



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers ®**  
Wilmington District

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## **General Re-evaluation Report and Environmental Assessment Surf City, Onslow and Pender Counties, North Carolina Coastal Storm Risk Management Project**



**Appendix M: Project Correspondence  
Draft**

**May 2024**



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
69 DARLINGTON AVENUE  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28403-1343

CESAW-ZC

13 January 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR Chief of Planning and Policy Division, USACE, South Atlantic Division (Attn: CESAD-PD, Eric Summa), 60 Forsyth St SW, Atlanta, GA 30303-8801

SUBJECT: Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General Reevaluation Report (GRR) – Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding

1. Reference: Letter to Town of North Topsail Beach, 12 JAN 2023
2. This memorandum documents scope, schedule and funding to support the recommendation to proceed with a General Reevaluation Report (GRR) for a Surf City, NC only Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) project. The original project was authorized as part of the Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management project in WRRDA 2014 and funded for construction through the Disaster Relief Act (DRA) of 2019. In July 2021, North Topsail Beach notified the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District (SAW) of their intent to not proceed with the town's portion of the project. A GRR for Surf City only must be approved in order to proceed with construction under DRA 19. The intent of this GRR is to receive authorization for the Surf City portion and document a 50-year Federal participation in the project.
3. Study Scope: The below scope of work is recommended to complete the GRR. The Wilmington District is proposing to use available information, where appropriate, from the 2010 Feasibility Report and the 2022 Draft Validation Report to show that a project, which only includes Surf City (without the North Topsail Beach portion), is economically justified, environmentally acceptable and engineeringly feasible (technically sound).
  - a. Plan Formulation: Plan formulation is proposed only to the extent of reducing the length of the authorized project to be within the town of Surf City only. The study will evaluate the authorized template for Surf City as a separate element and will remove the authorized template located in the town of North Topsail Beach. The GRR will describe changed conditions since authorization and if they impact the authorized template for Surf City. The team will not reformulate alternatives or run new engineering and economic models but will only confirm the existing authorized plan within Surf City is still feasible based on current USACE policies, guidance, and regulations.
  - b. Economics: A level 1 economic analysis will be conducted based on the recertified cost estimate to confirm that the authorized template for Surf City

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SUBJECT: Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General  
Reevaluation Report (GRR) – Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding

remains economically justified based on benefits from the 2010 Feasibility Report. No new modeling conducted. The GRR will describe any changed conditions in the structure inventory along with any risks and uncertainties if there may be potential impacts to authorized project benefits.

- c. Environmental: An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be completed to assess impacts from implementation of the authorized project within the Surf City town limits. Several environmental compliance activities were completed as part of the draft validation report efforts in 2021 and 2022. The GRR will affirm or update those requirements as appropriate and include final environmental compliance summaries and documentation in the EA which supplements the original Integrated Feasibility and EIS.
- d. Engineering: A qualitative risk assessment will be performed to determine the likelihood and consequences of poor project performance given the absence of the North Topsail Beach segment, as well as potential actions to mitigate poor project performance. Additionally, a transition (taper) template will be designed between Surf City and North Topsail Beach. Since the GRR will have no new reformulation and therefore no alternatives to compare, a risk assessment as described in ER 1105-2-101 will not be part of the GRR scope. No additional Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) model will be done. The GRR will confirm that the conditions have not changed and but if shown otherwise, the existing H&H model from 2010 to conduct any additional analysis needed. Parking and public access for the project will be confirmed.
- e. Cost Certification: The project cost estimate will be updated based on the findings from the GRR. The updated project cost estimate will undergo Agency Technical Review (ATR) and certification by Walla Walla District's Cost Mandatory Center of Expertise.
- f. Real Estate: Surf City has already begun purchasing real estate for the project. While real estate requirements for the Federal Project are based on the 2014 authorized plan within Surf City, they are not expected to change. However, the remaining real estate requirements needed to implement the project will be revalidated during preparation of the GRR. The sponsor has been informed they will receive no credit for any real estate acquired prior to executing a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA).
- g. Reviews: A Review Plan will be developed for the GRR. It will be endorsed by the Coastal PCX and approved by the South Atlantic Division. Reviews for the

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SUBJECT: Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General  
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study will consist of District Quality Control (DQC), ATR, and Policy Compliance and Legal Review. The review plan will seek approval for an exclusion to conduct a Type I Independent External Peer Review (IEPR).

- h. Public Engagement: There will be at least one public meeting to show the new plan for Surf City only and receive input on the new plan. Public meetings will either be in person and/or available virtually.

4. Study Schedule: The following table represents the proposed GRR schedule.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Start Date (M/D/Y)</b>	<b>Completion Date (M/D/Y)</b>	<b>Incremental Funding</b>	<b>Cumulative Funding</b>
Kick-off IPR Milestone*	01/24/23	<b>1/24/23</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$15,000
Review Plan - Approved	01/24/23	<b>3/28/23</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$30,000
Project Management Plan & Meetings	01/24/23	<b>3/28/23</b>	<b>\$35,000</b>	\$65,000
Compile GRR			<b>\$200,000</b>	
Update Engineering	01/24/23	4/10/23	\$55,000	\$120,000
Update Real Estate	01/24/23	4/10/23	\$20,000	\$140,000
Update Environmental in an EA	01/24/23	4/10/23	\$75,000	\$215,000
Draft Cost Estimate	01/24/23	4/17/23	\$25,000	\$240,000
Level 1 Economics Analysis	01/24/23	4/24/23	\$25,000	\$265,000
IPR #1	05/03/23	<b>5/03/23</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	\$285,000
District Quality Control (DQC) – Draft Report	5/15/23	<b>5/25/23</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	\$315,000
District Legal Review – Draft Report	5/26/23	<b>5/31/23</b>	<b>\$0</b>	\$315,000
Submit Draft Report for ATR, Cost Certification, Public, Policy and Legal Review	06/14/23	<b>7/14/23</b>	<b>\$120,000</b>	\$435,000
IPR #2 (ADM)	08/10/23	<b>08/10/23</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>	\$465,000
Revise Report based on ADM results	08/11/23	<b>08/18/23</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>	\$490,000
DQC & District Legal Review Final Report	08/21/23	<b>09/05/23</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$505,000

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SUBJECT: Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General  
Reevaluation Report (GRR) – Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding

Submit Final Report for ATR, Cost Certification, Policy and Legal Review	09/12/23	<b>09/26/23</b>	<b>\$105,000</b>	\$610,000
Draft Chief's Report	10/10/23	<b>10/10/23</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$625,000
IPR #3	10/17/23	<b>10/17/23</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$650,000
State and Agency Review	10/24/2023	<b>11/21/23</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	\$665,000
Signed Chief's Report	12/05/23		<b>\$25,000</b>	\$690,000

\*Tentative start date contingent upon receipt of DRA-19 funding

5. Funding: The GRR would be funded through DRA19 at 100% Federal expense. A total of \$700,000 is requested to complete the GRR as shown in the table above. This amount includes an overall contingency of \$155,000.

6. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Kent Tranter, Project Manager, at [kent.tranter@usace.army.mil](mailto:kent.tranter@usace.army.mil) or (910) 251-4034.

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CHRISTINE M. BRAYMAN  
Deputy District Engineer  
for Programs and Project Management

cc: Jackie Keiser, HERD Chief



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
**69 DARLINGTON AVENUE**  
**WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28403-1343**

CESAD-PD-P

13 January 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR Chief, Planning and Policy Division (E. Bush) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, (CECW-SAD/Susan Lucas), 441 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20314-1000

SUBJECT: Endorsement, and Limited Vertical Team Alignment of Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding, Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General Reevaluation Report (GRR)

REFERENCES:

- a. Memorandum from Wilmington District, Subject: Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General Reevaluation Report (GRR) – Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding, 13 JAN 2023
  - b. Letter to Town of North Topsail Beach, JAN 2023
  - c. Memorandum for Commander, USACE, Surf City, North Carolina, Coastal Storm Risk Management Study (CSRM), Disaster Relief Act of 2019 (DRA19), Proposed Scope of Work for General Reevaluation Report (GRR), 26 SEP 2022
1. This is the South Atlantic Division's Endorsement and a statement of Vertical Alignment of the above referenced proposal from South Atlantic Division, Wilmington District's proposal to implement a Coastal Storm Risk Management General Re-Evaluation Report in support of the community of Surf City, North Carolina.
  2. Background: The Surf City and North Topsail Beach Chief's Report was signed 30 December 2010. The project was authorized for construction in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) of 2014. The project was approved for funding under the Disaster Relief Act of 2019 (DRA19) (Public Law 116-20), in the amount of \$237M in January 2020 to complete the design of the project. The authorized project was formulated as a single contiguous coastal beach berm and dune project with two non-Federal sponsors (NFS), the Towns of Surf City, NC (Surf City) and North Topsail Beach, NC (North Topsail Beach). Coordination to complete the design began in March 2020 and has continued throughout the last two years. In 2021 and in more recent conversations, North Topsail Beach informed Wilmington District that they cannot support the financial commitments of a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) and recommended descopeing them from the effort. The remaining NFS Surf City, is prepared to proceed with construction of the Federal Project and has begun obtaining real estate at their own expense. Surf City was impacted by Hurricane Florence in 2018 and remains vulnerable to flood risk from coastal storms with each subsequent hurricane season.



