



FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**RARITAN BAY AND SANDY HOOK BAY, HIGHLANDS, NEW JERSEY COASTAL STORM RISK MANAGEMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY INTEGRATED FEASIBILITY REPORT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
HIGHLANDS, MONMOUTH COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District (Corps) has conducted an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The final Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment (IFR/EA) dated [May 2020](#), for the Highlands, addresses a resilient and sustainable risk management solution through 2076, in Highlands, New Jersey. The final recommendation is contained in the report of the Chief of Engineers, dated [TBD](#).

The Final IFR/EA, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated various alternatives that would reduce the risk of flooding and associated damages caused by storm surge due to coastal storms that impact Highlands in the study area. The recommended plan is the National Economic Development (NED) Plan and includes:

- T-Type Floodwall 9,362 lf
- I-Type Floodwall 992 lf
- Road Closure Gate (width) 55 lf
- Pump Station 300 cfs
- Detention Pond 1.6 acres
- Pressurized Pipes 1,600 lf
- Raised Ground Surfaces 328 lf

In addition to a “no action” plan, nine alternatives were evaluated. The alternatives included different elevations of floodwalls, and substitution of higher floodwall for buoyant swing gates, removable floodwalls, and concrete floodwalls & bulkheads. For further discussions please see Section 3.12 of the FR/EA. The non-structural alternative was not selected because it does not meet the overall project objective of reducing storm damage in the Borough of Highlands.

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the recommended plan are listed in Table 1:

Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Recommended Plan

	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Aesthetics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aquatic resources/wetlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invasive species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fish and wildlife habitat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Threatened/Endangered species/critical habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic properties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Other cultural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floodplains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous, toxic & radioactive waste	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hydrology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Land use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Navigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noise levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Public infrastructure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental justice	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribal trust resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Water quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. Best management practices (BMPs) as detailed in the IFR/EA will be implemented, if appropriate, to minimize impacts. To minimize impacts, best management practices (BMPs) include silt fencing for erosion and sediment control as described in Section 5.2 of the FR/EA. Mitigation for wetland impacts will be conducted through the purchase of credits at a NJDEP approved wetland bank as described in Section 5.3 of the FR/EA.

The recommended plan will result in unavoidable adverse impacts to approximately 0.75 acres of wetlands. To mitigate for these unavoidable adverse impacts, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will purchase mitigation credits at an approved NJDEP wetland bank.

Public review of the draft IFR/EA and FONSI was completed on 17 September 2015. All comments submitted during the public review period were responded to in the Final IFR/EA and FONSI. A 30-day state and agency review of the Final IFR/EA was completed on **TBD. PICK OPTION BASED ON RESULTS OF STATE AND AGENCY REVIEW.**

Pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that the recommended plan may affect but is not likely to adversely affect the following federally listed species or their designated critical habitat: federally threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), federally threatened piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), federally threatened red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), federally threatened seabeach amaranth (*Amaranthus pumilus*), federally endangered Atlantic sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus oxyrinchus*), federally endangered, federally threatened North Atlantic DPS green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), federally endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), and federally threatened Northwest Atlantic DPS Loggerhead Turtle (*Caretta caretta*). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife



Service (FWS) concurred with the Corps' determination on 2 March 2020 and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) concurred with the Corps' determination on 11 February 2020

Pursuant to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that historic properties may be adversely affected by the recommended plan. The Corps and the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office entered into a Programmatic Agreement (PA), dated 10 January 2017. All terms and conditions resulting from the agreement shall be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts to historic properties.

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended, the discharge of dredged or fill material associated with the recommended plan has been found to be compliant with section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR 230). The Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines evaluation is found in Appendix A3 of the IFR/EA.

A water quality certification pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act will be obtained from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Land Use Regulation prior to construction. In a letter dated 16 April 2020, the state of New Jersey stated that the recommended plan appears to meet the requirements of the water quality certification, pending confirmation based on information to be developed during the pre-construction engineering and design phase. All conditions of the water quality certification will be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts to water quality.

A determination of consistency with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Coastal Zone Management program pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 will be obtained from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Land Use Regulation prior to construction. In a letter dated 16 April 2020, the state of New Jersey stated that the recommended plan appears to be consistent with state Coastal Zone Management plans, pending confirmation based on information to be developed during the pre-construction engineering and design phase. All conditions of the consistency determination shall be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts to the coastal zone.

All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed.

Technical, environmental, and economic criteria used in the formulation of alternative plans were those specified in the Water Resources Council's 1983 Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies. All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in evaluation of alternatives.



Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the recommended plan would not cause significant adverse effects on the quality of the human environment; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Date

Thomas D. Asbery
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander