



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

New York District
26 Federal Plaza
New York, N.Y. 10278
ATTN: CENAN-OP-ST

Public Notice

In replying refer to:
Public Notice No. Sandy Hook Channel, NY Harbor FY17
Published: 14 February 2017 Expires: 14 March 2017

SANDY HOOK CHANNEL, NEW YORK HARBOR FEDERAL NAVIGATION PROJECT MAINTENANCE DREDGING

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. § 403), Section 404 (33 U.S.C. § 1344) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (amended in 1977 and commonly referred to as the Clean Water Act) proposes to perform maintenance dredging of Sandy Hook Channel, New York Harbor, Federal Navigation Project (see Figure 1) with subsequent placement of the dredged material as beneficial re-use of material to replenish the Sea Bright Offshore Borrow Area (SBOBA, see Figure 2).

ACTIVITY: Maintenance dredging of Sandy Hook Channel, New York Harbor, Federal Navigation Project, with placement of the dredged material at the Sea Bright Offshore Borrow Area for the purpose of beneficial re-use.

WATERWAY: Sandy Hook Channel, New York Harbor, Federal Navigation Project.

LOCATION: Monmouth County, New Jersey

The Sandy Hook Channel in New York Harbor, Federal Navigation Project was adopted in 1884, modified in 1933, 1937, 1958, 1965, and 1982. The Sandy Hook Channel has an authorized depth of -35 feet Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW) and is 800 feet wide, with widening at the junction with the Main Ship Channel and at the bend between the East Section and the Bayside Section.

The proposed activity is to dredge the critical shoal area located in the Bayside Section of Sandy Hook Channel.

A detailed description of the proposed activities is enclosed to assist in your review. This activity is being evaluated to determine that the proposed placement of dredged material will not unreasonably degrade or endanger human health, welfare or amenities, or the marine environment, ecological systems or economic potentialities.

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. Comments are used to assess impacts on navigation, water quality, endangered species, historic resources, wetlands, scenic and recreational values, and other public interest factors. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and to determine the need for a public hearing.

ALL COMMENTS REGARDING THIS ACTIVITY MUST BE PREPARED IN WRITING AND MAILED TO THIS OFFICE AT THE ADDRESS ON THE FRONT PAGE BEFORE THE EXPIRATION DATE OF THIS NOTICE. Otherwise, it will be presumed that there are no objections to the activity.

Any person who has an interest, which may be affected by the placement of this dredged material, may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the comment period of this notice and must clearly set forth the interest that may be affected and the manner in which the interest may be affected by the activity. It should be noted that information submitted by mail is considered just as carefully in the process and bears the same weight as that furnished at a public hearing.

Pursuant to Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 as amended [16 U.S.C. 1456(c)], for activities conducted or supported by a federal agency in a state which has a federally approved Federal Consistency Determination (FCD) program, the Corps must submit a determination that the proposed project is consistent with the State FCD program to the maximum extent practicable. This activity is subject to review by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for its consistency with the enforceable policies of the New Jersey State Coastal Management Program.

The New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has determined that the proposed activities are consistent to the maximum extent practicable and within the applicable policies of the New Jersey State Coastal Management Program. A copy of this determination will be provided to the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Additional information regarding the Corps of Engineers' consistency determination may be obtained by contacting the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Coastal Regulation, CN 401, 501 East State Street, Second Floor, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0401, Attention: Consistency Review.

The proposed project was reviewed based upon the New York District's "Essential Fish Habitat Assessment for the Use of Sand Resources at the Sea Bright Offshore Borrow Area" and "Post Emergency Dredging Evaluation (2015) and Programmatic Biological Assessment for Piping Plover, Red Knot, Northeastern Beach Tiger Beetle and Seabeach Amaranth for the Sandy Hook Federal Navigation Channel, Sandy Hook New Jersey". Based upon these reports, and a review of the latest public listing of threatened and endangered species, it has been preliminarily determined that the proposed activity for which authorization is sought herein, is not likely to adversely affect any federally threatened or endangered species (humpback whales, finback whales, right whales, loggerhead turtles, leatherback turtles, green turtles, and Kemp's ridley turtles, piping plover, red knot, northeastern beach tiger beetle and seabeach amaranth) or their critical habitat pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. § 1531).