## CESAD-PD-P

SUBJECT: Endorsement, and Limited Vertical Team Alignment of Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding, Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRМ) General Reevaluation Report (GRR)

3. Current Challenge: There is a legal constraint with using DRA 2019 construction funds. In summary, the project cannot be constructed in phases. Once a project begins construction using DRA 2019 funds, the entire project must be completed with DRA 2019 funds. In a typical Federal project, if one of the sponsors is unwilling to sign the PPA, the remaining partner could enter into an agreement for their phase of the project and their portion could be constructed if it was economically justified, engineeringly feasible, and environmentally acceptable. In order to implement Surf City under the legal constraint of DRA 2019, the North Topsail Beach portion must be removed from the Federal project.
4. Vertical Alignment: In the months of September through November of 2022, the background and current challenges were briefed through the Coastal Planning Center for Expertise, Headquarters and through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. The result of the conversations was a recommendation from all entities that a General Evaluation Report which individually examines the feasibility of a separate and distinct recommendation for Surf City and a proffered Chief's Report is the best path for expeditious storm risk management measures to the community.
5. Availability of Funding: The GRR would be funded through DRA19 Investigations at 100% Federal expense. A total of \$700,000 is requested to complete the GRR as shown in the table above. This amount includes an overall contingency of \$155,000.
6. Risk and Risk Management: The City of North Topsail has indicated in meetings and in writing that they understand and accept the risks of deauthorization. To further address this risk, Wilmington District has issued an additional letter to the City of North Topsail (reference 2) to assure that the city will continue to endorse this path. The second risk is that the team is recommending performing a Level 1 Economic Analysis supported by the original modeling performed for the 2010 Feasibility Study and Chief's Report. This risk was discussed with members of the Office of Water Policy Review and with the Coastal Center for Expertise. All have agreed that performance of additional modeling will not enhance the recommendation significantly and therefore is not recommended.
7. Reviews: A Review Plan will be developed for the study and will be endorsed by the Planning Center of Expertise for Coastal Storm Risk Management and approved by the South Atlantic Division. Reviews for the study will consist of District Quality Control, Policy and Legal Compliance Review and Agency and Technical Review. The review plan will seek approval for an exclusion to conduct a Type I Independent External Peer Review.

CESAD-PD-P

SUBJECT: Endorsement, and Limited Vertical Team Alignment of Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding, Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General Reevaluation Report (GRR)

8. South Atlantic Division fully endorses the Wilmington District's GRR Scope Memo outlining scope, schedule, and cost recognizing the urgency to construct the Surf City project as soon as possible. The SAD Memo attached dated 22 September requesting DRA funding for Surf City is still applicable and included by reference here.
9. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mr. Wilbert Paynes, Review Manager, at [wilbert.v.paynes@usace.army.mil](mailto:wilbert.v.paynes@usace.army.mil).

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ERIC P. SUMMA  
Chief, Planning and Policy  
South Atlantic Division

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
441 G STREET, NW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20314-1000

CECW-SAD

04-May-23

MEMORANDUM FOR Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)

SUBJECT: Surf City, North Carolina, Coastal Storm Risk Management Study, Disaster Relief Act of 2019, Proposed Scope of Work for General Reevaluation Report

1. References:

- a. Town of North Topsail Beach, letter, 18 November 2022 (enclosure 1)
- b. CESAW-ZC, memorandum (Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General Reevaluation Report (GRR) – Proposed Scope, Schedule, and Funding), 13 January 2023 (enclosure 2)
- c. CESAD-PD-P, memorandum (Endorsement, and Limited Vertical Team Alignment of Proposed Scope, Schedule and Funding, Surf City, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) General Reevaluation Report (GRR)), 13 January 2023 (enclosure 3)

2. Purpose. To request your concurrence on an appended scope of work for a limited General Reevaluation Report (GRR), resulting in a Chief's Report, to examine the feasibility of implementing Surf City as a stand-alone project and to deauthorize North Topsail Beach.

3. Background. The towns of Surf City and North Topsail Beach Chief's Report was signed on 30 December 2010. The project was authorized for construction in the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (Public Law (PL) 113-121). The project was approved for construction funding under the Disaster Relief Act of 2019 (DRA 2019) (PL 116-20), in the amount of \$237M in January 2020. The authorized project was formulated as a single contiguous coastal beach berm and dune project with two non-federal sponsors (NFS), the Towns of Surf City, North Carolina (NC) (Surf City) and North Topsail Beach, NC (North Topsail Beach). Coordination to complete the design began in March 2020 and has continued throughout the last two years. In 2021 and in more recent conversations, North Topsail Beach informed the Corps that they cannot support the financial commitments of a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) and recommended descoping them from the effort. The remaining NFS Surf City, is prepared to proceed with construction of the federal project and has begun obtaining real estate at their own expense. Surf City was impacted by Hurricane Florence in 2018 and remains vulnerable to flood risk from coastal storms with each subsequent hurricane season. This memorandum attempts to lay out the current challenges and

most expedited path forward to deliver a CSRM project to the Town of Surf City, NC using DRA 2019 funds.

4. Current Challenge. There is a legal constraint with using DRA 2019 construction funds. In summary, the project cannot be constructed in phases. Once a project begins construction using DRA 2019 funds, the entire project must be completed with DRA 2019 funds. In a typical federal project, if one of the sponsors is unwilling to sign the PPA, the remaining partner could enter into an agreement for their phase of the project and their portion could be constructed if it was technically feasible, economically justified, and environmentally acceptable. To implement Surf City under the legal constraint of DRA 2019, the North Topsail Beach portion must be removed from the federal project (i.e., deauthorized). Additionally, in order for the Surf City portion of the project to be constructed using DRA 2019 funding, and to be eligible for additional assistance under PL 84-99 in the future, it will have to be reauthorized as a stand-alone project. The proposed GRR would result in a Chief's Report that would not only recommend deauthorization of North Topsail, but would also recommend the authorization of Surf City, NC as a stand-alone CSRM project. Implementation Guidance, and PL 116-20, state that an unauthorized project that is studied using investigations funds from PL 116-20 may also be constructed using the construction funds from that same appropriation law as long as the Secretary finds the project to be technically feasible, economically justified, and environmentally acceptable. Conducting the GRR with DRA 2019 investigations would then allow the Surf City project to be constructed utilizing the current working estimate of \$237M while awaiting future authorization as a federal project.

5. Current Status. A Draft Validation Report only for Surf City was developed by the Corps in April 2022. The preliminary findings showed that the Surf City component of the federal project constituted approximately 60-65% of the entire authorized project (dune and berm) but as a stand-alone project, remained technically feasible, economically justified, and environmentally acceptable. Further coordination with the vertical team resulted in a recommendation of a limited GRR to deauthorize the North Topsail Beach portion of the project, due to the challenge/constraint discussed in paragraph 4 above. The Corps has held several meetings with both Surf City and North Topsail Beach explaining the challenges of not executing the PPA. Subsequently a meeting with North Topsail Beach was held on 19 August 2022 to explain that a new post-authorization study is being proposed that will focus only on Surf City, which could possibly result in the eventual deauthorization of their portion of the federal project. Representatives from North Topsail Beach expressed no opposition or concerns with this possible outcome and its impact on their community. In a letter dated 18 November 2022 to the Corps, North Topsail Beach acknowledged and reaffirmed their understanding of becoming deauthorized (reference 1.a).

CECW-SAD

SUBJECT: Surf City, North Carolina, Coastal Storm Risk Management Study, Disaster Relief Act of 2019, Proposed Scope of Work for General Reevaluation Report

6. Recommendation. It is my recommendation that an appended scope of work for a limited GRR be pursued, resulting in a Chief's Report, to examine the feasibility of implementing Surf City as a stand-alone project and to deauthorize North Topsail Beach. I request your concurrence with this recommendation. Concurrence on this path is time sensitive as vertical alignment on the GRR scope of work may enable inclusion in the DRA 2019 Investigations list, which the Corps is currently preparing. Twelve months and \$700K are required for this limited GRR effort.

7. If there are any questions, please contact Susan Lucas, Deputy Chief, South Atlantic Division Regional Integration Team, at (904) 860-2211 or e-mail at [susan.s.lucas@usace.army.mil](mailto:susan.s.lucas@usace.army.mil).

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3 Encls

1. North Topsail Beach Letter,  
18 Nov 22
2. SAW Proposed Surf City GRR Memo,  
13 Jan 23
3. SAD Endorsement Memo, 13 Jan 23

EDWARD E. BELK, JR. P.E.  
Director of Civil Works

# *Town of North Topsail Beach*

Joann M. McDermon, Mayor  
Mike Benson, Mayor Pro Tem

Chief William Younginer  
Acting Town Manager

Aldermen:

Richard Grant  
Tom Leonard  
Susan Meyer

Sherrie L. Hancock  
Town Clerk



*Nature's Tranquil Beauty*

## **Memorandum**

**To:** Pam Castens, Project Director, USACE Engineers, Wilmington District

**From:** Mayor Joann McDermon on Behalf of the Board of Aldermen

**Subject:** USACE Response by North Topsail Beach, July 1, 2021

Thank you for your email of June 14, 2021. This response is on behalf of the Board of Alderman for North Topsail Beach (NTB) regarding the Surf City / North Topsail Beach, NC Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM or "Project") Project.

## **History**

The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) CSRM Project has been going on for over twenty years. In 2010 the Project construction cost was estimated to be \$123.1 million, and the 50-year Renourishment was \$227.8 million. In 2015 the Project construction cost was \$144.3 million, and the 50-year Renourishment was \$245.4 million. Most recently, in 2020, the Project construction cost estimate is \$237 million and the 50-yr Renourishment cost estimate is an additional \$672.1 million.

Most importantly, until 2019 no federal funding was approved for the Project, which meant it was in "limbo" as to whether and when the Project would occur. Given the uncertainty over the Project's viability and faced with substantial beach erosion in the area of the Project, NTB embarked upon its own Storm Risk Mitigation Project (NTSBRM) in the 2014/2015 time period spending over \$15 million dollars of town funds.<sup>1</sup> The result was a FEMA Engineered beach, which gave NTB increased coverage from FEMA.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There are three towns on Topsail Island. The town of Topsail Beach and NTB chose to initiate their own Beach Risk Management Programs, while Surf City has not to this day.

