.

5 MS. MCDUGAL: Hi, my name is Analisa McDougal.
6 I'm also a student at UM. I didn't have my card
7 ready because I didn't think I was going to speak
8 tonight. It's my first time at one of these things.
9 And I'm just changing careers in to this from school
10 counseling. So it's big change for me. But I did
11 want to address Captain --

12 What is your name?

13 MR. DENKIN: Captain Denkin.

14 MS. MCDUGAL: I think you're right, the
15 conversation should have happened before 1999, but
16 that's not on people who are stewards on the
17 environment. That's on project managers. We're not
18 ensuring that that happened. And it's highly
19 inappropriate to blame the victim in any area of our
20 society, and that is just inexcusably unacceptable
21 saying the project is done and we just need to deal
22 with it is like throwing the baby out with the bad
23 water. And it's a super important resource for us
24 all.

25 MR. MURPHY: Ma'am, I don't want to mispronounce

1 your name. I messed it up last time.

2 MS. FREDERICKS: That's okay.

3 Hello, again. I don't want this to become some
4 crazy argument from both sides. I know you are going
5 to come up and speak after me, and I know you're
6 going to say your peace. I respect that. But
7 knowing that our comments are on the record, I felt
8 the need to stand up for my friends and fellow
9 students and say that we are not being indoctrinated.
10 We are doing our master's. So we've been through our
11 four years. We've worked hard.

12 We've learned everything that we thought was
13 important and we came down here because we thought we
14 needed to protect the environment. This is not us
15 being told what to think, being brought here because
16 they need us to speak against. We chose to be here.
17 We want to be here because the coral reefs are
18 important to us. And the fact that the last dredging
19 project just killed so many and we know that and
20 we're going to do it again, that's not -- that's not
21 something that has anything do with families are not
22 caring about each other.

23 That's just that the reefs are an important
24 resource and we have facts and that's true. And we
25 care about your families and a lot of us are here

1 because we've spent our lives growing up on the
2 water, on boars around ports. I'm from New York.
3 I'm from Long Island. I know all about that, but I
4 still think that the environment is important, and we
5 need to consider it when we talk about this dredging
6 project. And I think that we all need to be educated
7 when we think about these things. So again please
8 don't dredge the port. I think as a student, as an
9 environmentalist, as an educated scientist, I
10 personally feel that it's important that we protect
11 this resource. And I don't have anything against
12 your family or your people and everyone that you've
13 worked with and. It's not about that. It's about
14 the corals.

15 I'm Tra Fredericks.

16 MR. MURPHY: Anyone else?

17 MR. DENKIN: John Denkin, Navy pilot. I welcome
18 all the students here. I think it's great. I didn't
19 know. Now I do. Very good. It did seem like they
20 were sent here for extra credit to line up and do it.
21 This is very good to hear. I just want you to know
22 that I did speak earlier today and you weren't here
23 so I just want to go back over that. Our profession
24 is to protect the environment and the public
25 interest.

1 So the channels are the way they are. The
2 commerce is coming and it's 14 -- right now we're at
3 a certain size ship and they're growing to a bigger
4 size to come through the new Neopanamax Canal. These
5 ships are destined for the East Coast. It's
6 happening. It's real. We have to accommodate that
7 because they and the shipping pressure, everybody is
8 -- they are coming here. We pilots have to get them
9 in here safely. We look at this as -- okay, to get a
10 little bit more safety margin in this channel to get
11 these 14,000 behemoth mega ships in this port, we
12 need to sacrifice a little bit.

13 There's thousands of miles of reefs along the
14 coast. We're focused on this small little area. But
15 by doing this we now increase the safety to these
16 reefs everywhere. Because if a ship grounds here, it
17 will tear open the bottom of the ship, all the oil,
18 whether it's black oil, diesel oil, it doesn't
19 matter -- you've stop using black oil. They have.
20 They've gone to a very low sulfur, more clean -- it's
21 still oil. So that wasn't a suggestion from the
22 Sierra Club.

23 That doesn't work. They are going to LNG. Ships
24 are coming now LNG. But the problem is a ship
25 grounds and hits, that reef is going to be destroyed,

1 pulverized. We're trying to get a little more safety
2 margin to protect not only the current reef there but
3 the entire coastline, the beach, the environment. So
4 that's where we stand. And it's a fact. It's
5 happening. And with these improvements, we can make
6 it safer for everything that's going on. Whether we
7 dredge or not, we need more margin of safety. That's
8 what we're looking for. That's why we're here.

