

protection program. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has identified 4,000 feet of the project area as an area of Critical Erosion. The project is being proposed to: mitigate the historical erosion loss; protect upland properties and infrastructure; establish a viable beach and dune system for sea turtles; and enhance the recreational use of the County's eroded beaches.

Within Sector 7, continued erosion has limited the availability of quality beaches and has increased the cost of protecting the shoreline. To protect shorefront properties within the area, extensive seawall construction has taken place within recent years. Without adequate large-scale measures to counteract erosion rates within this area, more shoreline armoring to protect property is likely to occur.

Beach restoration was recommended for this shoreline based on erosion rates, proximity of major structures to mean high water line, beach width, available sand resources and coastal dynamics. The goals of the beach restoration and dune enhancement are to optimize the performance and cost of the project while providing storm protection for the upland properties, limiting direct and indirect coverage of nearshore hardbottom habitats, creating additional nesting habitat for marine turtles, and providing greater recreational area along the County's beaches.

Indian River County recently completed a beach restoration project in Sectors 1 and 2 at the northern end of the County (Ambersand Beach Restoration Project), under the authority of the Department of the Army Permit Number 200001872 (IP-IS) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Permit Number 0166929-001-JC. This project involved the development of an Environmental Assessment and Regional Cumulative Impact Assessment. This regional assessment of the cumulative impacts associated with beach nourishment activities will be updated with this project and included in the DEIS as an appendix.

The DEIS intends to focus on Sector 7 and incorporate the effects of all future beach nourishment projects in less detail. Future projects within Indian River County will be added as supplements to the EIS when these projects come on line.

**Alternatives.** For the Sector 7 beach restoration project, the applicant has provided analysis of a number of alternatives, including the No Action Alternative, in addition to the proposed alternative. Alternatives to be evaluated in the DEIS include the use of sand

retention structures and decreased fill volume. Other alternatives with the potential to further minimize environmental impacts may be included in the DEIS.

**Issues.** Issues related with this beach restoration project include impacts to nearshore hardbottom resources, impacts to Essential Fish Habitat, impacts to marine turtles including foraging habitat and nesting beaches, and beach access concerns.

**Scoping and Public Involvement.** The scoping process will involve Federal, State, County, and municipal agencies and other interested persons and organizations. A workshop was held at the Indian River County Commission Chambers, 1840 25th Street, Vero Beach, FL, by Indian River County on July 23, 2003, to solicit comments from interested organizations and individuals on the scope of the DEIS. Comments received included the use of public monies for the work, the need for the work, impacts to nearshore hardbottom reefs, alternative designs, and the need for public access. Issues brought forth may be considered during the EIS process.

**Coordination.** The proposed action is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and the National Marine Fisheries Service under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

**DEIS Preparation.** It is estimated that the DEIS will be available to the public by June 2004.

**Luz D. Ortiz,**

*Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

#### **Intent To Cease Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Subsequent Environmental Impact Report for a Permit Application for the Proposed West Basin Marine Terminal Improvement Projects in the Port of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, CA**

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

**ACTION:** Cease preparation of Draft EIS/R.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Los Angeles District is no longer preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Subsequent Environmental Impact

Report (EIS/SEIR) covering the overall proposed West Basin improvement projects in the Port of Los Angeles. The Corps and the Los Angeles Harbor Department (LAHD) had previously circulated a Notice of Intent to prepare a Draft EIS/SEIR (**Federal Register**, July 5, 2002, Volume 67, Number 129) covering several terminal improvement projects in the geographic portion of the Port of Los Angeles known as the West Basin. This Draft EIS/SEIR is no longer being pursued. The Corps and the LAHD are in the process of preparing project specific Draft EIS/EIRs for both the China Shipping Terminal Improvements project at Berths 97-109, and the TraPac Terminal Improvements project at Berths 136-147. Both of these terminal projects were formerly elements of the larger West basin document. This notice does not indicate any change of status for these project specific proposals.

#### **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

#### **Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the West Onslow Beach and New River Inlet (Topsail Beach) Shore Protection Project, Pender County, NC**

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The Town of Topsail Beach is located on Topsail Island, a barrier island on North Carolina's central coast. The town has experienced severe erosion of the ocean shoreline, high vulnerability to storm overwash, and damage to numerous structures due to erosion and storms. The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1992 authorized a Federal Shore Protection Project to address these problems, but the project has not been constructed. The authorized project and the remaining ocean shoreline at Topsail Beach are now undergoing reevaluation studies to provide a basis for a decision regarding continuation of