

PUBLIC NOTICE

US Army Corps of Engineers New York District Jacob K. Javits Federal Building New York, N.Y. 10278-0090 ATTN: Regulatory Branch

In replying refer to: Public Notice Number: NAN-2020-01260-EMI Issue Date: April 28, 2021 Expiration Date: May 28, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The New York District, Corps of Engineers has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403) and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344).

- APPLICANT: United States Department of Homeland Security Plum Island Animal Disease Center P.O. Box 848 Greenport, New York 11944
- ACTIVITY: Ten-Year Maintenance Dredging with Beach and Upland Placement
- WATERWAY: Gardiners Bay
- LOCATION: Plum Island, Town of Southold, Suffolk County, New York

Dredge Location: Plum Island Harbor

Dredge Material Placement Location: Pine Point Beach

A detailed description and plans of the applicant's activity are enclosed to assist in your review.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

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are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

ALL COMMENTS REGARDING THE PERMIT APPLICATION MUST BE PREPARED IN WRITING AND EMAILED TO REACH THIS OFFICE BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE OF THIS NOTICE, otherwise, it will be presumed that there are no objections to the activity.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be fully considered during the public interest review for this permit application. Comments provided will become part of the public record for this permit application. All written comments, including contact information, will be made a part of the administrative record, available to the public under the Freedom of Information Act. The Administrative Record, or portions thereof, may also be posted on a Corps of Engineers internet web site. Due to resource limitations, this office will normally not acknowledge the receipt of comments or respond to individual letters of comment.

Any person may request, in writing, before this public notice expires, that a public hearing be held to collect information necessary to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons why a public hearing should be held. It should be noted that information submitted by email is considered just as carefully in the permit decision process and bears the same weight as that furnished at a public hearing.

Our preliminary determination is that the activity for which authorization is sought herein is not likely to affect any Federally endangered or threatened species or their critical habitat. However, pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. 1531), the District Engineer is consulting with the appropriate Federal agency to determine the presence of and potential impacts to listed species in the project area or their critical habitat.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act (Public Law 104-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service (NOAA/FS) on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The proposed work, fully described in the attached work description, could cause the disruption of habitat for various lifestages of some EFH-designated species as a result of a temporary increase in turbidity during construction. However, the New York District has made the preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effects are not likely to be substantial because it is expected that fish populations would avoid the small area of disturbance. Further consultation with NOAA/FS regarding EFH impacts and conservation recommendations is being conducted and will be concluded prior to the final decision.

Based upon a review of the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places, the project area is located within the Fort Terry Historic District which is listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places. In a letter dated April 15, 2021, the New York State Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation Office stated that the project, as described, will have No Adverse Effect on historic resources. Presently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistorical, or historical data may be lost by work accomplished under the required permit.

Reviews of activities pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act will include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404 (b) of the Clean Water Act and the applicant will obtain a water quality certificate or waiver from the appropriate state agency in accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act prior to a permit decision.

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Pursuant to Section 307 (c) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 as amended [16 U.S.C. 1456 (c)], for activities under consideration that are located within the coastal zone of a state which has a federally approved coastal zone management program, the applicant has certified in the permit application that the activity complies with, and will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with, the approved state coastal zone management program. By this public notice, we are requesting the state's concurrence with, objection to, or waiver of the applicant's certification. No permit decision will be made until one of these actions occur. For activities within the coastal zone of New York State, the applicant's certification and accompanying information is available from the Consistency Coordinator, New York State Department of State, Division of Coastal Resources and Waterfront Revitalization, Coastal Zone Management Program, One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Avenue, Albany, New York 12231, Telephone (518) 474-6000. Comments regarding the applicant's certification, and copies of any letters to this office commenting upon this proposal, should be so addressed.

In addition to any required water quality certificate and coastal zone management program concurrence, the applicant has obtained or requested the following governmental authorization for the activity under consideration:

• New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

It is requested that you communicate the foregoing information concerning the activity to any persons known by you to be interested and who did not receive a copy of this notice. Please send all comments and questions concerning this application to <u>Christopher.W.Minck@usace.army.mil</u>.

In order for us to better serve you, please complete our Customer Service Survey located at <u>http://www.nan.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/CustomerSurvey.aspx</u>.

For more information on New York District Corps of Engineers programs, visit our website at <u>http://www.nan.usace.army.mil</u>.

FOR AND IN BEHALF OF Stephan A. Ryba Chief, Regulatory Branch

Enclosures

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WORK DESCRIPTION

The permit applicant, United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS), has requested Department of the Army (DA) authorization to conduct dredging, with ten years maintenance with placement of dredged material at a designated beach placement and upland area. The project is located at Plum Island Harbor in Gardiners Bay at the USDHS Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC) on Plum Island, Town of Southold, Suffolk County, New York

The proposed work would involve the following:

Maintenance dredge with ten years maintenance, by hydraulic dredge, approximately 3,788 cubic yards (CY) of material from an approximately 15,933 square yard irregularly shaped area (approximately 143,397 square feet or 3.29 acres) and extend to a depth of 16 feet below the plane of Mean Low Water (MLW) with two feet of allowable overdraft (maximum depth of 18 feet below MLW). Additionally, dredge approximately 615 cubic yards of material from an approximately 5,596 square yard irregularly shaped area in the eastern portion of the harbor (approximately 50,364 square feet or 1.15 acres) and extend to a depth of 12 feet below the plane of MLW with two feet of allowable overdraft (maximum depth of 14 feet below MLW). The approximate slope of the dredge area would be approximately 3 to 1.

The total volume of dredged material (approximately 4,400 cubic yards) would be placed above the plane of Spring High Water over an approximately 12,490 square yards (approximately 112,410 square feet or 2.58 acres) at Pine Point Beach with return flow to the waterway.

The applicant has also proposed two alternate upland diked areas for placement of the dredged material. A 100-foot-wide by 450-foot-long diked area would be located west of the dredge area and an approximately 80 to 240-foot-wide by 340-foot-long diked area would be located east of the dredge area. Material would be stored and dewatered with return flow to the waterway through a return flow pipe prior to disposal at an approved upland location.

The applicant plans to conduct up to five (5) additional dredging events within the ten-year maintenance dredging period removing a similar volumes of material from within the same dredging area with beach and upland placement at the above referenced areas. The amount of material to be dredged over the ten-year maintenance dredging period is approximately 29,000 CY.

The applicant has stated that they have avoided, minimized, and mitigated for potential impacts proposed, to the maximum extent practicable by using a turbidity curtain around the project area.

The purpose of this project is to maintain save navigation at the USDHS Plum Island Harbor to allow for the continued use of the passenger and freight ferries that are essential for the PIADC facility operation.