The proposed Sea Bright Offshore Borrow Area placement will not result in the dredged material being placed within the vicinity of any identified wrecks, as indicated in the National Register of Historic Places. Additionally, there are no other historic sites eligible for or included in the Register within the project area. No known archaeological, scientific, prehistorical or historical data are expected to be lost by work accomplished under the required dredging.

Reviews of the activity pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act will include application of the guidelines announced by the Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act. The Corps 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 commencement of any work.

In compliance with Section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (1996 amendments), an Essential Fish Habitat Assessment will be prepared and submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service for review and comment.

The proposed work is being coordinated with the following Federal, State and local agencies:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service
- U.S. Coast Guard, First District
- State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

If you have any questions concerning this notice, you may contact Mr. Ed Wrocenski at (917) 790-8636. Comments or questions may be FAXED to (212) 264-4260 ATTN: Mr. Ed Wrocenski.

DESCRIPTION OF PLANNED ACTION:

The New York District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, proposes to perform maintenance dredging of Sandy Hook Channel, New York Harbor. The Sandy Hook channel was last dredged by the New York District in 2015, removing approximately 336,010 cubic yards (CY) of gravel and sand. The dredged material was used as remediation material at the Historic Area Remediation Site (HARS). The proposed maintenance dredging would involve the removal of very critical shoals consisting of approximately 350,000 CY of gravel and sand to be placed at the Sea Bright Offshore Borrow Area (SBOBA). Maintenance dredging of this channel is usually accomplished by a clamshell dredge. The entire channel does not require maintenance dredging; only the area where shoaling has seriously reduced the required authorized depth of the channel require dredging.

The Sandy Hook Channel is 35 feet deep and 800 feet wide, extending from the junction with the Main Ship Channel. The proposed work will dredge the channel to its project depth of -35 feet MLLW, plus 2 feet allowable overdepth, subject to the availability of funds.

The purpose of the proposed dredging is to restore the authorized project dimensions, thereby assuring the safe and economical use of the Sandy Hook Channel by shipping interests. The dredged material will replenish the SBOBA, as it is a source of material for beach nourishment projects within Monmouth County, NJ. The proposed dredged material would be transported by bottom releasing vessels to the placement site.

This public notice serves to announce the government's intent and identifies the proposed location for placement of approximately 350,000 CY of material. The dredging and placement at the SBOBA for this project is currently anticipated to occur during the fall of 2017.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

It has been determined that maintenance dredging of the Sandy Hook Channel, with placement of the dredged material at the SBOBA is not likely to have an adverse environmental impact on water quality, marine resources, fish, wildlife, endangered species, recreation, aesthetics and flood protection of the area.

An update of the EA and a 404(b) evaluation as required by the Clean Water Act (40 CFR § 230) will be prepared prior to the implementation of the proposed work.

PLACEMENT SITE:

The dredged material from this project is proposed to be placed at the SBOBA using the split-hull process. The SBOBA is located approximately 1 nautical mile east of Sandy Hook, NJ (Figure 2) and has been used as a material source for beach nourishments by the NY District since 1994.

MATERIAL DESCRIPTION:

The proposed dredging areas are depicted in Figure 1.

The area in Sandy Hook Channel has been characterized by sediment samples taken to a depth of 37 feet – project depth, plus two feet allowable overdepth. Based upon an analysis of five (5) sediment samples from Sandy Hook Channel, the grain size characteristics of the proposed dredged material are:

