



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 1890
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28402-1890

May 13, 2005

Environmental Resources Section

Mr. Stephen Rynas
Federal Consistency Coordinator
North Carolina Division of Coastal Management
151-B Highway 24
Hestron Plaza II
Morehead City, North Carolina 28557

Dear Mr. Rynas:

Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune proposes to construct and maintain access channels and a turning area in the New River in the vicinity of the French Creek area and Rhodes Point, renovate an existing diked upland disposal area, widen a ramp area, and construct a concrete pad on Weil Point. The purpose of this action is to provide and maintain an operationally and environmentally sustainable, safe, and efficient means to move Marine tank units across the New River for training purposes. In accordance with Section 307(c) (1) of the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 as amended, Camp Lejeune has determined that construction and maintenance of the proposed access channels turning basin and upland facilities are consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the North Carolina approved coastal management program.

This determination is based on the review of the proposed project's conformance with the enforceable policies of the State's coastal program which are primarily found in Chapter 7 of Title 15A of the North Carolina Administrative Code. A review of the Onslow County Land Use Plan shows that Onslow County supports dredging to accommodate riverine training exercises. Details of the consistency determination are provided in the enclosed diagrams, location map, and supporting narrative. Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune requests that the Division of Coastal Management concur with this consistency determination.

The Environmental Resources Section of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, prepared this determination in coordination with and at the request of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Stacy Samuelson, Environmental Resources Section, at (910) 251-4480 or by e-mail: Stacy.D.Samuelson@saw02.usace.army.mil. The point of contact at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune is Mr. Martin Korenek at (910) 451-7235.

Sincerely,

W. Coleman Long
Chief, Planning and
Environmental Branch

Enclosure

**CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION
FOR
Dredging and Improvements, French Creek Area and Rhodes Point
Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune**

1. Project Description

Marine Corps Base (MCB) Camp Lejeune is a military installation in Onslow County, North Carolina. The facility encompasses Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Air Station, New River and the Greater Sandy Run Area. MCB Camp Lejeune proposes to construct and maintain access channels and a turning area in the New River in the vicinity of French Creek Area and Rhodes Point, renovate an existing diked upland disposal area, widen a ramp area and construct a concrete pad on Weil Point. The purpose of this action is to provide and maintain an operationally and environmentally sustainable, safe, and efficient means to move Marine tank units across the New River for training purposes. Presently, the only means for transporting tanks to and from the MCB Camp Lejeune main side to Greater Sandy Run Area (GSRA) training areas and weapons ranges is by loading them on ribbon bridge sections and transporting them across the New River to their training destination on the other side.

Proposed actions in New River include:

- Dredging and maintenance of an Engineer Point access channel.
- Dredging and maintenance of a turning basin off Weil Point.
- Dredging and maintenance of existing Weil Point and Rhodes Point access channels.
- Widening of the Weil Point ramp access channel to accommodate ribbon bridge operations.
- Rehabilitation and expansion of existing Weil Point dredged material disposal area.

Proposed actions on the Weil Point ramp area include the following:

- Construction and placement of an 11m x 22m (35ft x 70ft) concrete tank pad within the existing Weil Point Ramp access road.
- Shoreline stabilization of the areas adjacent to the widened ramp area.
- Widening of the Weil Point Ramp splash point 30.5 m (100ft) along the waterfront and 30.5 m (100ft) up the Weil Point Road.

New River

On the east side of New River, the proposed action includes the dredging and maintenance of a 30 m x 410 m (100 ft x 1345 ft) access channel to Engineer Point, an access channel to Weil Point (30 m x 9384 m (100 ft x 3077 ft)), and a turning basin off of Weil Point near the confluence of French Creek and New River. On the west side of New River, the proposed action includes dredging and maintenance of a 30 m x 535 m (100 ft x 1755 ft) access channel to Rhodes Point. The proposed dredging limits are shown in the attached figures. The turning basin and access channels encompass approximately 7.5 ha (18.5 ac.). The proposed project depth is -6 feet mean low water (m.l.w.) (New River m.l.w. datum). This is the minimum channel depth for operations of the ribbon bridge sections and the bridge erection boats. To achieve the project depth of -6 feet m.l.w., the maximum allowable dredging depth will be -8 feet m.l.w. These channels extending from the east and west shores extend to deep water in the New River. Dredging in the middle of the river is not required. The initial dredging would result in removal of between 14,000 and 30,000 cubic yards of material from the project area. Sediment hydraulically dredged from the proposed dredging areas would be

transported by dredge pipe to the diked upland disposal area on Weil Point. Return water from the disposal area would be released by a water control spillway and returned via a pipe to the New River. The discharge pipe would terminate waterward of emergent vegetation. Due to the silty nature of the material to be dredged, and distance from an authorized beach disposal area, upland diked disposal is the only viable alternative for disposal. Depending on existing conditions, dredging may not be required throughout the entire area shown to achieve the desired project depth. Dredging would not occur to the east of the Inland Primary Nursery Area boundary at the mouth of French Creek. Dredging would be scheduled to take place between October 1 and March 31.

After construction of the proposed access channels and turning basin, periodic maintenance dredging would be conducted to maintain project design depths. The periodicity of this maintenance is unknown, but should be infrequent, as the existing channels to Weil Point and Rhodes Point have not required maintenance dredging since initial construction approximately twenty years ago.