<sup>2</sup> See attached. Non-engineered beaches only qualify for "Emergency work" i.e. dune restoration while Engineered beaches are eligible for replacement of sand loss from the dune and from the beach itself.

The result of this Program was that the Phase 5 area covered under the CSRM is much more robust than the areas of Surf City which do not have engineered beaches. (See discussion below)<sup>3</sup>

The history provides perspective for the actions of NTB, including the questions of whether, given the substantial investment the town has already made in the CSRM project area, and the robustness and protection of the beach compared to the other non NTB areas of the Project, is the CSRM Project a proper use of NTB taxpayers' funds. This is a question that the Board has wrestled with from the beginning, recognizing that the CSRM Project is exciting, and the excellent work done by the USACE team.

### **Financial impact on NTB**

As mentioned above the cost of the Project and to the town has risen substantially over the past twenty years, more than doubling. As the Corps team has already pointed out, the current estimate was done in 2019 and thus the impact of inflation is not known. The parameters of the Project are that the current Project "cost" is an estimate and that the actual cost, determined only after bids are received, will be the fiscal responsibility of the participants. The cost could go up or down, but recent market trends showing significant inflation increases, particularly in construction, are likely to increase the cost of the NTB portion of the Project as it will be many months before it is bid. Additionally, a number of other N.C. beach communities are embarking on nourishment projects, stressing a limited supply of firms performing nourishment. What this means as a practical matter is that the town assumes fiscal responsibility for an unknown project cost.

Compounding these issues, is the revelation regarding "non qualifying" areas of the Project. In a June discussion and follow up email it was communicated to NTB that 13.57% of the Project area, reflecting 7,092 feet of shoreline, was ineligible for Cost Sharing/Financing, totaling \$32,170,960.46 of which \$19,401,466.14 was the responsibility of NTB<sup>4</sup> and the remaining \$12,769,494.32 the responsibility of Surf City.

It was also communicated to NTB that in addition to the USACE not making any contribution towards the ineligible area, it also would not provide financing for that area, and that NTB (and Surf City) must provide the totality of its share (the \$19 million) before USACE would even send out the bids for the Project. This would require NTB to raise, in addition to its share of the eligible areas, a prepayment larger than its initial share of the Project. In addition, this creates a funding structure that would be prohibitive for NTB. This "structure" would mean that the renourishment funding<sup>5</sup> would be for both

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<sup>3</sup> Unlike in Surf City where the USACE project includes the entire town's shoreline [minus the ineligible unbuilt lots] for NTB the USACE project only places sand on our southernmost 4 miles of NTB's 11.2 miles of shoreline. As shown below, the financial commitments for the Project would seriously jeopardize NTB's ability to undertake Projects which would protect the remaining 7.2 miles of its beaches.

<sup>4</sup> The State of North Carolina will NOT contribute a share of this. In an email dated June 16, 2021, Mr. Hart of the State Division of Natural Resources stated "After reviewing your request the state funds would have to be matched to federal funds. The language relating to these funds can be found in Session Law 2020-79 (Part IV section 11. (b)) includes the language that these funds match federal funds. These state funds cannot be used in matching only local funds and would require federal funds to utilized.

<sup>5</sup> NTB assumes that areas ineligible for the Project would likewise be ineligible for the renourishment, although it is possible that certain lots could be developed, and parking addressed. For planning purposes, given the uncertainty of these, NTB must consider the funding of renourishment to be the same as the original Project.

the “upfront” payment for the ineligible areas and funding for the renourishment, in effect creating a “do loop” funding cycle.

The second issue which occurs as a result of the ineligible areas, and USACE not providing financing, is that NTB would be required to go to the Local Government Commission (LGC), for approval for borrowing the \$19,401,466.14. This requires that NTB request a certain amount to borrow and demonstrate how it plans to pay for it. With the Project cost unknown until bids are received, it is not likely that the LGC can approve NTB’s request given their statutory direction that the borrowing be “adequate and not excessive”. Without a bid being taken before NTB borrows the determination of adequate but not excessive is not able to be determined.

Further, the latest information provided to NTB by the USACE regarding the amount to be financed, the original estimate was around \$16 million, but the June estimate is now \$25,782,903.68,<sup>6</sup> a 56% increase.

Finally in the issue of financing, the above may put NTB in the position of not being able to fund this fall’s FEMA project which is mostly in the NTB Project area. The current estimate for this FEMA Cat G project is approximately \$14 million and FEMA only “reimburses” NTB for costs associated with this project, meaning that NTB must have financing in place, with LGC approval, or lose out on millions of dollars of sand.

## **FEMA**

Another unresolved and fundamental issue for NTB is the role of FEMA. As stated above, NTB has spent millions of dollars in the Project area to create an “engineered” beach and the protection that provides. The unresolved issue is when does FEMA cease being responsible for the Project beach, especially does this occur at the signing of the PPA or the signing of the construction contract for the NTB area. If the former, and with the NTB construction contract is not let for many months if not years, NTB could be faced with the impact of a major storm significantly damaging the Project area, but without funding by either FEMA or the USACE.<sup>7</sup> This issue is now being considered by FEMA but a decision by the USACE deadline is not likely. NTB cannot take this risk.

## **NTB’s ability to fund**

The only area of revenue to fund the Project under the control of NTB is in property taxes and there is a maximum of \$1.50 per 1,000 of value under NC General Statutes. NTB’s tax rate is \$0.46, effective July 1, 2021. Per an analysis performed by NTB outside financial advisor, a “town wide” one cent (\$0.01) per one hundred of property value raises around \$100,000 annually. The original \$16 million would need \$3 million annually to pay off or a \$0.30 increase. The new nearly \$26 million would need \$5 million

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<sup>6</sup> NTB does not understand how this amount could go up as it represents our percentage share of the “eligible” Project cost of \$237,000,000 but now \$32,170,960 has been removed so it is counterintuitive that the NTB loan amount should go up. With 13.57% of the Project cost being excluded, it is logical that the “borrowed” amount should go down by around the same percentage.

<sup>7</sup> USACE has indicated that if “sand” is lost they can cover this in the construction bid. The problem is that this will increase the cost of the project, and NTB’s cost will increase versus being reimbursed by FEMA.



annually or a \$0.50 increase. Raising the \$19 million prepayment <sup>8</sup> would add another \$3.6 million annually or a \$0.36 increase. The current tax rate of \$0.46, plus the new \$0.50 (\$26 million) and the \$0.36 (19 million) would total \$1.32 per or nearly a 300% increase in the Towns property taxes.<sup>9</sup> This level of taxes would be too close to the \$1.50 limit. It would also limit available dollars for nourishment cost in the other four phases of the NTB coastline.

This would create another problem for NTB in that its South Fire Station needs to be replaced and the Project could reduce or eliminate NTB's ability to fund this necessary public safety item.

### **Control of the Project area and Joint and several liability**

The PPA requires <sup>10</sup> that NTB and Surf City have "joint and several" liability. NTB is not willing to and cannot commit to sharing liability with another town.

While perhaps not considered by some to be as critical an issue as the above, in discussions with other towns that have chosen not to participate in federal projects, the ceding of control of NTB's beach to the USACE is a concern, mostly from the financial commitments. For example, if the renourishment costs escalate, or we have a recession where the town's revenues diminish, it could place NTB in the position of stress in meeting our financial commitments to the USACE (and third-party lenders) versus funding a town needs, such as public safety.

### **Response to the request for an answer regarding the approval of the PPA by July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

For the reasons noted above, the Town of North Topsail Beach is not able to meet the deadline for project commitment of the PPA by July 6, 2021. We fully understand you will need to de-scope North Topsail Beach from the project and move forward with the Surf City portion.

---

<sup>8</sup> Because as described above these prepayments would occur for renourishment as well, NTB's financial advisor recommends that any debt (NTB does not have these funds available) term must coincide with the next round of "fund raising" for maintenance nourishments.

<sup>9</sup> For comparison the Town of Topsail Beach's property tax is \$0.36

<sup>10</sup> USACE has communicated to NTB that this issue is not negotiable with them but must be worked out between NTB and Surf City.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
69 DARLINGTON AVENUE  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28403-1343

November 8, 2022

Ms. Alice Derian  
Town Manager  
2008 Loggerhead Ct  
North Topsail Beach, NC 28460


Dear Ms. Derian:

As discussed during our telephone conversation on August 19, 2022, the Wilmington District is seeking deauthorization of the North Topsail Beach portion of the Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management project. This action is a result of the letter, dated July 1, 2021, notifying the Wilmington District of the town's decision not to sign of the Project Partnership Agreement.

The Disaster Relief Act of 2019, stipulates that the funding provided must be used to construct the full authorized project. In order to proceed with construction of the Surf City portion, the North Topsail Beach section of the project must first be deauthorized. Once deauthorized, the Wilmington District (SAW) will move to construct the Surf City "only" portion of this Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) project.

SAW is proceeding with a report to deauthorize the North Topsail Beach section of the project. Please provide written response to this to acknowledge our discussions on this matter. Should the town have any questions regarding this process or its impacts, please reach out to the Point of Contact for this project: Mr. Kent Tranter, 910-251-4034, [kent.tranter@usace.army.mil](mailto:kent.tranter@usace.army.mil).