18.6% GRAVEL, 80.9% SAND, 0.5% SILT & CLAY

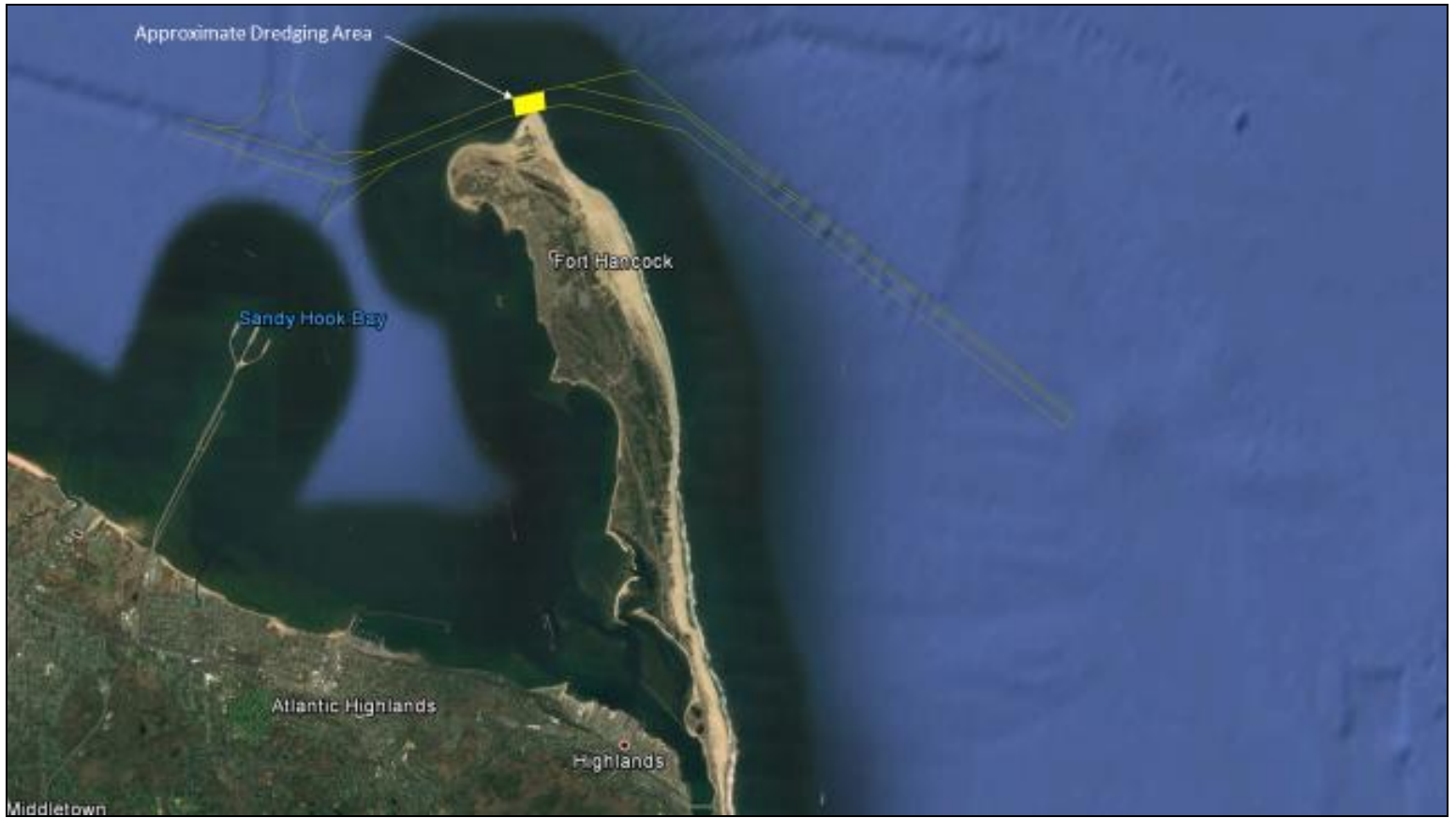
For more information on the New York District Corps of Engineers programs, visit our website at <http://www.nan.usace.army.mil>.

