



# **Notice of Intent Public Engagement**

## **Summary Report**

October 2024

Prepared by:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires an early and open process for determining the scope of the issues to be addressed as part of the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). During this NEPA scoping process, the lead Federal agency solicits agency and public input regarding issues to be considered in the EIS. Accordingly, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE or Corps), Wilmington District, initiated the public scoping process with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register on June 7, 2024 (see Attachment A). The EIS is intended to assess the potential social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed deepening of the Wilmington Harbor in Wilmington, NC. The intent of the public meetings was to provide information to the public regarding the proposed project and provide a forum for input from the public that would help identify significant issues and data needs associated with the Corps' evaluation of the proposed action and assist in identifying other potential alternatives.

This report was prepared to document recent public engagement activities and to summarize the agency and public comments received during the public comment period. Virtual and in-person public meetings were initiated in June 2024. Four virtual sessions (each covering a different topic), and one in-person public meeting were held, with the virtual sessions being repeated a second time for those that missed the first set of sessions. Federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, other interested parties, and the public were invited to participate in this process. During both the virtual and in-person meetings the Corps provided information on the following topics: Plan Formulation, NEPA, Cultural Resources, Social Effects and Economics, Ecological Resources, Physical Resources and Beneficial Use of Dredge Materials. These meetings served as a mechanism to solicit agency and public input on the issues, alternatives, and potentially significant effects to be considered in the EIS. All comments received to date, including those provided during the Notice of Intent (NOI) comment period, will be considered by the Corps during preparation of the EIS and become part of the administrative record. These comments will help determine the range of issues to consider in the EIS (i.e., the "scope" of the EIS).

### 1.1 Project Background

An Integrated section 203 Study and Environmental Report for potential navigation improvements to the Wilmington Harbor Federal navigation channel serving the Port of Wilmington, North Carolina was prepared in 2020 by the North Carolina State Ports Authority (NCSPA) under the authority of section 203 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986, as amended. The study area was the existing Wilmington Harbor



federal navigation channel that originates offshore and extends approximately 38 miles from entrance channel in the Atlantic Ocean and up the Cape Fear River to the City of Wilmington, North Carolina where it serves the Port of Wilmington. The navigation improvements proposed in the 2020 report were conditionally authorized by Section 403 of the WRDA of 2020: Authorization of Projects Based on Feasibility Studies Prepared by Non-Federal Interests. The section 203 authorization for the navigation improvements project, Wilmington Harbor, North Carolina, is conditioned upon the resolution of comments set forth in the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) (ASA(CW))'s review assessment, dated May 17, 2020. An EIS evaluation of the proposed project effects on the human environment is required to address several comments from the ASA(CW)'s review assessment.

- *Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action.* The purpose of the proposed action is to contribute to national economic development (NED) by addressing transportation inefficiencies for the forecasted vessel fleet, consistent with protecting the Nation's environment. The need for the proposed action is to address the constraints that contribute to inefficiencies in the existing navigation system's ability to safely serve forecasted vessel fleet and cargo types and volumes.
- *Preliminary Action Alternatives.* The USACE has identified two preliminary action alternatives for inclusion in the EIS: 47-foot and 46-foot deepening alternatives.
  - The 47-foot alternative was conditionally authorized in section 403 of WRDA 2020 and would result in the channel deepening to ¥47 feet MLLW (Mean Low Low Water- average height of the lowest tides recorded over a long period of time) from the Anchorage Basin through the Lower Swash Reach (Mid-River) and to ¥49 feet MLLW in the ocean bar reaches and an extended and realigned entrance channel; and channel widening in some reaches.
  - The 46-foot alternative would result in the channel deepening to ¥46 feet MLLW from the Anchorage Basin through the Lower Swash Reach (Mid-River) and to ¥48 feet MLLW in the ocean bar reaches and an extended and realigned entrance channel; and channel widening in some Reaches.

Dredged material management for the preliminary action alternatives was proposed to be placed in the Wilmington Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site; however, the USACE will also evaluate beneficial use of dredged material. Construction of any action alternative may be accomplished through mechanical (e.g., clamshell) and hydraulic (e.g., cutterhead and hooper) dredge equipment, and may require blasting in reaches where hard rock is encountered.