Sincerely,

  
Benjamin A. Bennett  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
District Commander

# *Town of North Topsail Beach*

Joann M. McDermon, Mayor  
Mike Benson, Mayor Pro Tem

Aldermen:  
Richard Grant  
Connie Pletl  
Tom Leonard  
Fred Fontana



Alice Derian, ICMA-CM  
Town Manager

Melinda Mier  
Town Clerk

*Nature's Tranquil Beauty*

November 18, 2022

COL Benjamin Bennett  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District

Per your request, the Town of North Topsail Beach understands that we will be deauthorized from the WRDA 2014 project. The Town of North Topsail Beach has not changed our position from the letter submitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers in July of 2021, which acknowledged the need for you to de-scope North Topsail Beach from the project and move forward with Surf City.

Please consider this a formal request to deauthorize the Town of North Topsail Beach from the WRDA 2014 project.

Sincerely,

Alice Derian, ICMA-CM  
Town Manager



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
69 DARLINGTON AVENUE  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28403-1343

January 12, 2023

Ms. Alice Derian  
Town Manager  
2008 Loggerhead Ct  
North Topsail Beach, NC 28460

Dear Ms. Derian:

On November 7, 2022, Wilmington District Commander, COL Benjamin Bennett participated in a virtual meeting with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Headquarters and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (OASA(CW)) to discuss a path forward for a Surf City only project from the Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management project authorized in 2014. This letter meets a stated requirement from that meeting to ensure that North Topsail has no concerns and understands the implications of the North Topsail portion of the project being deauthorized.

As covered in recent correspondence, the Corps is seeking authorization of a Surf City only project that does not include the North Topsail Beach portion of the currently authorized Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management project. This action is a result of the Town of North Topsail Beach letter, dated July 1, 2021, notifying the Corps of the decision not to sign the required Project Partnership Agreement.

If left unconstructed, and eventually deauthorized, the North Topsail Beach portion of the project will not be eligible for Federal participation through the Corps for maintenance, and therefore, will not receive the storm damage reduction benefits discussed in the feasibility report. Further, the North Topsail Beach portion will not have a federally maintained 50-year Coastal Storm Risk Management project, which includes cost shared Federal funds to complete periodic nourishments. Nor will it be eligible for post-storm related Flood Control and Coastal Emergencies (FCCE) funding for response and recovery activities related to the project, which provides authority and funding to restore the project up to a full project template at 100% Federal expense even after the 50-year project is complete, so long as the project remains authorized.

If the outcomes described above are consistent with the town's understanding and desires, then no further correspondence is necessary. If the Town would like to reconsider this matter, please provide a written response to this letter by 15 February 2023. Should the Corps not receive a response by this date, it will proceed as described above. Should the town have any questions regarding this process or its impacts,

please reach out to the Point of Contact for this project: Mr. Kent Tranter, 910-251-4034, [kent.tranter@usace.army.mil](mailto:kent.tranter@usace.army.mil).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine M. Brayman". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Christine M. Brayman  
Deputy District Engineer  
For Programs and Project Management



# Town of Surf City

Douglas C. Medlin, Mayor  
William J. (Buddy) Fowler, Mayor Pro-Tem  
John Koloski, Councilman

Donald R. Helms, Councilman  
Teresa B. Batts, Councilwoman  
Jeremy Shugarts, Councilman

April 22, 2022

Colonel Benjamin Bennett  
69 Darlington Ave  
Wilmington, NC 28403

Dear Colonel Bennett,

*Kent, Bob,  
Well Done & Thanks!  
✓R, COB*

I'm writing to express my sincere appreciation for all the hard work you and your team continue to put forth regarding the Surf City Coastal Storm Reduction Management project. It has been a long road to this point, and we want to reiterate the Town's commitment as a local sponsor to see this project to fruition.

Recently, town leadership met with your team, Robert Keistler and Kent Tranter, to get an update on the project. We continue to be impressed with their engagement towards providing status updates, thoughtful insight, and overall guidance, as we work through the challenges that have been presented.

It's our hope that collectively, we get this project underway and that the South Atlantic Division looks upon the Validation Report as favorable so we can bring the much-needed protection to our public infrastructure and increase the Town's resiliency towards future storm events. It is our understanding that the Report was well received, and the information contained was thoroughly put together.

If there's anything we can do for you and the Wilmington District please let us know, we look forward to seeing you soon and welcoming you back to Surf City.

Sincerely,

Douglas C. Medlin, Mayor





# Town of Surf City

Teresa B. Batts, Mayor  
Donald R. Helms, Mayor Pro-Tem  
John Koloski, Councilman

William J. Fowler, Councilman  
Jeremy Shugarts, Councilman  
Hugh Cannady, Councilman

---

May 31, 2023

US Army Corps of Engineers  
Wilmington District  
69 Darlington Avenue  
Wilmington, NC 28403

Subject: Town of Surf City Coastal Storm Risk Management Project

Colonel Benjamin Bennett,

This letter serves as acknowledgment of the Corps commitment to provide full protection of the Surf City Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) project for the Town of Surf City. Based on the Transition Map provided by the Corps, the Town of Surf City will commit to securing necessary easements, with the cooperation of the Town of North Topsail Beach, as well as provide the necessary local match to uphold our commitment to a forthcoming (PPA) Project Partnership Agreement.

The Town looks forward to our continued partnership with the Wilmington District on execution of this project.

Sincerely,

Kyle Breuer  
Town of Surf City  
Town Manager

Joann M. McDermon, Mayor  
Mike Benson, Mayor Pro Tem

Aldermen:  
Fred Fontana  
Richard Grant  
Tom Leonard  
Connie Pletl



Alice Derian, ICMA-CM  
Town Manager

Nancy Avery  
Interim Town Clerk

July 27, 2023

Colonel Benjamin A. Bennett, Commander  
US Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District  
69 Darlington Avenue  
Wilmington, NC 28403

Subject: Town of Surf City Coastal Storm Risk Management Project

Dear Colonel Bennett:

This letter serves as acknowledgment of the US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) intent to construct the Surf City portion of the previously authorized Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) project for the Town of Surf City and its impact on the Town of North Topsail Beach. The Town of North Topsail Beach has elected not to participate as a cost sharing sponsor of this project and has previously sent the Corps written notice of that election. Based on the discussions with the District and the Town of Surf City, North Topsail Beach understands that the project transition between the two towns will extend approximately 1,000 ft into the southern town limit of North Topsail Beach and include a tapered placement of sand into this transition area. This is being done to provide maximum CSRM protection for the Town of Surf City. The Town of North Topsail Beach understands that the Town of Surf City will commit to securing necessary easements as well as providing all necessary local funding to uphold commitments regarding the project, including that portion of the project that extends into North Topsail Beach. The Town of North Topsail Beach agrees to cooperate fully with the Town of Surf City in this matter and will help to communicate with its residents at the appropriate time regarding this portion of the project.

The Town looks forward to our continued partnership with the Wilmington District.

Sincerely,

Alice Derian, ICMA-CM  
Town Manager



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
69 DARLINGTON AVENUE  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28403-1343

11 March 2020

Doug Piatkowski  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
Division of Environmental Assessment  
381 Elden Street, MS4042  
Herndon, VA 20170-4817

Dear Mr. Piatkowski:

In 2011, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) completed an Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (EIS/ROD) for the Surf City and North Topsail (SCNT) Beach Coastal Storm Risk Management Project (CSRMP) in Pender and Onslow Counties, North Carolina. A Supplemental Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI) was completed in 2014 to address refinement of borrow area characterizations and to document implementation of Wilmington District's sediment compatibility practice for the SCNT project. The SCNT CSRMP project was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2014 and recently funded by Public Law 116-20, the Additional Supplemental Appropriations Disaster Relief Act, 2019. The Corps plans to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) in 2020 to address expansion of the hopper dredging window (December 1-March 31) to coincide with the beach placement window of November 16-April 30.

The Surf City and North Topsail Beach study area is located on Topsail Island, which is a 22-mile-long and 0.5-mile-wide barrier island approximately 40 miles northeast of Wilmington, North Carolina. This area is at risk from hurricanes and winter storms, which regularly erode the shoreline, causing damage to structures and environmental resources. The CSRMP project will include the creation of a 7-foot high by 50-foot optimum wide berm and a 15-foot high by 25-foot wide dune along approximately 10 miles of shoreline. Initial construction of the project will require approximately 13 million cubic yards of borrow material. Several borrow areas have been identified and are typically between one and six miles offshore and have pre-dredge bottom depths between 35 and 50 feet.

The Supplemental EA will evaluate the impacts of any changes that have occurred since completion of the 2014 EA/FONSI and will address the impacts of expanding the environmental window for construction. The currently proposed borrow sites for initial construction and nourishment intervals are located off of Topsail Island. Some of the borrow sites are inside the three mile line and some are outside the three mile line (reference attached figure).

Pursuant to 40 CFR 1501, the Corps requests that the BOEM serve as a cooperating agency during the required National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process since BOEM has jurisdiction by law over mineral leasing in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The Corps will serve as the lead federal agency to ensure NEPA compliance for the CSRMP project. The Corps further requests that BOEM serve as a cooperating agency and the Corps the lead on consultation requirements related to ESA Section 7 (50 CFR 402), NHPA Section 106 (36 CFR 800), Subpart C Consistency (15 CFR 930), and Magnusson-Stevens Section 305 (50 CFR

600). Pursuant to 50 CFR 402, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will notify the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service of its lead role and BOEM's cooperating role provided your agreement to serve as a cooperating agency. The Corps will also notify the State Historic Preservation Officer and North Carolina Division of Coastal Management of BOEM's involvement and the Corps' lead agency role. All previously conducted surveys and reports conducted by the Corps in accordance with NEPA compliance for this project will be provided to BOEM. Additionally, the Corps will include BOEM in all future correspondence with Federal and state agencies.