It is requested that you communicate the foregoing information concerning the proposed work to any persons known by you to be interested and who did not receive a copy of this notice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randall G. Hintz", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Randall G. Hintz
Chief, Operations Support Branch

Enclosures:
Location Maps



**Figure 1: Project Location Map
(Not to scale)**

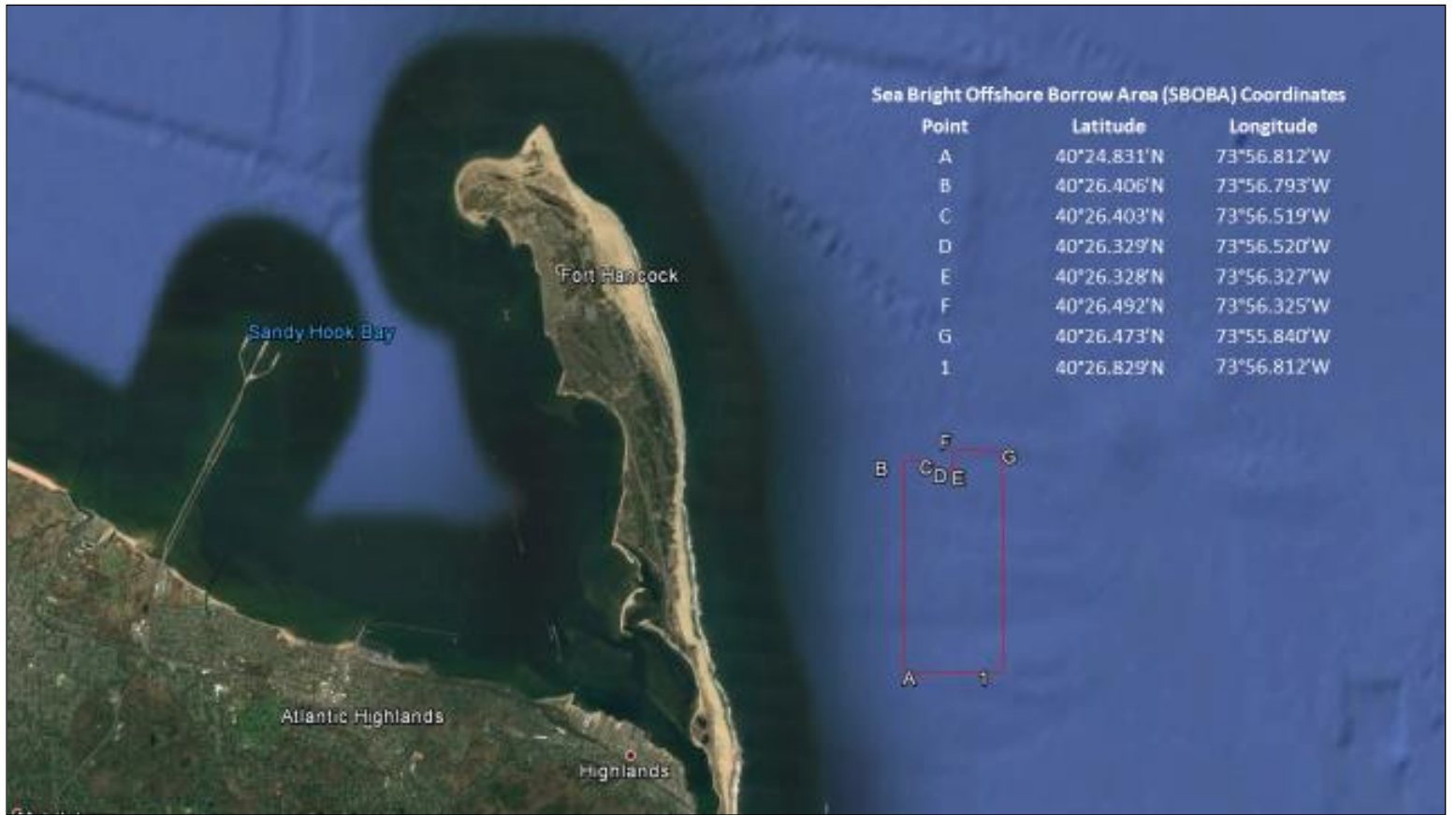


Figure 2: Sea Bright Offshore Borrow Area Location Map