Prior to dredging activities, the existing diked upland disposal area on Weil Point would be rehabbed for placement of dredged materials. The expansion and rehabilitation of the dike has been designed to prevent any disturbance to known archeological sites. On the northwest side (parallel with the New River shoreline) of the dike, no ground disturbing activities outside of the centerline of the existing dike would occur. This means that the new dike would be entirely within the existing dike in this area. The disposal area would be expanded to the south and southeast. The proposed rehabilitation of the disposal area consists of moving the dike centerline to the southwest and raising the dike elevation. Material for dike rehabilitation would be pushed up from the interior of the disposal area and brought in from an approved borrow source. The dikes would be seeded and grassed in accordance with an approved Sedimentation and Erosion Control Plan. Sediment hydraulically dredged from the proposed access channels and turning area would be transported by dredge pipe to the disposal area. Return water from the disposal area would be piped to the New River to a point waterward of emergent vegetation, if present. There would be no fill of wetlands. These changes are necessary to provide adequate storage capacity in the disposal area for present and future maintenance dredging requirements.

Weil Point

Construction of the proposed 11m x 22m (35ft x 70ft) tank pad would create a hardened turning area at the top of the existing ramp road at Weil Point. The existing ramp road is narrow enough that tracked vehicles cannot be turned until they are on the unprotected Weil Point Road. The tank pad would be constructed of reinforced concrete with all placement of concrete occurring above the mean high water line. The existing concrete ramp would be maintained for continued use as necessary.

Widening of the existing ramp area at the end of Weil Point Road would be accomplished to expand water access. This expansion of the splash point would allow tank access to the ramp area for loading on both Landing Craft Utility (LCUs) and ribbon bridge sections. The Weil Point Ramp Area would be expanded approximately 30 m (100 ft) to the west side of the existing ramp. The widened area would extend approximately 30 m (100 ft) up the road. The concrete rubble present along the shore in the proposed expansion would be removed. Above mean high water, the rubble would be replaced with clean sand and gravel. Ramp area expansion would require removal of vegetation and grading of approximately 0.1 ha (0.2 ac) of upland forested habitat. Appropriate transitions to existing shoreline stabilization would be included in the ramp widening to prevent shoreline erosion as a result of use of the ramp area.

The proposed action would not adversely impact air or water quality, surface water or groundwater, natural resources, threatened or endangered species, wetlands, floodplains, hazardous waste sites, the coastal zone, cultural resources, or prime farmland soils. All work would be completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of applicable permits and approvals.

2. Areas of Environmental Concern

The proposed action would take place in areas designated as areas of environmental concern (AECs) under the North Carolina Coastal Management Program. Activities would occur in Coastal Wetlands, Estuarine Shorelines, Estuarine Waters, and Public Trust Areas. The following determinations have been made regarding the consistency of the proposed action with the state's management objective for each of the areas affected:

Coastal Wetlands – The proposed action is consistent with the highest priority use of coastal wetlands, preservation. The existing dredged material disposal area is sited to avoid wetlands. The return water pipeline would not impact wetlands.

Estuarine Shorelines – The proposed action may unavoidably involve movement of pipelines and equipment across estuarine shorelines, no adverse impacts are expected. The proposed action would not have adverse impacts on estuarine resources.

Estuarine Waters – The waters of New River are estuarine waters. Return water from the proposed disposal area would be released to the waters of New River. The function of the disposal area is to retain solids and release clarified water meeting State water quality standards.

Public Trust Areas - The proposed action would involve actions needed to deposit dredged materials on high ground. Wetlands would not be affected. The containment dike would be designed to allow adequate settlement of suspended solids. The effluent from the disposal area would be returned by pipe to New River, the dredging site, and to a point waterward of emergent vegetation uplands. A water control structure would be installed on the intake end of the effluent pipe. The action would not be detrimental to the physical and biological functions of the estuary and public trust areas. The proposed action would not violate state water quality standards.

The local land use plan is the 1996 Onslow County Plan (Holland Consulting Planners 1999). MCB Camp Lejeune also has a Master Plan Update (Atlantic Division, NAVFACENGCOM 1987b) which serves as the land use plan for the base. The Onslow County Plan is consistent with the North Carolina Coastal Management Program. The proposed project is consistent with both of these plans.

3. Projects Outside the Area of Environmental Concern

15A NCAC 07M .0301 establishes management objectives to ensure public access to public beaches and waters. As described above, this project occurs within public waters but would not impede access to areas of French Creek and the New River currently open to the public. It is therefore consistent with the State's coastal program.

15A NCAC 07M .0700 establishes policies for mitigation should a project have adverse impacts. The proposed project has been designed and sited to avoid adverse impacts to the maximum extent feasible. Dredging would not occur to the east of the Inland Primary Nursery

Area boundary at the mouth of French Creek. Dredging would occur within designated Special Secondary Nursery Areas. However, this access channel and turning area dredging would occur during times of low biological activity to minimize impacts to estuarine resources. The Implementation of an approved soil sedimentation and erosion control plan during construction activities for the dike, ramp widening and tank pad areas, along with revegetation of exposed soils would minimize impacts to upland areas of the proposed project and prevent potential impacts to water quality. Consequently due to a lack of adverse impacts a mitigation requirement is not triggered.

15A NCAC 07M .0800 establishes management objectives for water of the State within the coastal area that has a potential for uses which require optimal water quality. Initial construction and future maintenance dredging of the access channels and turning area would have minor short-term impacts to water quality, but would not be adversely affected. Return of water from the upland diked disposal area would be consistent with requirements of North Carolina Division of Water Quality Certification # 3363 and would not adversely affect water quality. Implementation of an approved soil sedimentation and erosion control plan during construction of the proposed ramp widening and shoreline stabilization would prevent impacts to water quality during project construction and use. The proposed project is consistent with management objectives for water quality.

4. Determination

The proposed project will not result in any significant impacts to coastal resources. The proposed dredging, ramp widening and improvements to the French Creek area and Rhodes Point are consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of North Carolina's coastal management program. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Stacy Samuelson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District, at 910-251-4480. The point of contact at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune is Mr. Martin Korenek at (910) 451-7235.

