

ACTION: Announcement of DEIS Availability, King Cove Access Project, and Notice of Public Hearings.

SUMMARY: The King Cove Health and Safety Act (Section 353) of the Omnibus Consolidated and Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1999 (Public Law 105-277) provided the Aleutians East Borough (AEB) with \$20 million to construct a year-round marine-road transportation system between the Cities of King Cove and Cold Bay, Alaska, on the Alaska Peninsula. AEB proposes a 152-acre project consisting of a 17.2-mile access road, two hovercraft ramps, and terminals located on the Northeast Corner of Cold Bay and Cross Wind Cove, on the west side of Cold Bay, and a hovercraft. The Corps of Engineers, Alaska District, has evaluated the AEB's permit application under the authority of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Air Act. The EIS describes five alternatives that satisfy the purpose and needs for the proposed project. The alternatives are: (1) Northeast Corner Cold Bay—Hovercraft; (3) Lenard Harbor—Hovercraft; (4) Lenard Harbor—Ferry; (5) Lenard Harbor—Helicopter; and (6) the Isthmus Road alternative. Alternative 2 is the No-Action Alternative. Alternative 6 is included for comparison purposes only and cannot be selected for authorization by the decision-maker. Alternatives 1, 3, 4, and 5 would be constructed primarily on King Cove Corporation surface lands. Alternative 1 requires a USFWS compatibility determination on Native corporation owned lands within the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge, and no construction or operations would occur within the Congressionally designated Wilderness Area. Currently, Alternatives 3 and 4 are designated as the Environmentally Preferable Alternatives. The Corps of Engineers will use the EIS, public review process and consideration of comments received as a basis for the permit decision.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska District, is the lead Federal agency with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as a cooperating agency for this DEIS. During the Scoping process (February 16 to June 22, 2001) over 12,331 comments were received, with over 12,000 comments and opinions provided by e-mail. Many of these scoping comments expressed an objection to a road through the Izembek National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness Area. Twenty-eight alternatives were preliminarily considered during the scoping and the alternative

development phase of the EIS process. Six alternatives were selected for further evaluation. The proposed action (Alternative 1, Northeast Corner Cold Bay / Hovercraft) and two alternatives (Alternative 3, Lenard Harbor / Hovercraft; and Alternative 4, Lenard Harbor / Ferry) were selected for detailed evaluation that incorporates a marine-road link design in compliance with Section 353 cited above. The required "no action" alternative is presented as Alternative 2. The two remaining alternatives are not in compliance with section 353; hence, the \$20 million Federal appropriations would not be available for project construction. These are an air-road link alternative (Alternative 5, Lenard Harbor / Helicopter) and an all-road alternative (Alternative 6, Isthmus Road). The all-road alternative (Alternative 6) is not a practicable alternative for evaluation under the Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines (40 CFR 230) for the Clean Water Act and cannot be authorized by the District Engineer. If an application is received by the USFWS under Title XI of ANCSA, a separate EIS would be required, with approval required by the Secretary of Interior, The President, and Congress. No significant adverse impacts were identified for Alternatives 1, 3, 4, and 5. Significant beneficial impacts were noted for each action alternative centering on human and social resources with the ability to enhance safe, reliable, and efficient emergency medical transport for King Cove residents and seasonal workers. For Alternatives 1, 3, 4, and 5 with the incorporation and implementation of mitigation measure, impacts to threatened and endangered or listed species (Steller's eider, Steller sea lion, and Northern sea otter) were preliminarily determined not likely to adversely affect these species. For the same alternatives and incorporation of mitigation measures, determinations of "would not likely impact Essential Fish Habitat", and Habitats of Particular Concern were concluded.

Public Workshops and Public Hearings: August 25, 2003, Cold Bay, Alaska, Community Building. Public Workshop: 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Public Hearing: 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

August 26, 2003; King Cove, Alaska, Community Center. Public Workshop: 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Public Hearing: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

September 9, 2003; Anchorage, Alaska University of Alaska, Commons Room 107, 3700 Sharon Gagnon Lane. Public Workshop: 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. Public Hearing: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Comment Period: Comments should be received by the Corps of Engineers, Alaska District (address above) by September 23, 2003, or 45 days from the publication date within the **Federal Register**, whichever is later.

David S. Hobbie,

Assistant Branch Chief, Regulatory Branch, Alaska District.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Raritan and Sandy Hook Bay, Combined Erosion and Storm Damage Reduction Project, Borough of Highlands, Monmouth County, NJ

AGENCY: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The New York District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to ascertain compliance with and to lead to the production of a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document in accordance with the President's Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) rules and regulations, as defined and amended in 40 CFR parts 1500-1508, Corps' principals and guidelines as defined in Engineering Regulation (ER) 200-2-2, ER 1105-2-100, and other applicable Federal and State environmental laws for the proposed erosion control and storm reduction efforts in the Borough of Highlands in Monmouth County, NJ.