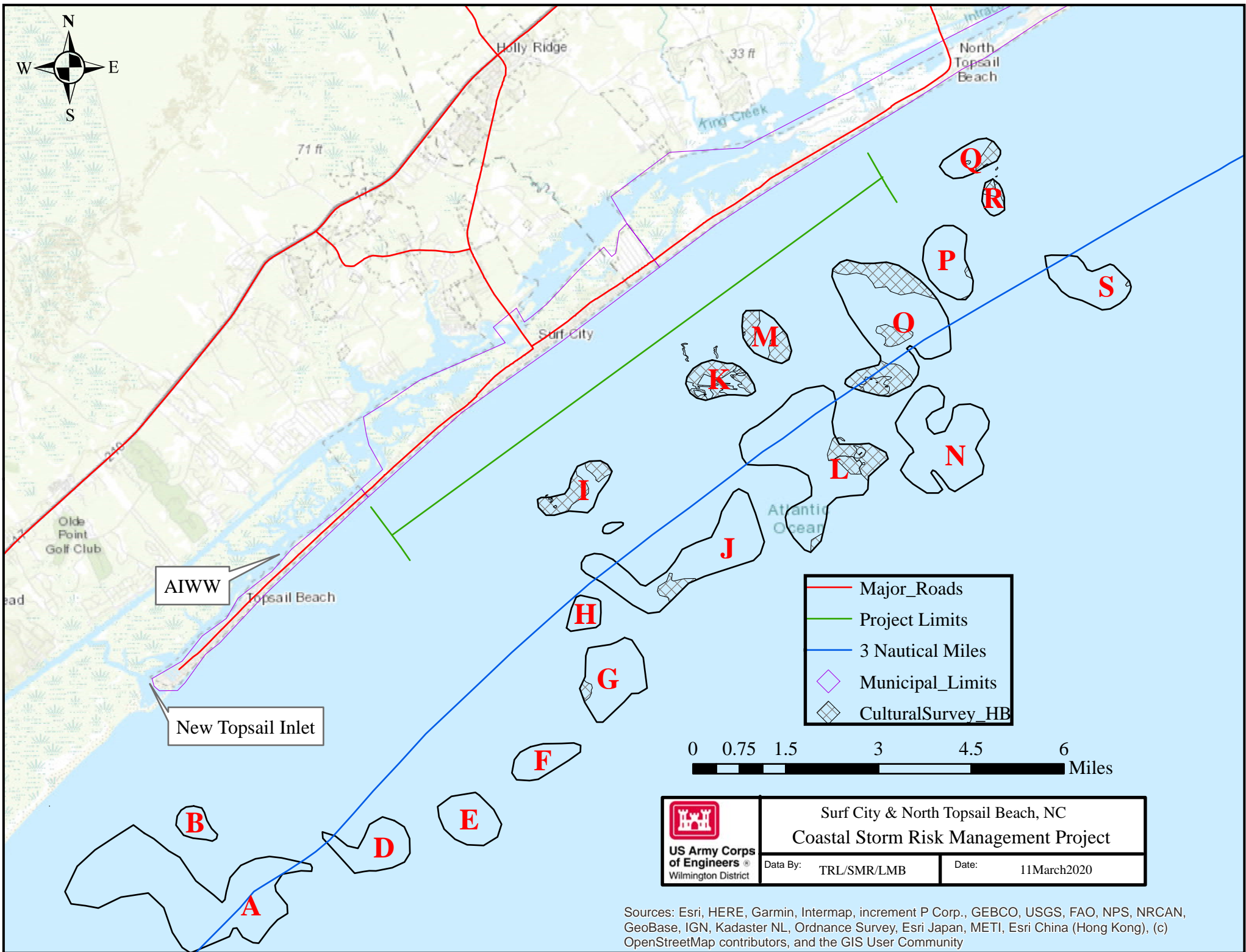
Please advise us, at your earliest convenience, as to your agency's willingness to serve as a cooperating agency in the NEPA process for this project. Eric Gasch, Environmental Resources Section, will serve as the major point of contact for any BOEM involvement in this project, and can be reached at 910-251-4553 and by email at [eric.k.gasch@usace.army.mil](mailto:eric.k.gasch@usace.army.mil) in the event that you would like additional information regarding this matter. We look forward to an efficient and productive relationship with BOEM regarding this project.

Sincerely,



Elden J. Gatwood  
Chief, Planning and  
Environmental Branch





Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
**69 DARLINGTON AVENUE**  
**WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28403-1343**

May 26, 2020

Environmental Resources Section

Dear Sir or Madam:

This scoping letter rescinds the previous scoping letter, dated March 25, 2020, for the Surf City and North Topsail Beach (SCNTB) Coastal Storm Risk Management Project (CSRM) in Pender and Onslow Counties, North Carolina. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has reevaluated the construction plan for the SCNTB CSRM project and now proposes year-round construction for the SCNTB project in lieu of only expanding the window to November 16-April 30. Year-round construction will allow contractors more flexibility to get the work done within a wider window, which will reduce risks associated with a shortage of hopper dredges, reduce overall project costs, and should result in a more timely project completion. Year-round dredging and placement will also reduce the number of disturbance events to the beaches and aquatic resources. This year-round proposal is for initial construction only, not renourishment events, which is estimated to take approximately 36 dredging months. The proposed window for periodic nourishments for the 50-year project will be November 16-April 30.

In 2011, the Corps completed an Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (EIS/ROD) for the Surf City and North Topsail Beach, North Carolina Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Feasibility Report. A Supplemental Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (SEA/FONSI) was completed in 2014 to address refinement of borrow area characterizations and to document implementation of Wilmington District's sediment compatibility practice for the SCNTB project. The SCNTB CSRM project was authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2014 and recently funded by Public Law 116-20, the Additional Supplemental Appropriations Disaster Relief Act, 2019. The Corps is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to address the proposal for year-round construction and to expand the periodic nourishment window to coincide with the beach placement window of November 16-April 30.

The SCNTB project area is located on Topsail Island, which is a 22-mile-long and 0.5-mile-wide barrier island approximately 40 miles northeast of Wilmington, North Carolina (Figure 1). This area is at risk from hurricanes and winter storms, which regularly erode the shoreline, causing damage to structures and environmental resources. The CSRM project will include the creation of a 7-foot high by 50-foot wide berm and a dune that is 15 feet high with a crest width of 25 feet, along approximately ten miles of shoreline. Initial construction of the project will require approximately 12 million cubic yards of borrow material. Several borrow areas located off of Topsail Island (Figure 2) have been identified and are located typically between one and six miles offshore with pre-dredge bottom depths between 35 and 50 feet.



Use of borrow sites, located three miles or more offshore (Outer Continental Shelf), requires a lease from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). For this reason, the BOEM is a cooperating agency on the Environmental Assessment and a lease from BOEM will be obtained prior to use of OCS borrow areas.

The EA will evaluate the impacts of any changes that have occurred since completion of the 2014 EA/FONSI, and will address the impacts of year-round dredging and placement for initial construction and window expansion from December 1- March 31 to November 16- April 30 for renourishment cycles. It is estimated that initial project construction will take approximately four years if the environmental (work) window remains limited to December 1-March 31; however, if the work window is expanded, it will allow for potential project completion on a more efficient timeline. The renourishment interval for the SCNT CSRM project is six years. An extended environmental window will reduce risks associated with availability of dredges, reduce the number of disturbance events to the beaches and aquatic resources, and support more efficient renourishment completion timelines as well as reduce overall project costs.

We are now requesting comments from stakeholders and the interested public to identify significant resources and issues of concern with regard to year-round dredging and beach placement for initial construction and an expanded window for subsequent nourishment events. Comments received as a result of this scoping letter will be considered during preparation of the EA.

The EA is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and will address the project's relationship to all applicable Federal and State laws and Executive Orders. Resources known to occur in the study area include: fisheries and benthic resources; threatened and endangered species; human resources (including socioeconomic, recreational and aesthetic resources); and cultural resources. Potential impacts to these resources, as well as water quality, air quality, and cumulative effects, will be fully addressed in the EA. Should there be other issues which you believe should be discussed in the EA, please take this opportunity to bring them to our attention.

In order to effectively address any concerns that are raised, please provide your input no later than 30 days from the date of this letter. A scoping meeting (conference call, date/time to be determined) will be held at least one week prior to the scoping comment deadline. Details regarding the scoping meeting are forthcoming. All input may be directed to Ms. Keleigh Cox, Environmental Resources Section, at (910) 251-4070 or via email at [Keleigh.C.Cox@usace.army.mil](mailto:Keleigh.C.Cox@usace.army.mil).

