

## **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)**

### **Folly Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment Folly Beach, Charleston County, South Carolina**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington 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 October 2021, for the Folly Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRМ) project evaluates CSRМ opportunities in Folly Beach, Charleston County, South Carolina. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) is a cooperating agency under the National Environmental Policy Act for this project due to the proposed use of Outer Continental Shelf sand resources. The final recommendation is contained in the report of the Chief of Engineers, dated October 26, 2021.

The final IFR/EA, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated various alternatives that would reduce the adverse economic effects of coastal storms and erosion at Folly Beach, while protecting the Nation's environment in the study area. The recommended plan is the National Economic Development (NED) plan and includes:

- The recommended plan consists of a 5.85 mile (30,890 linear foot) main dune and berm combination beach fill.
- The southwest portion of the project includes a 35-foot-wide berm between reaches 1 to 17 for 19,170 feet.
- The northeast portion includes a 50-foot-wide berm between reaches 18 to 26 and the Heritage Preserve for 11,720 feet.
- The berm is at elevation 8.0 feet.
- The plan includes constructing a new dune or raising the existing dune to a uniform elevation of 15 feet NAVD88 with a minimum top width of 5 feet for reaches 2-26. Reach 1 (County Park) and the Heritage Preserve are berm only and have no dune.
- The beach fill includes a 750-foot tapered transition at the ends of the project and a 500-foot transition between the 35-foot and 50-foot-wide berm.
- During the 50-year period of recommended federal participation, material for the beach fill would be dredged from two proposed offshore borrow sources and one riverine borrow source, transported to the beach by pipeline, for the beach fill construction.
- The renourishment interval for the project is twelve years.

Numerous alternatives were considered, but only Alternative 1 (No-Action), Alternative 3 (recommended plan) and Alternative 7 (non-structural) were evaluated in detail. Alternatives 2, 4, 5 and 6 have similar environmental consequences as Alternative 3 and therefore not further analyzed.

For both 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**

	Less than significant effects	Less than significant 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Invasive species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fish and wildlife habitat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input 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"/>
Other cultural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Floodplains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hazardous, toxic & radioactive waste	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>
Socioeconomics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental justice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Soils	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tribal trust resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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"/>
Sea Level Rise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Coastal barrier resources	<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 as detailed in the IFR/EA will be implemented, as appropriate, to minimize impacts. Environmental commitments can be found in Appendix I.

No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the recommended plan.

Public review of the draft IFR/EA and FONSI was completed on December 10, 2020. 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 October 16, 2021. Comments from state and federal agency review did not result in any changes to the final IFR/EA.

Pursuant to Section 7(a)(2)/7(d) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the Corps determined that of the species under the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS's) purview, the recommended plan may affect, not likely to adversely affect the West Indian Manatee; Seabeach Amaranth; Green, Hawksbill, Kemp's Ridley, and Leatherback Sea Turtles; and may affect, likely to adversely affect the following federally listed species or their designated critical habitat:

- Piping Plover
- Piping plover critical habitat
- Red Knot
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle Critical Habitat (per Section 5.05.3 in IFR/EA)

The USFWS concurred with the Corps' determination on August 2, 2021.

Pursuant to Section 7(a)(2)/7(d) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the Corps determined that of the species under the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS's) purview, the recommended plan may affect, not likely to adversely affect the Blue, Sei, Sperm, Finback and North Atlantic Right Whales, Hawksbill and Leatherback Sea Turtles and Atlantic Sturgeon, and may affect, likely to adversely affect the following federally listed species or their designated critical habitat:

- Green Sea Turtle
- Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle
- Loggerhead Sea Turtle

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the Corps determined the recommended plan has no significant impacts on historic properties following the stipulations of the Programmatic Agreement between USACE, State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPO), BOEM, the City of Folly Beach, and South Carolina Institute for Archeology and Anthropology (SCIAA). Detailed surveys of the offshore borrow areas and pipeline routs has been deferred until the pre-construction engineering and design (PED) phase of the project.

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 F of the IFR/EA.

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control has waived water quality certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, as follows. Notice was published on October 22, 2010 in the South Carolina State Register. A copy of the letter can be found in Appendix I of the IFR/EA.


A consistency concurrence with the State of South Carolina Coastal Zone Management program pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 was obtained from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environment Control, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management prior to construction. In a letter dated September 3, 2021, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control- Office Ocean and Coastal Resource Management 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 PED phase. All conditions of the consistency concurrence shall be implemented to minimize adverse impacts to the coastal zone.

The Corps will enter into a lease agreement with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management for the use of Federal Outer Continental Shelf sand for the initial construction or periodic renourishments.

All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed. In a letter dated January 19, 2021, the NMFS had no essential fish habitat conservation recommendations. The USFWS stated in a letter dated August 5, 2021 that they believe the project does not meet an exception to the CBRA.

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.

8 April 2022  
Date

  
Benjamin A. Bennett  
Colonel, Corps of  
Engineers District  
Commander