The Borough of Highlands is located in the northeastern section of Monmouth County and is bounded on the north by Sandy Hook Bay and on the east by the Shrewsbury River. The project study area consists of approximately 1/3 of a square mile of densely developed marine, commercial, and residential buildings at the eastern terminus, and extends westward approximately 11,000 feet, bounded by Sandy Hook Bay to the south and NJ State Route 36 to the north.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Howard Ruben, Environmental Analyst, Planning Division, Environmental Analysis Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY 10278-0090, at 212-264-0206 or at howard.ruben@usace.army.mil. Written

comments are to be provided to Mr. Ruben.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. The Combined Erosion Control and Storm Damage Prevention Pre-Feasibility Study for the Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay, NJ, including the Borough of Highlands, was authorized by a resolution of the Committee on Public Works and Transportation of the U.S. House of Representatives adopted August 1, 1990, which states the following: "Resolved by the Committee on Public Works and Transportation of the United States House of Representatives, that, the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors is requested to review the report of the Chief of Engineers on Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay, New Jersey, published as House Document No. 464, Eighty-seventh Congress, Second Session, and other pertinent reports, to determine the advisability of modifications to the recommendations contained therein to provide erosion control and storm damage prevention for the Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay." The Water Resources Development Act of 1966 reauthorized the project, including uncompleted construction.

2. The previously authorized Federal project for Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay, NJ, was authorized by the Flood Control Act of October 12, 1962, in accordance with House Document No. 464, Eighty-seventh Congress, Second Session. While this project resulted in construction of shore protection improvements within certain municipalities, improvements in Highlands were not considered economically feasible and therefore not recommended. It was noted in the 1962 study that Highlands is subject to severe damage from tidal flooding and that the problem would be further considered for development of an economically feasible plan. The area of Highlands was again addressed in the Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay, New Jersey, Combined Flood Control and Shore Protection Reconnaissance Study Report, dated March 1993. This reconnaissance report covered municipalities extending westward from Highlands to South Amboy with concentration on Port Monmouth for which a specific plan of improvement was identified. Report findings concluded that, within the study area, shoreline protection and flood control projects in Highlands and five other communities appeared to be economically viable and were recommended to go forward with further studies. This was determined indirectly through means of a planning evaluation matrix that compared Port

Monmouth criteria to damage mechanism and potential damage reduction benefits.

3. Two types of environmental analyses will be conducted; impacts associated with structural storm damage reduction improvements and analyses required for mitigation planning purposes.

4. Public scoping meetings are expected to be scheduled in September 2003. The meetings will be held in Monmouth County at locations not yet determined. Public notices identifying the location, date, and time for the meetings will be announced in local area newspapers. Results from the public scoping meetings with the District and Federal, State, and local agency coordination will be addressed in the scoping document. Parties interested in receiving notices of public scoping meetings or copies of the scoping document should contact Mr. Ruben at the above address.

5. Federal agencies interested in participating as a Cooperating Agency are requested to submit a letter of intent to Colonel John B. O'Dowd, District Engineer, at the above address.

6. Estimated Date of DEIS Availability: February 2005.

Leonard Houston,

Chief, Environmental Analysis Branch.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay, Combined Erosion Control and Storm Damage Reduction Study, Borough of Keyport, Monmouth County, NJ: Feasibility Phase

AGENCY: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The New York District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which will lead to a NEPA document in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, as defined and amended in 40 CFR parts 1500-1508 (promulgated pursuant to NEPA), Corps' principles and guidelines as defined in Engineering Regulations (ER) 1105-2-100, Planning Guidance Notebook, and

ER 200-2-2, Procedures for Implementing NEPA, and other applicable Federal and State environmental laws for the proposed storm damage reduction project in the Borough of Keyport, Monmouth County, NJ.

The study area consists of low-lying areas along the Raritan Bay shoreline between and including Luppattong Creek to the west and Chingarora Creek to the east in the Borough of Keyport, Monmouth County, NJ. Bay area flooding primarily occurs in the low-lying commercial areas located in the central and northwestern portions of the Borough and in residential areas to the northeast. Flooding also occurs in areas adjacent to Luppattong and Chingarora Creeks.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Ronald Pinzon, Project Biologist, Planning Division, Environmental Analysis Branch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY, 10278-0090, (212) 264-2199, or Ronald.R.Pinzon@usace.army.mil.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. This study is authorized by a resolution of the Committee on Public Works and Transportation of the U.S. House of Representatives dated August 1, 1990, reading: "Resolved by the Committee on Public Works and Transportation of the United States House of Representatives, that, the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors is requested to review the report of the Chief of Engineers on Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay, New Jersey, published as House Document No. 464, Eighty-seventh Congress, Second Session, and other pertinent reports, to determine the advisability of modifications to the recommendations contained therein to provide erosion control and storm damage prevention for the Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay."

2. A public scoping meeting is scheduled for September 2003. Results from the public scoping meeting with Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as the public, will be addressed in the DEIS.

3. Federal agencies interested in participating as a Cooperating Agency are requested to submit a letter of intent to Colonel John B. O'Dowd, District Engineer, at the above address.

4. Estimated date of DEIS availability: August 2004.

Leonard Houston,

Chief, Environmental Analysis Branch.

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