- A No Action alternative will also be evaluated in the EIS, which provides for the existing authorization channel depth of ¥38 feet MLLW at the Anchorage Basin, ¥42 feet MLLW in the Mid-River reaches, and ¥44 feet MLLW through the ocean bar reaches and entrance channel.
- *Summary of Expected Impacts.* The USACE conducted an early scoping comment period for the proposed federal action in June 2023 and received public comments on anticipated effects to resources resulting from the proposed action. Additionally, the USACE has been coordinating on potential resources to be evaluated through outreach to stakeholders since the June 2023 public comment period. The USACE will evaluate potential effects to hydrology and hydraulics, groundwater, water quality (dissolved oxygen, temperature, and salinity), air quality, cultural and tribal resources, wetlands, endangered species and habitat, and aquatic resources. Additionally, the USACE will evaluate the potential social effects of the proposed action, including environmental justice issues.

## 1.2 Notice of Intent (NOI) and Public Comment Period

In accordance with 40 CFR 1502.4(5)e, the formal beginning of the EIS process begins with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS. The USACE published the NOI in the Federal Register on June 7, 2024. The NOI provided a general description of the proposed action, as well as the purpose and need for action, a preliminary description of the proposed action and alternatives the EIS will consider, a brief summary of expected effects, anticipated permits and other authorizations, a schedule for the decision-making process, a description of the public scoping process, including any scoping meeting(s), a request for comment on alternatives and effects, as well as on relevant information, studies, or analyses with respect to the proposed action, and contact information for a person within the Corps who can answer questions about the proposed action and the environmental impact statement. The Corps provided a 45-day comment period which started with the publishing of the NOI on June 7, 2024. The public comment period ended July 22, 2024.

## 2.0 PUBLIC OUTREACH

Participation by the public, governmental agencies, tribes, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is critical to the NEPA process. The purpose of scoping is to ensure participation of interested parties, such as Federal, state, tribal, and local government agencies and officials; property owners; residents; and other stakeholders and to help identify the significant issues that need to be analyzed in depth in the EIS (40 CFR 1501.7).



This process also serves to deemphasize insignificant issues, narrowing the scope of the EIS process accordingly (40 CFR 1500.4(g)). Scoping results in the identification of a range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in the EIS (40 CFR 1508.25).

This process is intended to:

- Encourage interested parties to participate in the preparation of the EIS;
- Provide access to information about the proposed project;
- Solicit information and comments from interested parties; and
- Facilitate effective communication between the Corps and interested parties

## 2.1 Public Outreach Process

The Corps has and will continue to offer opportunities for public participation and input via the project website, public and agency meetings, and review and comment of the Draft and Final EIS. Public coordination and input during the scoping process consisted of the following elements:

- Publishing an NOI in the Federal Register on June 7, 2024 (Attachment A);
- Distributing a local public notice on June 7, 2024, that includes information about the proposed project and identified the major components of the proposed project (Attachment F);
- News Release posted on project website on May 20, 2024 at:  
<https://www.saw.usace.army.mil/Media/News-Releases/Article/3781669/usace-wilmington-to-hold-public-meetings-for-the-wilmington-harbor-403-project/>  
(Attachment B)
- News Release posted to all 4 of the District Social Media sites on May 20, 2024 (Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn)
- Media Advisory sent out to the media list specified in the summary report on June 6, 2024 (Attachment C)
- Reminder post for the meeting with details on all social media accounts sent out on June 11, 2024
- A final reminder post for meeting with details on all social media accounts was sent out on June 12, 2024