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Owens  
Chief, Environmental Resources Section

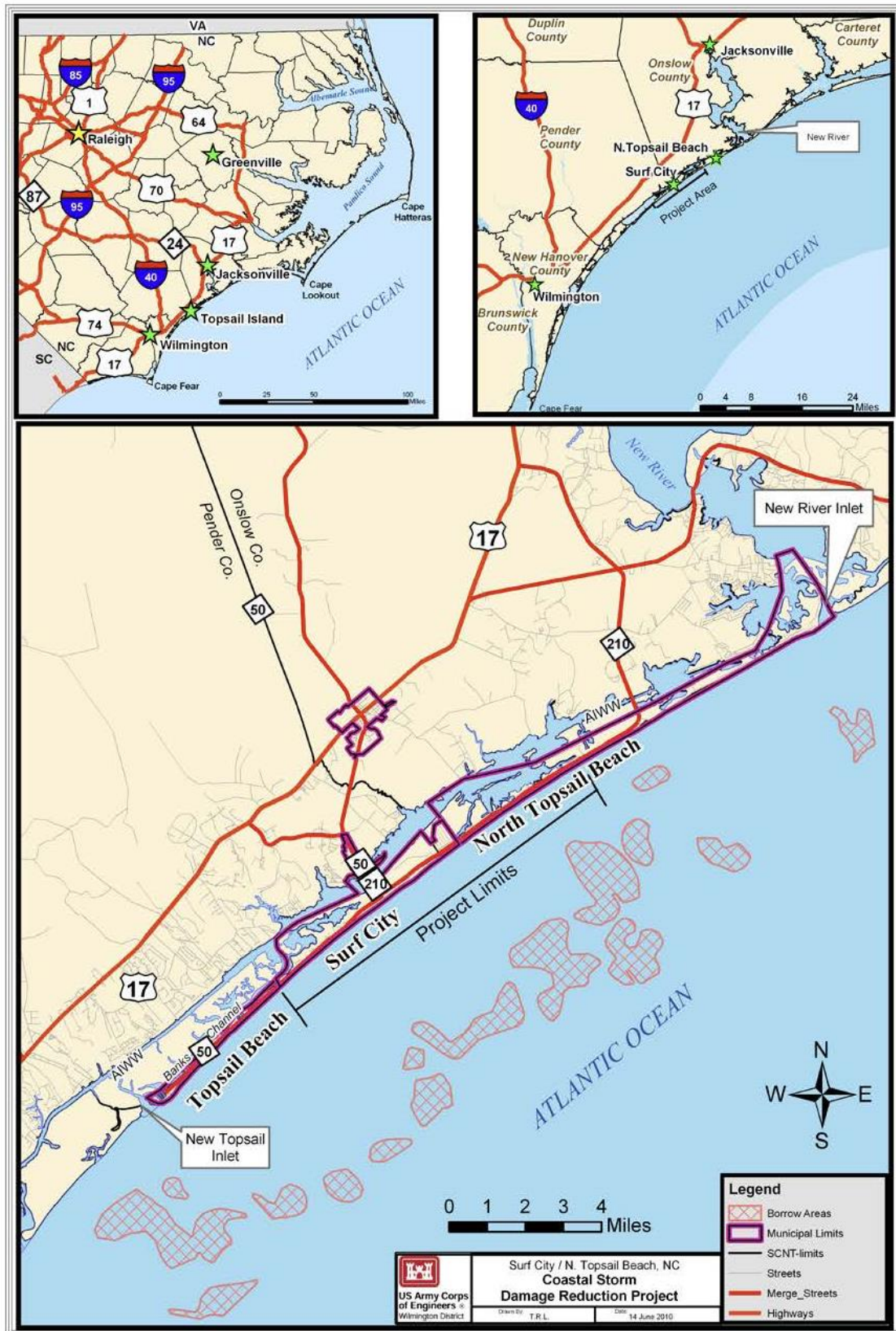


Figure 1. SCNTB CSRM Project Overview



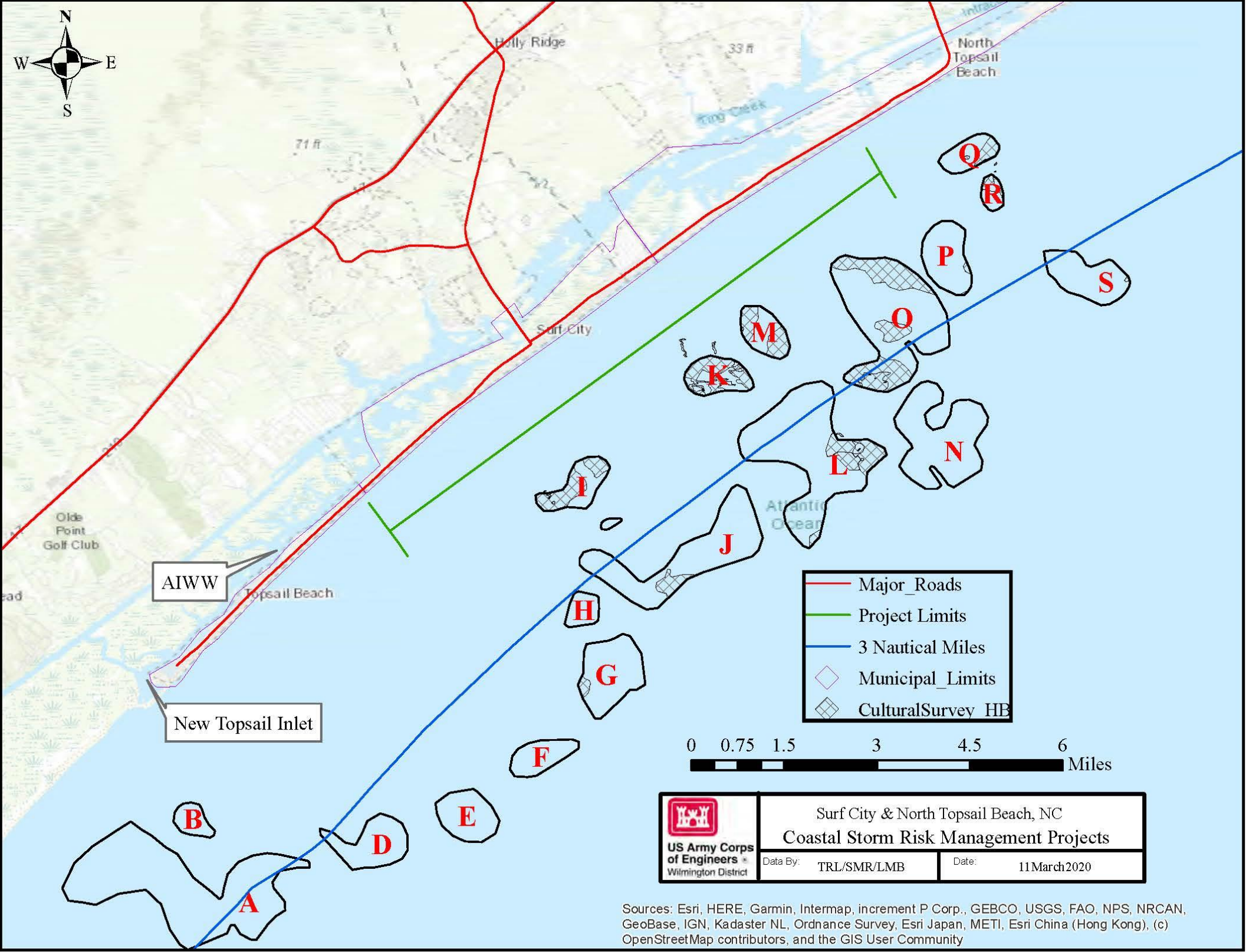


Figure 2. Identified Borrow Areas



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WILMINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
69 DARLINGTON AVENUE  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28403-1343

May 6, 2020

Planning and Environmental Branch - Environmental Resources Section

Mrs. Renee Gledhill-Earley, Environmental Review Coordinator  
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office  
4617 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4617

Dear Mrs. Gledhill-Earley:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wilmington District (Corps) is assessing effects to cultural resources associated with the Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Damage Reduction (SCNTB CSDR) Project<sup>1</sup> (hereafter Project; ER 20-0050). Specifically, the Corps is assessing effects associated with pump-out activities in areas between identified offshore sand borrow areas and the shoreline, for the entirety of the Project's footprint (Figures 1 and 2). The contract for construction of the SCNTB CSDR Project will include language allowing flexibility for the Contractor to determine the best equipment to use in constructing the Project; however, based on other similar CSDR projects in the region, it's anticipated that a hopper dredge with pump-out capability will be used to extract and temporarily hold the sand obtained from the borrow sites. Once the hopper (hull) is filled to capacity with sand, it would move to a buoy or floating platform closer to shore (between the offshore borrow site and shore) that would be connected to a submerged pipeline that extends to the placement location on the beach. The sand in the hopper would then be pumped through the pipe to the beach. The location of the pump-out buoy or platform would vary, depending on which offshore borrow site is being used. All potential borrow areas<sup>2</sup> have been previously coordinated with your office and reviewed for compliance regarding Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA; Attachment 1).

Table 7.2 and Section 8.06 of the Project's Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement<sup>1</sup> include text stating "To assure the risk of potential impacts to cultural resources within inshore areas subject to pump-out activities are avoided, specific pump-out locations would be identified, surveyed, and investigated for cultural resources in conjunction with hard bottom surveys before commencement of nourishment activities." This text was included to provide a plausible path forward concerning project implementation/construction and, chiefly, to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA regarding pump-out activities' relationship with submerged cultural resources. The Corps remains committed to avoiding Project impacts relating to cultural resources; however, to most efficiently use Project funds, the Corps now proposes to identify areas where pump-out activities (i.e., submerged dredge pipeline routes, pipeline anchor locations, etc.) **cannot** occur rather than identifying specific areas where they are to occur. The Corps feels that this proposal also satisfies outstanding

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.saw.usace.army.mil/Missions/Coastal-Storm-Risk-Management/Surf-City-and-N-Topsail-Beach/>

<sup>2</sup> Mid-Atlantic Technology and Environmental Research, Inc. (2005). An Archaeological Remote Sensing Survey of Surf City-North Topsail Beaches Offshore Borrow Areas.

obligations under Section 106 and will provide Contractors flexibility in use of their equipment, given the distances separating borrow areas from the shoreline.

