

Federal participation for the design and construction of the project. These studies will be documented in a General Reevaluation Report (GRR) accompanied by an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Questions about the proposed action and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) can be answered by Ms. Jenny Owens; Environmental Resources Section; U.S. Army Engineer District, Wilmington; Post Office Box 1890; Wilmington, NC 28402-1890; telephone: (910) 251-4757.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** WRDA of 1992 authorized the implementation of the West Onslow Beach and New River Inlet (Topsail Beach) Shore Protection Project, as described in the report of the Chief of Engineers dated November 19, 1991. However, the plan recommended for construction was not the National Economic Development (NED) plan, which would have provided a storm dune and beach, a rock terminal groin, and periodic beach nourishment. The rock groin was unacceptable to the State of North Carolina due to its inconsistency with hard structure rules of the Coastal Management Program. Therefore, the recommended plan did not include a groin and, instead, provided for more frequent beach nourishment to offset the sand retention that would have been provided by a groin. The recommended plan extended over a distance of approximately 3.6 miles along the oceanfront at the southern end of Topsail Beach and included a dune with a crest elevation of 13 feet above mean sea level (msl) fronted by a storm berm at elevation 9 feet msl and a beach berm at elevation 7 feet msl.

Reevaluation studies will address the currently authorized project and the remaining shoreline at Topsail Beach. The principal purpose of a Federal project would be the reduction of damages associated with hurricane and storm events and beach erosion. Potential benefits from the project would include protection of the town's structures and related infrastructure (*i.e.*, roads, utility lines, *etc.*), as well as improvements in aesthetic qualities and recreational opportunities at the beach.

The GRR studies will evaluate several alternatives to address shore protection and related issues at Topsail Beach. These alternatives may include: (1) Construction of berms and dunes along all or portions of the oceanfront within the study area; (2) Removal and/or relocation of structures; and (3) No Federal action. The maximum potential project length is approximately 4.6

miles (*i.e.*, from the Topsail Beach-Surf City town limits to New Topsail Inlet). The selection of final project features and reaches for inclusion in a recommended plan will be based on a maximization of new benefits.

During the GRR, potential estuarine, inlet, offshore, and upland sources of borrow material will be investigated, and quantities of sand required for berm and dune construction will be determined. Estimated sand volumes and placement frequency for project maintenance will also be developed.

Alternative methods of beach nourishment and dredging of offshore borrow areas will also be evaluated, including the use of an ocean-certified hydraulic pipeline or hopper dredge.

All private parties and Federal, State, and local agencies having an interest in the study are hereby notified of the study and are invited to comment at this time. A scoping letter requesting input to the study was sent to all known interested parties on February 14, 2001.

A formal scoping meeting is not planned at this time but may be held if it is determined that new information could be obtained that would not otherwise be available. All comments received as a result of this notice of intent and the previous scoping letter will be considered in the preparation of the DEIS.

Significant environmental resources to be addressed during project studies and in the DEIS include: (1) Endangered and threatened species; (2) Marine and estuarine resources; (3) Fish and wildlife and their habitats, including essential fish habitat; (4) Water quality; (5) Socioeconomic resources; and (6) Cultural resources. Efforts will be made to enhance resource conditions and minimize adverse impacts.

The lead agency for this project is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District, Wilmington. Cooperating agency status has not been assigned to any other agency. The DEIS is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and will address the relationship of the proposed action to all other applicable Federal and State Laws and Executive Orders. The DEIS is currently scheduled for distribution to the public in the summer of 2004.

Dated: December 2, 2003.

**W. Eugene Tickner, P.E.,**

*Deputy District Engineer, Programs and Project Management.*

[FR Doc. 03-31339 Filed 12-18-03; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3710-CE-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

#### Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Surf City and North Topsail Beach, NC, Shore Protection Project

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** Surf City and North Topsail Beach are located on Topsail Island, a barrier island on North Carolina's central coast. Storm activity has resulted in severe erosion of the protective berm and dune along the ocean shoreline of the area, as well as damage to numerous structures and their contents. Studies conducted to address these problems were included in House Document 393, 102nd Congress, "West Onslow Beach and New River Inlet, North Carolina," which was approved by Congress in 1992. This report recommended a hurricane protection and beach erosion control project for approximately 3.6 miles of oceanfront at Topsail beach, but determined that such improvements were economically infeasible for the northernmost portion of the island, including Surf City and North Topsail Beach. However, the six hurricanes that passed through the area during 1996-1999 inflicted heavy damages to these towns and, as a result, Congress directed that a review be made of the 1992 report to determine the advisability of modifying its recommendations with regard to shore protection for Surf City and North Topsail beach.