# WILMINGTON HARBOR 403

## LETTER REPORT & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

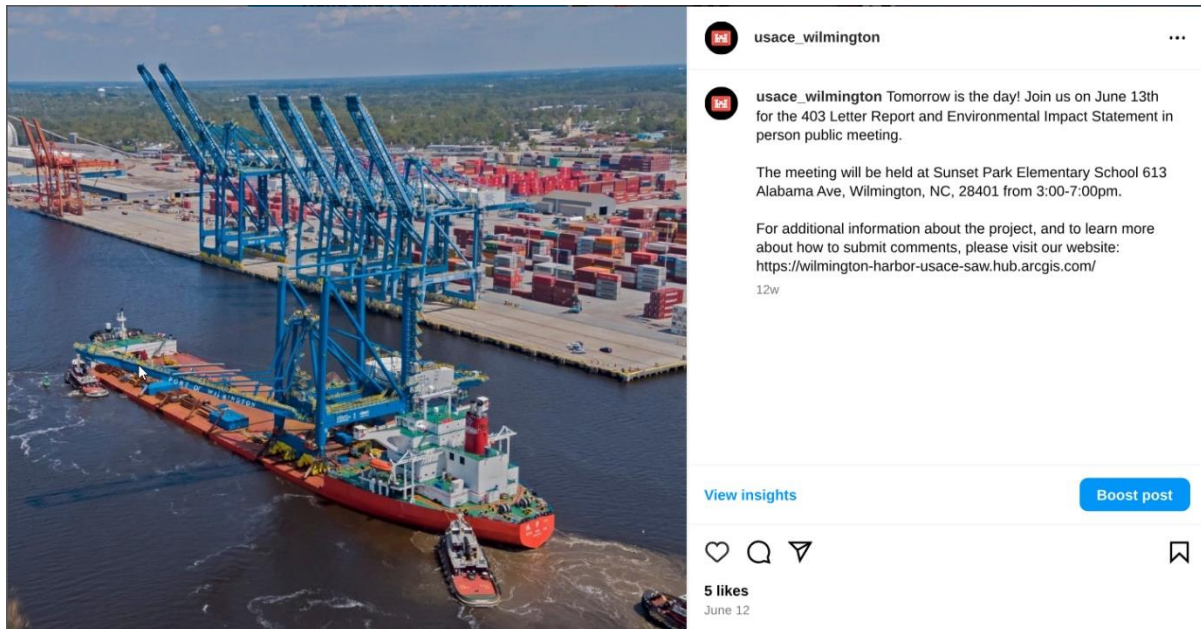


Figure 1- USACE Instagram post with a final reminder to attend the June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting

- A video reel with public meeting highlights was posted on all social media accounts on June 13, 2024. Link: <https://www.instagram.com/p/C8K7ttzyQZL/>
- A posting regarding the second round of virtual meetings was posted on June 24, 2024 on all social media accounts

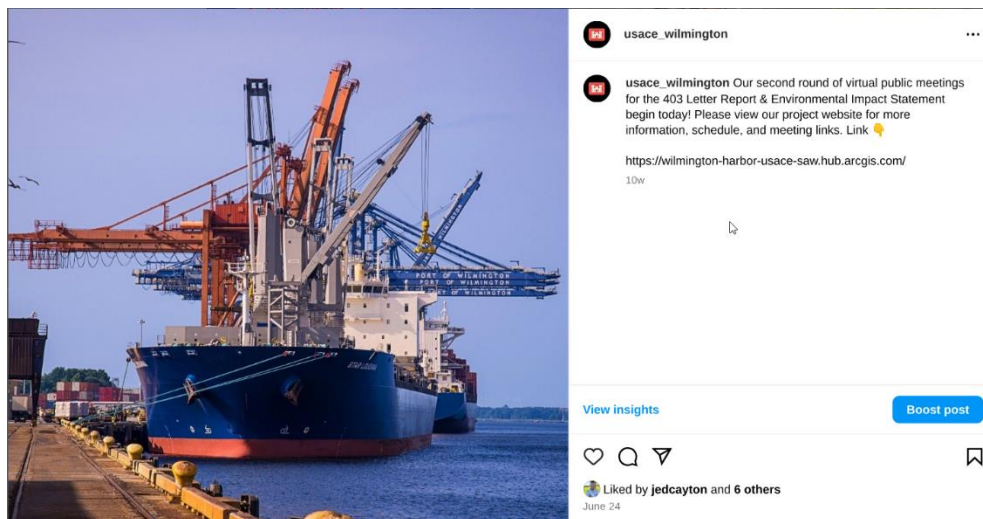


Figure 2- USACE Instagram post with a reminder to attend the second round of virtual meetings





- Public scoping meeting - held on June 13, 2024 was used to inform the public about the proposed action, present and solicit verbal and written comments on the actions, alternatives, and impacts that the EIS should address. The comment period began June 7, 2024, and ended July 22, 2024.
- A series of virtual meetings were held in June 2024 that provided the same information that was presented to public at the in-person public meeting, offering the public multiple platforms with which to engage with the Corps and receive relevant project information.

## 3.0 PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS

### 3.1 Notice of Intent

As previously described, the Corps prepared a Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Wilmington Harbor 403 project that was published in the Federal Register, Volume 89, No. 111, on June 7, 2024. The publishing of the NOI initiated the 45-day public comment period. USACE used several methods to inform the public about the publication of the NOI and provided additional notification via email to the stakeholder list, posting to website and public notice page, and issuance through Wilmington District's Regulatory Public Notice distribution list. Using these methods, over 400 stakeholders received notification of the publication of the NOI, the opportunity to engage with USACE in virtual and in-person public meetings and informed the public of the meeting being held on June 13, 2024. The dates for the virtual public meetings were also listed in the notice. The NOI, found in Attachment A, is accessible via the federal register: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2024-06-07/pdf/2024-12577.pdf>

### 3.2 Public Notice

On June 7, 2024, state and Federal agencies, elected officials, interest groups, and the general public from the Wilmington District's Regulatory Division mailing list were notified by email that a local public notice was available on the Wilmington District's website. The public notice is included in Attachment F. The purpose of the local public notice was to inform state and Federal agencies and other interested parties regarding the proposed action, information about the proposed project, and that an EIS that is being prepared by the Corps.

