

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Corps of Engineers****Intent To Prepare a Joint Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the Hamilton Army Airfield Wetland Restoration Project, Marin County, CA**

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DOD.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District and the California State Coastal Conservancy propose to restore wetland habitat at the former Hamilton Army Airfield and adjacent properties. The airfield lies on former tidal wetland that has been diked to protect it from tidal flooding. The area has subsided significantly since its removal from tidal action. The project may modify existing levees and construct new ones around the project area. Dredged material suitable for wetland creation would be used to bring the area to an elevation where marsh would establish itself, after which the bayfront levee would be breached, returning tidal action to the area. Restoration without the use of dredged material is also being considered.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions regarding the scoping process or preparation of the EIS/EIR may be directed to Eric Jolliffe, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 333 Market Street, Seventh Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-2102, (415) 977-8543, or Terri Nevins, California State Coastal Conservancy, 1330 Broadway, Suite 1100, Oakland, CA 94612-2530, (510) 286-4161.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as implemented by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and Public Law 102-484 Section 2834, as amended by Public Law 104-106 Section 2867, the Department of the Army and the California State Coastal Conservancy hereby give notice of intent to prepare a joint Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) for the Proposed Hamilton Army Airfield Wetland Restoration Project, Marin County, California.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be the lead agency in preparing the EIS. The EIS/EIR will provide an analysis supporting the requirements of

both NEPA and CEQA in addressing impacts to the environment which may result from restoring wetland habitat at the former Hamilton Army Airfield and adjacent properties.

1. Proposed Action

The Hamilton restoration site consists of the former Hamilton Army Airfield, adjacent Navy ballfields, and the former Hamilton North Antenna Field. The project would restore up to 950 acres of tidal marsh and seasonal wetland at the site. All restoration alternatives have a goal of creating a mix of 80% tidal marsh and 20% seasonal wetland. Existing levees would be raised and new ones would be constructed around the perimeter of the site. The re-establishment of tidal marsh would require higher elevations than currently exist to allow the growth of wetland vegetation. These higher elevations could probably be achieved by breaching the existing bayfront levee and allowing tidal activity to deposit sediments. However, placement of suitable dredged material at the site to raise elevations closer to the eventual marsh plain would allow marsh vegetation to establish much sooner. In addition, the placement of suitable dredged material or other suitable fill is needed to achieve target elevations for seasonal wetland habitat restoration. Placement of dredged material would be accomplished by pumping a slurry of dredged material to the site from barges moored in San Pablo Bay.

2. Project Alternatives

a. No action. The area would remain free from tidal action as it is now and no marsh would develop. Pumps would continue to be required to remove runoff water.

b. Wetland would be restored to the Airfield and Navy ballfields without the use of dredged material. Approximately 700 acres of wetland would be restored.

c. Wetland would be restored to the Airfield and Navy ballfields using dredged material to accelerate marsh establishment and raise elevations for seasonal wetlands. Approximately 700 acres of wetland would be restored.

d. Wetland would be restored to the Airfield and adjacent properties at the site without the use of dredged material. Approximately 950 acres of wetland would be restored.

e. Wetland would be restored to the Airfield and adjacent properties at the site using dredged material to accelerate marsh establishment and raise elevations for seasonal wetlands. Approximately 950 acres of wetland would be restored.

3. Scoping Process

Federal, state and local agencies, and interested individuals are invited to participate in the scoping process to determine the range of issues and alternatives to be addressed. The California State Coastal Conservancy and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold two public scoping meetings to receive oral and written comments at the following locations and times:
9:30 am-12:00 pm, March 25, 1998, Hamilton Community Center, 203 Bel Bonito Street, Novato, California
And
7:30 pm-10:00 pm, March 30, 1998, Novato City Council Chambers, 908 Machin Drive, Novato, California.
In addition, written comments will also be accepted until April 8, 1998 at the addresses listed above.

4. Availability of EIS/EIR

The Draft EIS/EIR should be available for public review in August 1998.

Richard G. Thompson,

Corps of Engineers, District Engineer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**Department of the Army****Corps of Engineers****Intent To Prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the San Juan Creek Watershed Feasibility Study; Orange County, CA**

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Los Angeles District, DoD.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The San Juan Watershed encompasses a drainage area of approximately 176 square miles in southern Orange County. Eight major tributaries feed San Juan Creek along its twenty-seven mile course from the Cleveland National Forest in the Santa Ana Mountains to the Pacific Ocean at Doheny State Beach near Dana Point Harbor. Rapid development since the early 1980s has produced a variety of environmental concerns that threaten the overall functional integrity of the watershed. Issues warranting concern identified in the Reconnaissance Study include channel degradation, loss of habitat, decreased water quality and supply, loss of recreational and aesthetic values, and increased flooding. In response to these and other problems raised by various federal and state offices, interest groups, and private parties the Corps is developing an