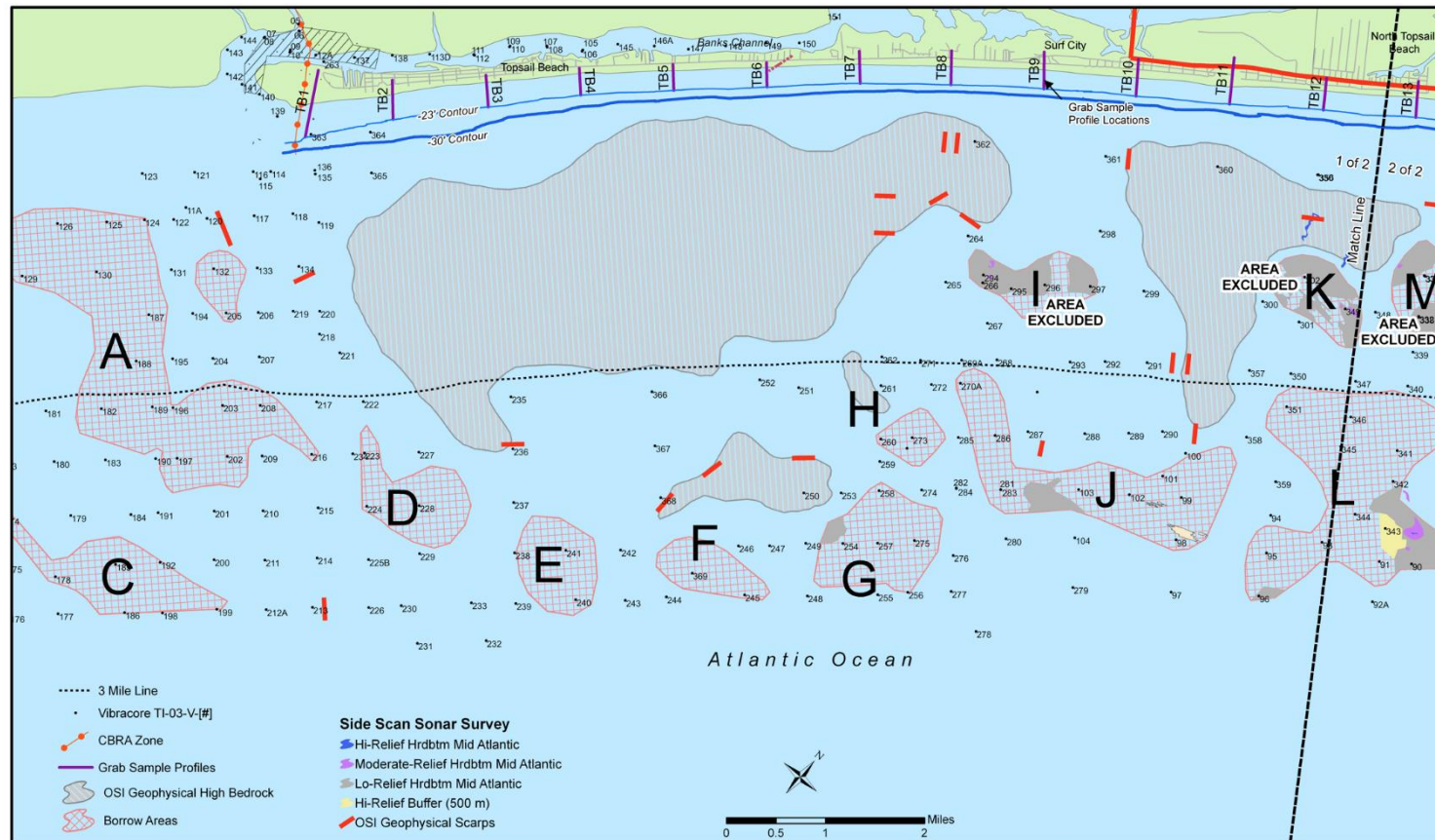
Unofficial communication with the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology's Underwater Archaeology Branch has revealed that all known submerged cultural resources requiring avoidance between the Projects' borrow areas and the shoreline (Figures 1 and 2) are identified in Figure 3, and are concentrated towards the southwestern extent of the Project near Topsail Inlet. Furthermore, best available information indicates that the probability of encountering submerged cultural resources in the Project area other than those shown in Figure 3 is low. The Corps proposes to avoid these identified resources and implement 300-foot radii buffers around them during pump-out activities.

Regarding continued compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA, the Corps has determined that there is a low likelihood that cultural resources within the Project's footprint, and specifically between potential borrow areas and the shoreline, will be affected by pump-out activities (i.e., submerged dredge pipeline routes, pipeline anchor locations, etc.) as long as these activities occur no nearer than 300-feet from the center points of identified submerged cultural resources as shown in Figure 3. At your earliest convenience, please provide comments regarding our determinations to include the coordinates of the resources shown in Figure 3, so that avoidance measures can be accurately included in contract plans and specifications. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Justin Bashaw, Environmental Resources Section, at [Justin.P.Bashaw@usace.army.mil](mailto:Justin.P.Bashaw@usace.army.mil), or you may call him at (910) 251-4581.

Sincerely,

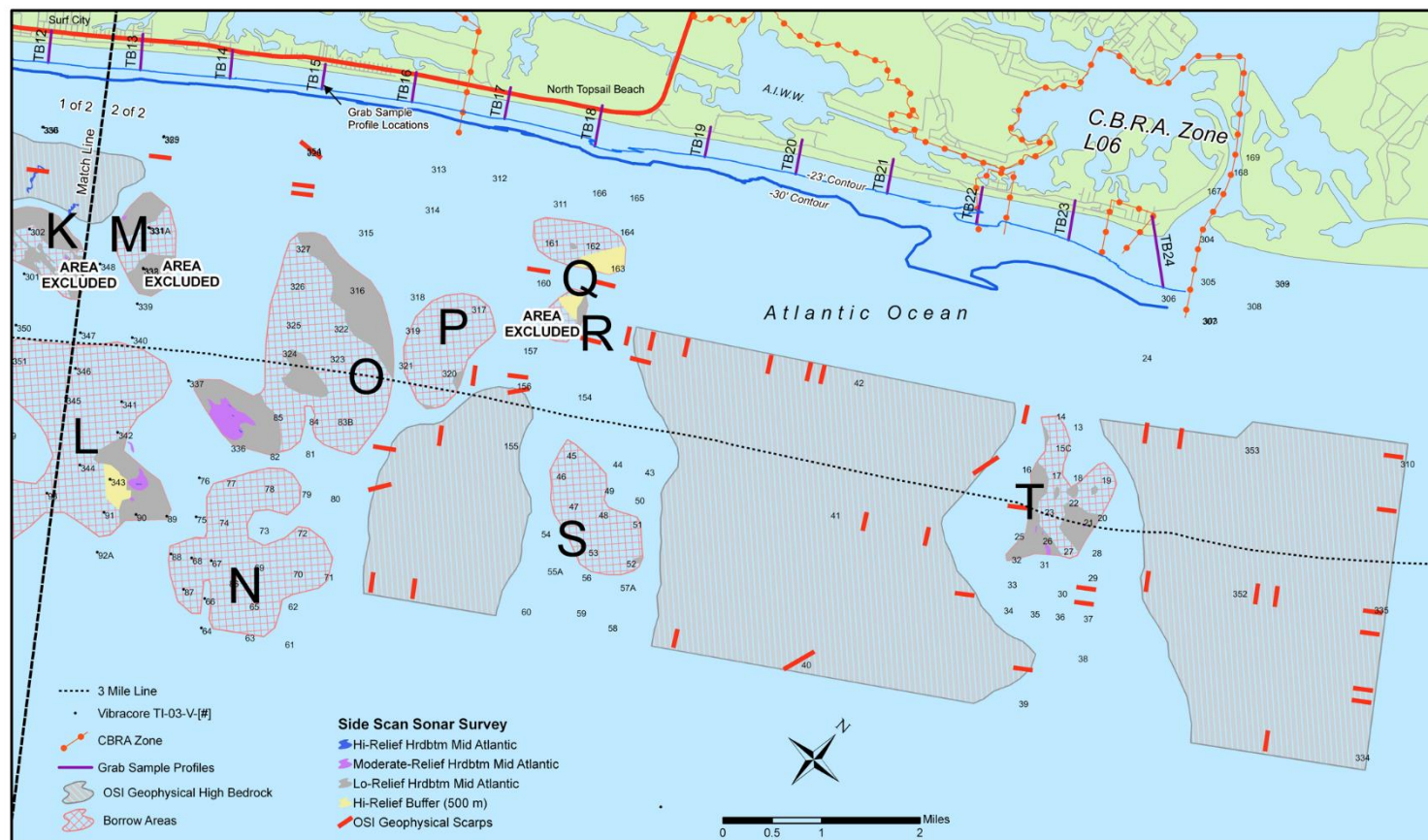
Jennifer L. Owens  
Chief, Environmental Resources Section