### 3.3 Media Advisory

On June 6, 2024, a media advisory was distributed by email and/or mail to various media outlets inviting them to cover the Wilmington Harbor 403 Letter Report and Environmental



Impact Statement public meeting being held on June 13, 2024. A copy of the media advisory can be found in Attachment C. A list of the contacted news outlets that shared articles on the public meetings are listed below.

- WECT Newsroom-[USACE to host public meetings for Wilmington Harbor 403 project \(wect.com\)](#)
- Coastal Review.org - [Public meetings set to discuss Wilmington Harbor project | Coastal Review](#)
- Dredging Today- [Comment period closing on the Wilmington Harbor dredging project - Dredging Today](#)

### 3.4 News Release

USACE published a news release on May 20, 2024, to provide notice regarding the series of public engagement sessions that were held in June 2024. USACE sent the release via email to a combination of 14 different media contacts. A copy of this notice is available for review in Attachment B.

### 3.5 Social Media

The USACE's Public Affairs utilized social media (Instagram, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, and LinkedIn) to coordinate with media outlets to share project information ahead of the public meeting with the intent of educating and engaging the public and stakeholders. Examples of the social media posts were described in previous sections.

### 3.6 Website

USACE has a publicly accessible website that provides project information as well as information about the NEPA process. The website includes the NOI Public Meeting materials and additional information on the Resources page. The NOI Public Meeting materials included meeting boards, meeting brochure, virtual meeting presentation slides, public engagement video, news release. The website also provides an opportunity for the public to access information about the proposed project, to submit written comments throughout the preparation of the EIS, and to sign up for the project mailing list.

All project related information can be found on the website and accessed at any time. The website will continue to be updated to provide information for the duration of the project. The project website address is: [wilmington-harbor-usace-saw.hub.arcgis.com](http://wilmington-harbor-usace-saw.hub.arcgis.com)



### 3.7 Email

USACE established the following group email inbox for the project: [WilmingtonHarbor403@usace.army.mil](mailto:WilmingtonHarbor403@usace.army.mil). Members of the public can send general inquiries and request to be added to the distribution list. The project email inbox was also used to collect public comments during the comment period from June 7, 2024 - July 22, 2024.

### 3.8 Public Engagement

The USACE hosted one (1) in-person public meeting and a series of virtual meetings to provide information to the public regarding the project to encourage and facilitate public participation in the project planning process. Four virtual public meetings were held in June 2024 during the week preceding the in-person public meeting. To accommodate schedules and ensure access to the information shared, each session was repeated during the last week of June. The in-person public meeting, which was held on June 13, 2024, and the virtual meetings are described in the subsequent sections.



*Figure 3- June 13, 2024 in-person public meeting information board presentation*

## 4.0 IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETING

### 4.1 Venue

An in-person public meeting was held on June 13, 2024, at Sunset Park Elementary School, located at 613 Alabama Avenue in Wilmington, NC (28401). This venue was selected due to its proximity to the Port of Wilmington, availability of free parking, ADA accessibility and the



school was also within the project study area. In addition to being in a study area, the public meeting venue was located within a disadvantaged (Environmental Justice (EJ)) community. Environmental Justice is a social effect the Corps looks at to ensure that potential adverse project impacts are not disproportionately distributed to disadvantaged communities and that benefits are distributed equitably. The location of the venue was purposefully chosen to encourage community and stakeholder engagement and participation in the public involvement process. The meeting was conducted in an open-house style format and lasted from 3:00pm to 7:00pm. Thirty-seven (37) people signed in at the welcome station for the scoping meeting. Information boards and handouts were available for viewing and subject matter experts from the Corps and staff from Stantec Consulting were present to answer questions regarding the proposed project.

### 4.2 Attendance

The meeting was attended by 37 members of the public who were greeted in the parking lot, and guided to the Welcome Station, and asked to sign-in. The In-Person Public Open House Sign-in Sheet is included as Attachment D. Attendees had an opportunity to engage with USACE and other project support staff to learn more about the project's goals, proposed schedule and the technical analysis being conducted on the project. In addition to the general public, the following agencies and organizations were represented at the open house:

- League of Women Voters
- University of North Carolina Wilmington
- North Carolina Coastal Federation
- Middle Sound Lookout
- Wilmington Cape Fear Pilots Association
- Funston Company
- Village of Bald Head Island
- Fort Caswell
- Town of Kure Beach
- Sandbar Oyster Company
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Brooks Pierce Law Firm
- North Carolina State Ports Authority



### 4.3 Meeting Format

The USACE hosted an in-person drop-in style public meeting to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to interact with USACE staff and provide input on the project. Materials available to the public for review included a video presentation, which was on a continual loop and multiple information stations staffed by Corps representatives showcasing different technical aspects of the project. Multiple information stations staffed by subject matter experts were located throughout the venue in addition to a video station that provided information on the project. The project brochure was also translated into Spanish and a Spanish speaking project team member was available throughout the public meeting to assist Spanish speaking citizenry.