9 MR. MURPHY: Anyone else?

10 I saw the gentleman first, sorry.

11 MS. RICK: My name is Jennifer Rick. I'm also a
12 student from UM. And I guess my concern is just
13 regarding these comments that this additional
14 dredging is necessary because of changes in the
15 shipping industry. And I guess my question to the
16 room in general is, well, how do we know that in the
17 ten years or so that it takes to complete this
18 project, or twenty years, whatever, that there won't
19 be more advances in the shipping industry, and then
20 we're dredging the port again.

21 We just get this repeat of events happening over
22 and over and all of these negative impacts on our
23 local environment. And I don't know. It just seems
24 like an endless cycle to me. Thank you.

25 MR. MURPHY: Sir.

1 MR. BAKER: I'm Andrew Baker, University of
2 Miami, and I'll be brief. In the interest of getting
3 these comments on this record, it's a point that I've
4 mentioned before and I'd like to say it again. Not
5 so much with this project -- hopefully this project
6 won't go ahead -- but also they are other projects
7 being considered, such as Port Everglades. And I
8 just want to reiterate the fact that we need
9 independent scientific monitoring of the impacts of
10 these dredging activities on our reef resources.

11 The current state of affairs in which the
12 environmental consultants that monitor the impacts of
13 the resource are chosen by and hired by contractors
14 of the Army Corps I think places everyone in a very
15 difficult situation where I think the owners of the
16 resource, in this case the citizens of Miami-Dade
17 County or the City of Miami, ought to be responsible
18 for having the ability to choose those contractors
19 and trust that they will do a good job on our behalf.

20 I think when you have a situation where the
21 contractors chosen by the contractor -- where one
22 contractor chooses another one, in particular where
23 that contractor gets used again and again over
24 long-term periods -- just sets up conflicts within
25 the system that can be easily avoided.

1 MR. MURPHY: And we have time for one more.

2 Ma'am.

3 MS. LANCELOT: Esther Lancelot.

4 So first of all for the record. For anyone
5 reading on the comments, these are not junior high
6 school students. These are educated adults that
7 happen to be younger than those of us that are in our
8 50s. So I would like to thank you all for being here
9 and for speaking. And as your careers grow, you --
10 will yours means continue to grow. And thank you for
11 bringing the sound foundation and not looking at the
12 problem and saying this only affects a little area.
13 Because we all know better.

14 We know it doesn't just affect a little slice.
15 And we don't have to be condescending and talk down
16 to folks to make our points. There you go. As it
17 comes out to the selection of contractors, you know,
18 you had some pretty rough contractors last time. We
19 had some lovely run-ins with them, not definitely the
20 finest people. So perhaps if you had modified your
21 selection process and included the scientific
22 community in that.

23 It might slow it down. But government was never
24 meant to be quick. It was meant to not happen so
25 drastically that the people and what is best for the

1 community and society was eliminated just for the
2 sake of commerce. Commerce is important but without
3 people there is no commerce. If you bring things in
4 to sound, the people are gone because we had major
5 storm and we had surge and now society is in
6 shambles, at least in the local area. It kind of
7 defeats the purpose. So why don't we think ahead and
8 try to just give a little bit back. And I appreciate
9 the safety comment. I really do. Because I know
10 it's difficult and I know you have a difficult job.
11 And you guys do some phenomenal work moving those big
12 ships around. So I don't want to put that down. You
13 have to do what you have to do. So why are we
14 dredging deeper now, this bigger and wider? It's
15 just truly close in. We should have known.

16 MR. MURPHY: I'm going to cut off the comment
17 period now then. Again, the team is still here and
18 mostly we'll be here till at least 8 o'clock. Take
19 advantage of the guys in the back or anywhere we're
20 standing around with the posters. Have a
21 conversation, ask questions. We'll absolutely have a
22 conversation with you instead of taking your comments
23 for the record. It's a little bit less formal.
24 Thank you all for coming. It's a big deal to take
25 time. Like I said, I don't know what you were

1 planning to do, but I appreciate you spending time
2 with us and I appreciate your passion on both sides
3 of the fence. Thank you all very much. Enjoy the
4 rest of your night.

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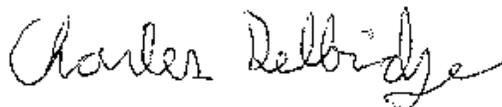
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