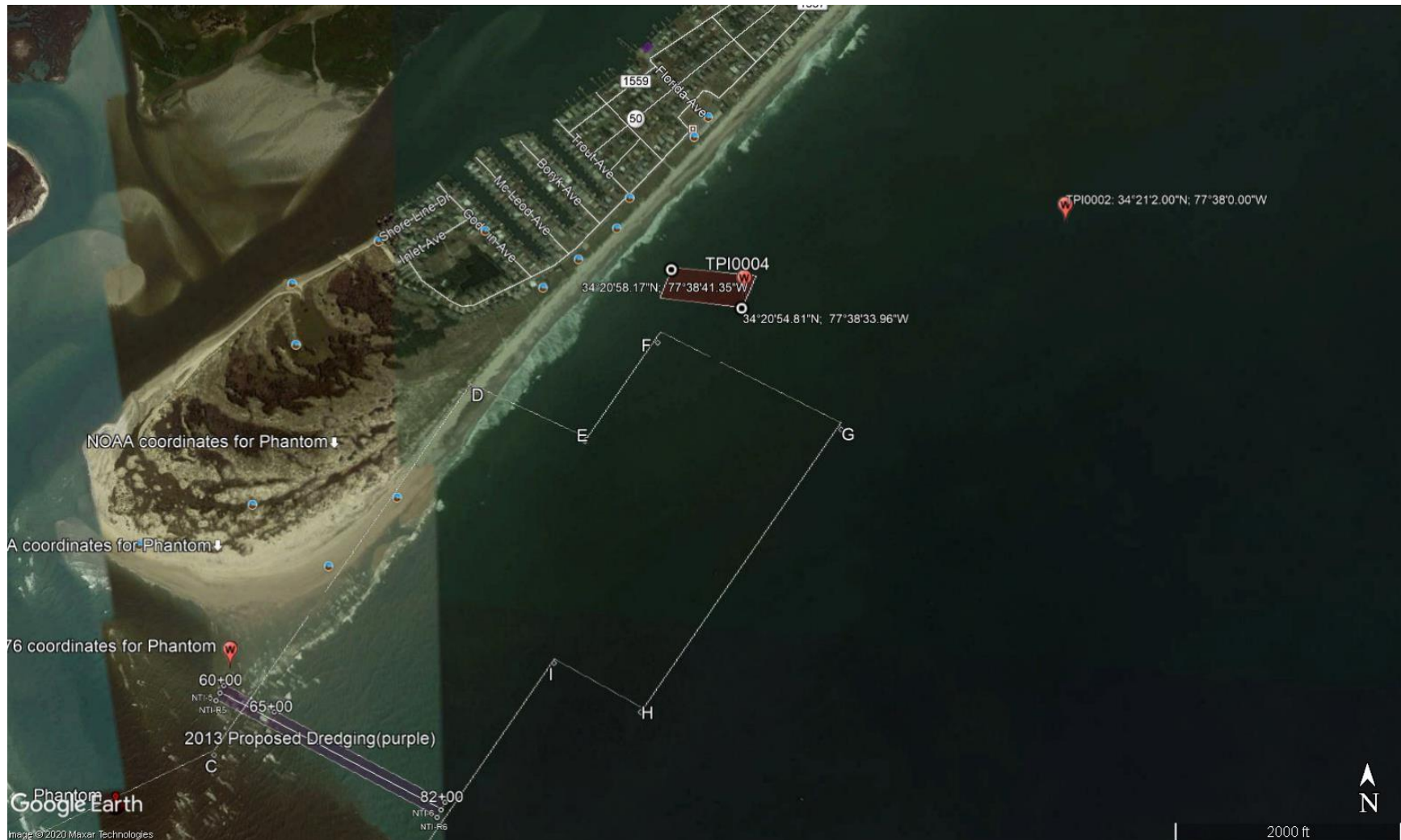


**Figure 1.** Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Project Map (1 of 2).





**Figure 2.** Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Project Map (2 of 2).



**Figure 3.** Known Submerged Cultural Resources Requiring Avoidance and 300-foot buffer.

**Attachment 1**

Past Correspondence Received from the  
North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office  
Regarding the Surf City and North Topsail Beach Coastal Storm Damage Reduction Project

August 3, 2005  
February 5, 2010



North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State Historic Preservation Office

Peter B. Sandbeck, Administrator

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
Lisbeth C. Evans, Secretary  
Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary

Office of Archives and History  
Division of Historical Resources  
David Brook, Director

August 3, 2005

Richard H. Kimmel  
Environmental Resources Section  
Department of the Army  
Wilmington District, Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 1890  
Wilmington, NC 28402-1890

RE: Draft Report: *An Archaeological Remote Sensing Survey of Surf City-North Topsail Beaches Borrow Areas*,  
Bib #5524, Pender and Onslow Counties, CH 01-0497

Dear Mr. Kimmel:

We have received the draft report summarizing the remote sensing surveys conducted by Mid-Atlantic Technology and Environmental Research, Inc. (M-AT/ER) in proposed offshore sand borrow areas near Surf City and North Topsail Beaches.

No previously recorded archaeological sites occur within the seven proposed sand borrow areas. M-AT/ER conducted marine magnetometer and side-scan sonar surveys of the proposed borrow areas for the purpose of identifying any potential archaeological resources that might be impacted by the offshore dredging activities. The survey identified no single source magnetic anomalies or acoustic targets with characteristics suggesting significant cultural resources within the proposed sand borrow areas. Because of these findings, we concur with the recommendation for no additional archaeological investigations related to sand mining activities in the seven proposed borrow areas.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, please contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919/733-4763. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above-referenced tracking number.

Sincerely,

Peter Sandbeck

ADMINISTRATION  
RESTORATION  
SURVEY & PLANNING

Location  
507 N. Blount Street, Raleigh NC  
515 N. Blount Street, Raleigh NC  
515 N. Blount Street, Raleigh, NC

Mailing Address  
4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4617  
4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4617  
4617 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-4617

Telephone/Fax  
(919)733-4763/733-8653  
(919)733-6547/715-4801  
(919)733-6545/715-4801



NORTH CAROLINA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

COUNTY: PENDER  
ONSLow

H05: IRRIGATION/DRAINAGE/FLOOD  
CONTROL

STATE NUMBER: 10-E-0000-0249  
DATE RECEIVED: 01/14/2010  
AGENCY RESPONSE: 03/03/2010  
REVIEW CLOSED: 03/08/2010



MS RENEE GLEDHILL-EARLEY  
CLEARINGHOUSE COORDINATOR  
DEPT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
MSC 4617 - ARCHIVES BUILDING  
RALEIGH NC

**REVIEW DISTRIBUTION**

CAPE FEAR COG  
CC&PS - DIV OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
DENR - COASTAL MGT  
DENR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS  
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE  
DEPT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES  
DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION  
EASTERN CAROLINA COUNCIL



*CH-01-0497*  
*~~12-10-0127~~*  
*A - Cultural resources*  
*addressed: HCH/eff*  
*2-3-10*

*Dec 2/1/10*

**PROJECT INFORMATION**

APPLICANT: Department of the Army  
TYPE: National Environmental Policy Act  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement

DESC: Develop Coastal Storm Damage Reduction plan for Surf City and North Topsail Beach

The attached project has been submitted to the N. C. State Clearinghouse for intergovernmental review. Please review and submit your response by the above indicated date to 1301 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-1301.

If additional review time is needed, please contact this office at (919)807-2425.

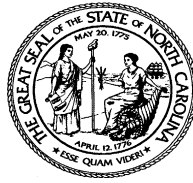
AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW THE FOLLOWING IS SUBMITTED: ☒ NO COMMENT ☐ COMMENTS ATTACHED

SIGNED BY:

*Renee Gledhill-Earley*

DATE: *2-5-10*

JAN 18 2010



**North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources  
State Historic Preservation Office**

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Roy Cooper  
Secretary Susi H. Hamilton

Office of Archives and History  
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

June 15, 2020

Justin Bashaw  
United States Army Corps of Engineers  
Wilmington District  
69 Darlington Avenue  
Wilmington, NC 28403

[Justin.P.Bashaw@usace.army.mil](mailto:Justin.P.Bashaw@usace.army.mil)

Re: Beach nourishment project, South of Humphrey Avenue to North of Ninth Street, Surf City, Pender County, ER 20-0050

Dear Mr. Bashaw:

Thank you for your email of May 6, 2020, concerning the above project.

We have conducted a review of the project and are aware of no historic resources which would be affected by the project. Therefore, we have no comment on the project as proposed.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-814-6579 or [environmental.review@ncdcr.gov](mailto:environmental.review@ncdcr.gov). In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Renee Gledhill-Earley".

 Ramona Bartos, Deputy  
State Historic Preservation Officer



**From:** [Gledhill-earley, Renee](#)  
**To:** [Bashaw, Justin P CIV USARMY CESAW \(US\)](#)  
**Subject:** [Non-DoD Source] Beach Renourishment South of Humphrey Ave to north of 9th Street, adjacent to the Atlantic Ocean/AIWW, Surf City ER 20-0050  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 16, 2020 12:44:48 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Dear Mr. Bashaw:

Thank you for your telephone call yesterday concerning the above-referenced undertaking. We understand that the project description used in our June 15, 2020, letter does not match that of the US Army Corps of Engineers. To resolve any confusion, we want to assure you that our comments applied to the entirety of the areas shown in Figures 1 and 2 in your May 6, 2020 letter.

If you have any further questions concerning this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me again.  
Best regards,

--

**Renee Gledhill-Earley**

Environmental Review Coordinator

State Historic Preservation Office

109 E Jones St MSC 4617 Raleigh, NC 27699

919 814 6579 *office*

#StayStrongNC

Learn more @ [nc.gov/covid19](https://nc.gov/covid19)

And don't forget your Ws! Wear. Wait. Wash.

WEAR a face covering.

WAIT 6 feet apart from other people.

WASH your hands often.

**\*\*COVID-19 has changed the way we accept non-electronic mail . See below.\*\***



*Email correspondence to and from this address is subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties.*

**Please Note:**

**Requests for project review or responses to our review comments should be sent to our Environmental Review mailbox at [environmental.review@ncdcr.gov](mailto:environmental.review@ncdcr.gov) Otherwise, I will have to return your request and ask that you send it to the proper mailbox. This will cause delays in your project. Information on email project submittal is at: [Blockedhttps://www.ncdcr.gov/state-historic-preservation-office/environmental-review/environmental-review-submission-process-0](https://www.ncdcr.gov/state-historic-preservation-office/environmental-review/environmental-review-submission-process-0)**

Couriered items from USPS, FedEx, UPS AND hand delivered items will only be accepted at the loading bay door located on Wilmington St. between the hours of 8AM-Noon M-F. Applicants should knock/ring the door bell at the loading bay entrance door. If no one answers they can leave the package on top of

the bin to the side of the door, then email me so that I can let staff know. Any packages left outside the stated hours are left at the deliverer's responsibility. We CANNOT be responsible for them. Custodial staff will NOT accept ANY deliveries.