Figure 4- Photo of boards presented at in-person public meeting. PDF's can be found in Attachment H



Figure 5- Information boards and interactive map station at in-person public meeting





### 4.4 Video Presentation

USACE Wilmington District Commander COL Brad A. Morgan led the video presentation with a description of the project's history and the current project status. Descriptions of the planning, economic, environmental, and engineering analyses for the potential alternatives were provided along with the approach to gathering public input. The video was on a continuous loop so that the public could access it at any time during the open house.



*Figure 6- Meeting participants watching video presentation*

### 4.5 Handouts

Each attendee was given a project brochure that provided an overview of the project, the proposed timeline, methods to submit feedback to USACE, and answers to frequently asked questions. Comment cards were also provided for those wishing to submit comments during the public meeting.

### 4.6 Informational Stations

In addition to the Welcome and Comment Stations, the following informational stations were staffed by USACE to provide information and receive input from the public:

Station 1: Plan Formulation, NEPA, Cultural Resources, Social Effects, Economics – boards describing the public engagement process, the proposed project plan and community resources were provided at this station.



Station 2: Ecological Resources – boards describing the existing natural resources, including threatened and endangered species, the NEPA process and impacts and mitigation planning were provided at this station.

Station 3: Physical Resources - boards describing the hydrology, geotechnical, water quality, groundwater and air quality modeling efforts were provided at this station.

Station 4: Beneficial Use of Dredged Materials – boards describing the beneficial use of dredged materials were provided at this station. This station was interactive and provided the opportunity for the public to post comments on the map with sticky notes, as well as using different colored dots and yarn to identify their issues and concerns and provide recommendations for the beneficial use of dredged materials.



*Figure 7- Meeting participants engaging with interactive map*

## 5.0 VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETINGS

A series of four topical Virtual Public Meetings were hosted by USACE through Webex. The intent of the virtual meetings was to give the public a chance to learn about the project and provide feedback to the project team.

During these facilitated meetings, participants were given multiple ways in which to provide public comments. The Corps provided the options of email, through the online website (a QR code was provided so that the public could be taken directly to the project website) or by mailing formal comments through the mail. There were no comments taken during the virtual meetings via chat, but the public was encouraged to submit official comments through the approved methods.





Every session focused on discrete subject specific topics (see Table 1 below) in addition to the standard content relating to the engagement process, project background, development of alternatives etc. that was presented at every session. Each session was scheduled for two hours and the series was repeated a second time for those who could not attend the first series of sessions. Every session offered an opportunity for the public to ask questions and provide comments. These virtual sessions were purposefully designed to engage the public and provide an interactive experience with the project team. The presentation slides are included in Attachment G. The series of meetings and their topics are outlined in the table below:

*Table 1- Breakdown of Virtual Public Meeting Sessions*

Date	Meeting Content	Location	Time	Public Participation
June 4, 2024 <i>Repeated on June 24, 2024</i>	Session 1: Plan Formulation, NEPA, Cultural Resources, Social Effects, & Economics	Webex	1:00-3:00pm	49
June 5, 2024 <i>Repeated on June 26, 2024</i>	Session 2: Ecological Resources (Wetlands, Protected Species, Habitat)	Webex	1:00-3:00pm	36
June 6, 2024 <i>Repeated on June 27, 2024</i>	Session 3: Physical Resources (Design, Geotech, GW, Geospatial, Hydrology, SLC, & WQ)	Webex	1:00-3:00pm	22
June 7, 2024 <i>Repeated on June 28, 2024</i>	Session 4: Beneficial Use of Dredged Materials	Webex	1:00-3:00pm	26

See Attachment G for the presentations used in the USACE Virtual Meetings and the meeting materials for the In-Person Public Meeting.

## 5.1 Comment Period

USACE accepted comments during the notice of intent period between June 7- July 22, 2024. During the 45-day comment period, USACE provided a number of methods for submitting comments, mail, online mapping tool, email, and at the in-person public meeting.