The potential for shoreline protection was subsequently reexamined in the "Surf City and North Topsail Beach, North Carolina, Reconnaissance Report" of May 2001, which recommended continued Federal participation a feasibility study. The feasibility study was initiated in 2002 and is ongoing.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Questions about the proposed action and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) can be answered by Ms. Jenny Owens; Environmental Resources Section; U.S. Army Engineer District, Wilmington; Post Office Box 1890; Wilmington, NC 28402-1890; telephone: (910) 251-4757.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Feasibility studies will investigate the entire oceanfront along Surf City and North Topsail Beach, except for portions of North Topsail Beach located within the Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS). The Coastal Barrier Resources Act of 1982 renders units of the CBRS

ineligible for Federal funding that could encourage their development. The principal purpose of a Federal project would be the reduction of damages associated with hurricane and storm events and beach erosion. Potential benefits from the project would include protection of the towns' structures and related infrastructure (*i.e.*, roads, utility lines, *etc.*), as well as improvements in aesthetic qualities and recreational opportunities at the beaches.

The feasibility studies will evaluate several alternatives to address shore protection and related issues. These alternatives may include: (1) Construction of berms and dunes along all or portions of the oceanfront within the study area; (2) Removal and/or relocation of threatened structures; and (3) No Federal action. The maximum potential project length is approximately 10 miles (the 17 miles from New River Inlet south to the Surf City-Topsail Beach town limits exclusive of approximately 7 miles within the CBRS). The selection of final project features and reaches for inclusion in a recommended plan will be based on a maximization of net benefits.

During the feasibility studies, potential estuarine, inlet, offshore, and upland sources of borrow material will be investigated, and quantities of sand required for berm and dune construction will be determined. Estimated sand volumes and placement frequency for project maintenance will also be developed.

Alternative methods of beach nourishment and dredging of offshore borrow areas will be evaluated, including the use of ocean-certified hydraulic pipeline and/or hopper dredges.

All private parties and Federal, State, and local agencies having an interest in the study are hereby notified of the study and are invited to comment at this time. A scoping letter requesting input to the study was sent to all known interested parties on February 14, 2001.

A formal scoping meeting is not planned at this time but may be held if it is determined that new information may be obtained that would not otherwise be available. All comments received as a result of this notice of intent and the previous scoping letter will be considered in the preparation of the DEIS.

Significant environmental resources to be addressed during project studies and in the DEIS include: (1) Endangered and threatened species; (2) Fish and wildlife and their habitats, including essential fish habitat; (3) Water quality; (4) Socioeconomic resources; and (5)

Cultural resources. Efforts will be made to enhance resource conditions and minimize adverse impacts.

The lead agency for this project is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers District, Wilmington. Cooperating agency status has not been assigned to any other agency. The DEIS is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, and will address the relationship of the proposed action to all other applicable Federal and State Laws and Executive Orders. The DEIS is currently scheduled for distribution to the public in the winter of 2005.

Dated: December 2, 2003.

**W. Eugene Tickner, P.E.,**

*Deputy District Engineer, Programs and Project Management.*

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**BILLING CODE 3710-CE-M**

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## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Office of Postsecondary Education

#### Developing Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) Program

**ACTION:** Correction; notice reopening application deadline for certain applicants.

**SUMMARY:** We correct the postmark date listed in the *Transmittal of Applications* section of the notice published on December 16, 2003 (68 FR 70008).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On December 16, 2003, we published a notice in the **Federal Register** reopening the application deadline for certain applicants under the HSI Program. The postmark date listed in the *Transmittal of Applications* section of the notice published was incorrect. The last sentence under *Transmittal of Applications* should read, "Your submittals must be postmarked no later than December 29, 2003."

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ms. Darlene B. Collins, U.S. Department of Education, 1990 K Street, NW., 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20006-8513. Telephone: (202) 502-7576 or via Internet: *Darlene.Collins@ed.gov*.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

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**Program Authority:** 20 U.S.C. 1001-1101d, 1103-1103g.

Dated: December 17, 2003.

**Sally L. Stroup,**

*Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education.*

[FR Doc. 03-31405 Filed 12-17-03; 1:28 pm]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Office of Science; Biological and Environmental Research Advisory Committee Renewal

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of renewal.

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to section 14(a)(2)(A) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, and in accordance with section 102-3.60, title 41 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and following consultation with the Committee Management Secretariat, General Services Administration, notice is hereby given that the Biological and Environmental Research Advisory Committee has been renewed for a two-year period beginning in December 2003. The Committee will provide advice to the Director, Office of Science, on the Biological and Environmental Research Program managed by the Office of Biological and Environmental Research.

The renewal of the Biological and Environmental Research Advisory Committee has been determined to be essential to the conduct of the Department of Energy business and to be in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed upon the Department of Energy by law. The Committee will operate in