## 5.2 Comment Submission Method

### 5.2.1 In-person at Public Open House

On June 13, 2024, USACE hosted an In-Person Public Open House at Sunset Park Elementary. Each meeting attendee received a brochure and public comment card as they entered the meeting space. The 11 handwritten comments were then scanned and archived.

### 5.2.2 Online

USACE's website houses an online Public Comment Tool that was made available during the public comment period. Through the location-based designed tool, the public could inform the USACE of challenges, opportunities, issues, and concerns they felt were important. The public could access the online tool through various means: QR code was included on meeting materials, in-person brochure, as well as on the virtual meeting presentations. Additionally, the public notice included a link. Finally, the public visiting the project website were able to leave their comments in the online comment tool. The links to the online comment tool and USACE website can be found below.

- [WH403 Public Comment Point | WH403 Public Comment Point | Wilmington Harbor \(arcgis.com\)](#)
- <https://wilmington-harbor-usace-saw.hub.arcgis.com/>

### 5.2.3 Email

The USACE included the project's email address on all public-facing documents, including display boards, handouts and on all virtual presentation materials. This email address was utilized by members of the public to contact the project team with additional questions or comments. Comments could be emailed to the USACE throughout the public scoping period of 7 June 2024 - 22 July 2024.

[WilmingtonHarbor403@usace.army.mil](mailto:WilmingtonHarbor403@usace.army.mil)

### 5.2.4 U.S. Postal Service

Members of the public could submit physical copies of their comments to the USACE during the public scoping period through the U.S. Postal Service. Comments were accepted if they were postmarked by or before the last day of the public scoping period, July 22 2024. The following mailing address was included on all project materials and listed on the project website:

*US Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District*



ATTN: Wilmington Harbor 403

69 Darlington Avenue

Wilmington, NC 28403

## 6.0 COMMENT SUMMARY

### 6.1 Advertising Survey

Guests who signed in at the In-Person Public Engagement Meeting were asked to share how they found out about the meeting. The results from this survey for the guests that responded are included in Table 2.

*Table 2: Survey Question: “How did you hear about the meeting?”*

Advertising Method	Count
Social Media	4
Public Notice	7
Project Website	7
Other	18

In addition, guests who used the USACE Public Comment Tool were asked to provide suggestions regarding how the USACE could improve public outreach. These suggestions are summarized and listed below:

- Increased news coverage, especially local news outlets
- Increased social media posts (Facebook, X, Instagram)
- Utilize community leaders to help disseminate the project information into the community

### 6.2 Receipt and Cataloging

During the public comment period 65 comments from 54 members of the public were received. Individuals representing a diverse number of organizations submitted comments including (1) federal agency, one (1) local government, five (5) non-profit organizations, two (2) departments at University of North Carolina Wilmington. This data was self-reported as recorded via the following comment methods:

- USACE Public Comment Tool (35)
- Email (16)
- Audubon Email Campaign (411 emails)



- Sierra Club Email Campaign (66 emails)
- Comment Card at the In-Person Public Open House (11)
- Agency Response from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1)
  - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service comment can be read in Attachment I

It should be noted that individuals were permitted to submit comments through multiple means, which resulted in a greater total number of comments compared to the number of commenters. For example, general comments may have been submitted via email, while multiple location- specific comments could have been submitted on the USACE Public Comment Tool. As comments were received, the USACE cataloged and recorded each one. All original copies are incorporated into the administrative record for this project. All public comments received are posted in a redacted form to the USACE project website.

### 6.3 Comment Analysis and Summarization

Comments were submitted that represented multiple categories as noted in Table 3; these included Environmental Impacts, Mitigation, Alternatives Development, and general EIS/NEPA-related comments. These categories represent a summary of the topics included in the comments; however, this data should not be considered an absolute accounting of comments, but rather a general overview of reoccurring general themes.

*Table 3: General Categorization of the Public Comments*

Category	Count*
Alternatives Development	1
Mitigation	3
EIS/NEPA General	21
Environmental Impacts	40

To further understand theming of the comments, the project team created subcategories to sort and filter the data. Table 4 includes a summary of subcategories, sorted by lowest frequency topics mentioned at the top to the highest at the bottom.

*Table 4: Subcategorization of the Public Comments*

Subcategory	Count
Air Quality	1



Subcategory	Count
Cumulative Effects	1
Cultural Resources	2
Purpose and Need	2
Environmental Justice	3
Sea Level Rise	3
Analytical Methods	4
Ecosystem Services	4
Supportive	5
NEPA Process	5
Socioeconomic	5
Flooding	5
Economic	7
Hazardous Materials	7
Dredged Material Management	8
Ecology	9
Development	10
Water Quality	10
Erosion	11
Saltwater Intrusion	14
Fish and Wildlife	20
Habitat	23

Each comment was assigned one category and up to three subcategories to capture the overarching theme and summarize the main points. Most comments were labeled with more than one subcategory due to the multiple concerns addressed in each comment. Therefore, the total count of subcategories was higher than the total number of comments. Comment length ranged from a couple of sentences to emails with up to 80 pages in length. It is important to note that these categories and subcategories were created to provide a framework to efficiently document the public input received during the public involvement process. The Corps will ensure that each individual comment is documented and appropriately incorporated into the EIS.

The following figures present the data in a visual format to help readers quickly understand the most frequently mentioned topics and overall theming of public concerns.

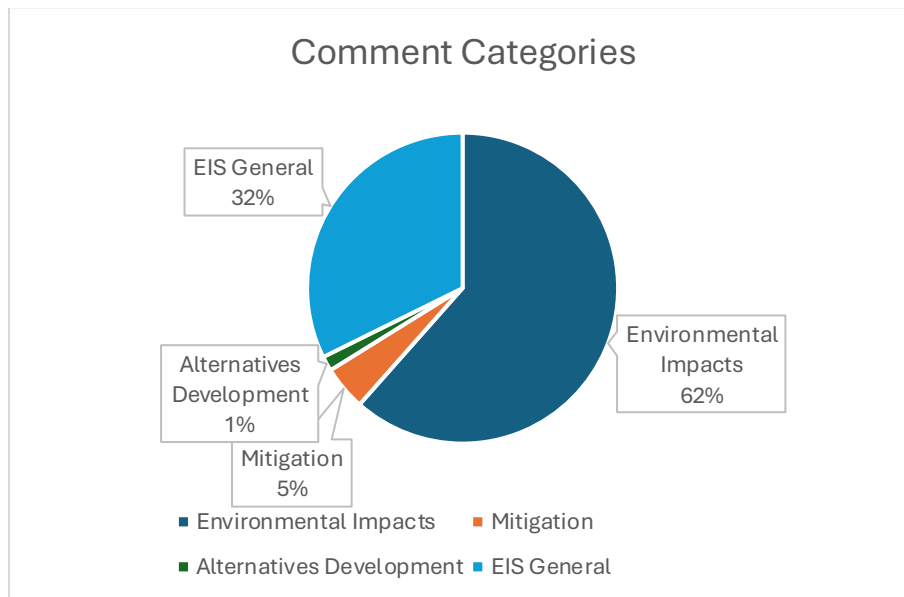


Figure 8- Primary Categorization of Public Comments

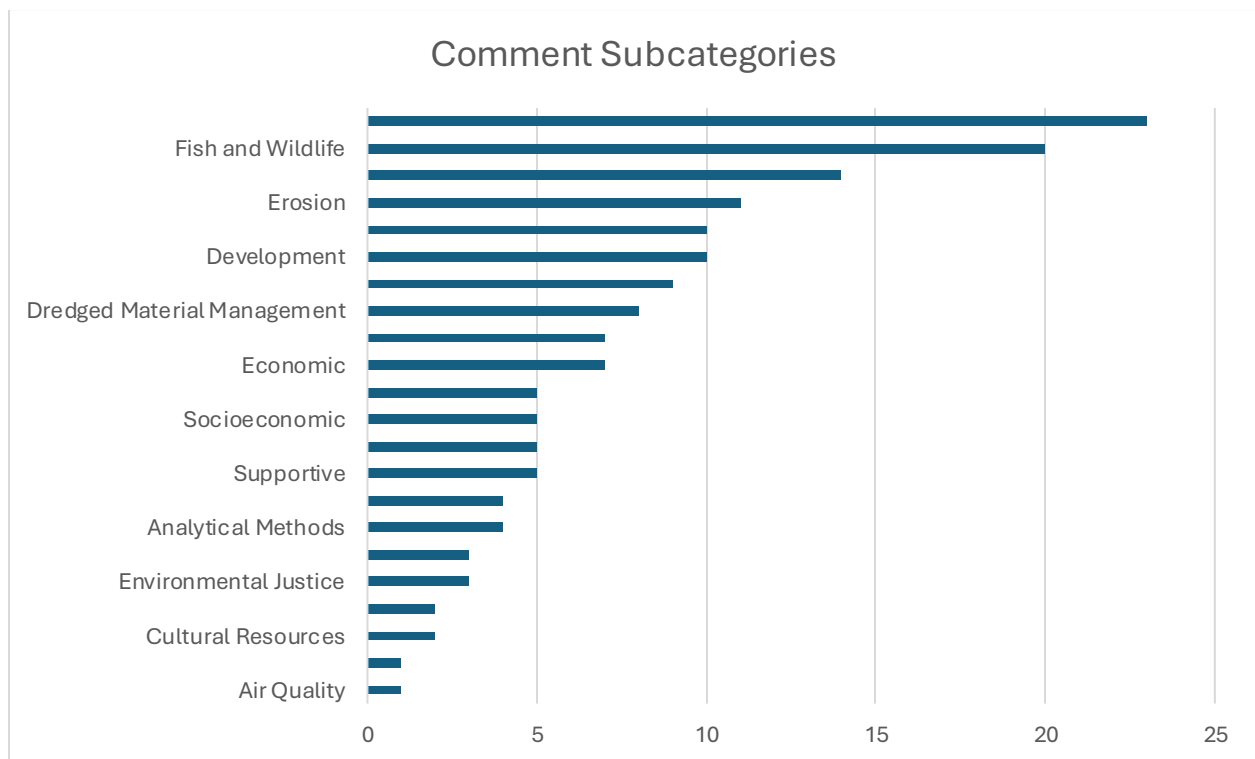


Figure 9- Subcategorization of Public Comments



### 7.0 FUTURE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Opportunities for future public involvement and comment will be provided throughout the development of the EIS, including project website updates, other formal and informal meetings with interested stakeholders. In accordance with NEPA, a Notice of Availability will also be published in the Federal Register for both the Draft EIS and the Final EIS. The Wilmington District will forward local public notices to both the Wilmington's Regulatory Division mailing lists and the project-specific mailing list and will publish meeting announcements through various media outlets. In addition, there will be a 45-day public review period and a public engagement meeting for the Draft EIS.





## ATTACHMENT A

Notice of Intent

## ATTACHMENT B

News Release



# NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

For Immediate Release:

Contact:  
Dave Connolly, 910.251.4626

### USACE Wilmington to hold public meetings for the Wilmington Harbor 403 Project

**WILMINGTON, N.C.-** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will host a series of public engagements during the Wilmington Harbor 403 scoping comment period. The meetings offer an opportunity for participants to engage with members of our team and learn about the conditionally authorized project to deepen the harbor to a depth of 47'. The intent of these engagements is to ensure stakeholders know when and how to engage, the type of input that will be helpful, and have adequate project information to engage.

The Corps is partnering with the North Carolina State Ports Authority for the Wilmington Harbor 403 Letter Report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We are committed to meaningful engagements with the public as early and often as possible and look forward to making that happen. For virtual meeting links, additional information about the project, and to learn more about how to submit comments, please visit our website: <https://wilmington-harbor-usace-saw.hub.arcgis.com/>

Public comments need to be received within 30 days of the publication of the Notice of Intent for full consideration.

Virtual Public Meeting Information		
DATE	CONTENT	MEETING TIME
June 4, 2024	Session 1. Plan Formulation, NEPA, Cultural Resources, Social Effects, & Economics	1:00-3:00 pm
June 5, 2024	Session 2. Ecological Resources	1:00-3:00 pm
June 6, 2024	Session 3. Physical Resources	1:00-3:00 pm



## **ATTACHMENT C**

### **Media Advisory**



## **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

For Immediate Release:

Contact:  
Dave Connolly, 910.251.4626

### **MEDIA ADVISORY**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District would like to invite you to cover the public meeting for the ongoing 403 Letter Report and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) taking place on Thursday, June 13, 2024, 3:00-7:00 pm, at Sunset Park Elementary School 613 Alabama Ave, Wilmington, NC 28401.

The event offers an opportunity for participants to engage with members of our team, learn about the conditionally authorized project to deepen the harbor to a depth of 47', the development of the Letter Report, and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The intent of these engagements is to ensure stakeholders know when and how to engage, the type of input that will be helpful, and have adequate project information to engage.

Please RSVP to [SAW-publicaffairs@usace.army.mil](mailto:SAW-publicaffairs@usace.army.mil) no later than close of business Tuesday, June 11, 2024, if you plan on covering this event.

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**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS –WILMINGTON DISTRICT**  
69 DARLINGTON AVE, WILMINGTON, N.C. 28403  
[WWW.SAW.USACE.ARMY.MIL](http://WWW.SAW.USACE.ARMY.MIL)



**ATTACHMENT D:**

Public Scoping Meeting Sign-In Sheet



## **ATTACHMENT E:**

Email Notification



**ATTACHMENT F:**

Regulatory Public Notice



**ATTACHMENT G:**

NOI Public Engagement Presentations



**ATTACHMENT H:**

Public Meeting Materials





**ATTACHMENT I:**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Agency Response