

NEPA education and information:

What is the purpose of the EIS for this project?

The EIS will evaluate the effects of construction and long-term effects of the proposed channel modification, including placement of new work and maintenance dredged material in beneficial use sites or other placement areas, such as open water and ocean dredged material disposal sites. The EIS will also include the original proposed actions, as modified and noted above. Potential impacts of the proposed project, connected actions, and alternatives will be evaluated in the EIS, which will assist the USACE in deciding whether to issue a Department of the Army permit.

What is the purpose of this scoping meeting?

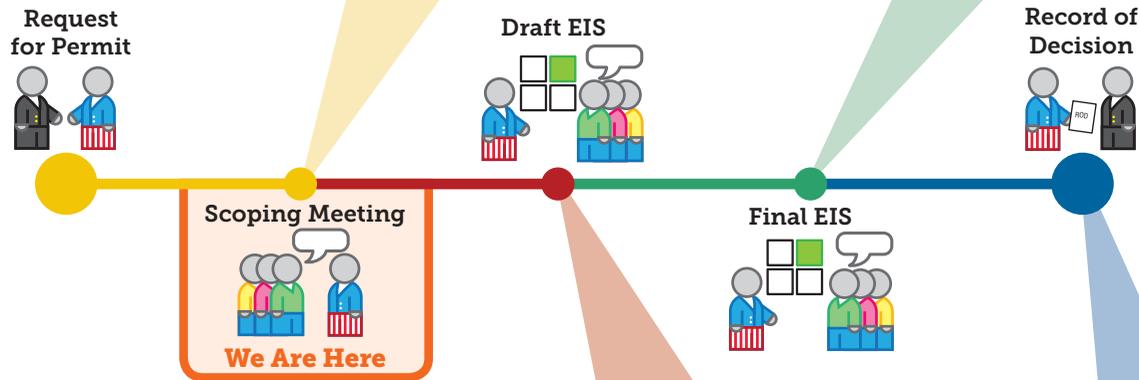
The purpose of this scoping meeting is to:

- Identify cooperating agencies, interested parties, significant issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS
- Provide the public with information about the EIS, the project, and how the public will participate in the process
- Gather information regarding public questions, concerns, and issues regarding the proposed project
 - Verbal comments will be recorded
 - Written comments will be accepted
- Provide the public with information about changes to the proposed project and permit application

What will happen next?

The NEPA team will continue efforts to evaluate potential impacts associated with the proposed project to complete a Draft EIS for public and agency review.

The Final EIS will then be published for agency and public review and comment. This will be the final opportunity to submit formal comments.



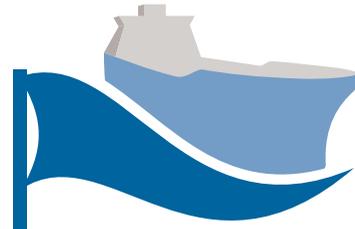
It is anticipated that a Draft EIS will be made available for public review in early calendar year 2014. A public comment period with a public hearing will be held at this time. The NEPA team will process the comments received, prepare responses to the comments, and revise the EIS as appropriate.

Those comments will be addressed in the Record of Decision, which will include the Corps' decision regarding whether or not to issue the requested permit.

The NEPA team will continue to conduct special studies to adequately address comments and evaluate the proposed expansion project.

Port of Gulfport EXPANSION PROJECT EIS

HARRISON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI



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

About the Proposed Project

The proposed port expansion project involves impacting up to 200 acres of open-water bottom in the Mississippi Sound from the construction of wharfs, bulkheads, terminal facilities, container storage areas, intermodal container transfer facilities, dredging and dredged material disposal and infrastructure, and construction of a breakwater of approximately 4,000 linear feet. The proposed expanded port facility may be elevated 25 feet above sea level to provide protection against future tropical storm surge events. The permit application modification for the proposed project includes deepening and possible widening of the existing Federal Navigation

Channel from the federally authorized dimensions. The federally authorized turning basin would also be modified, as would the proposed adjacent turning basin expansion. More information about project modifications is included on page 3 of this project newsletter. A Department of the Army permit is required for the proposed project, pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC § 1251), Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (33 USC § 403), and Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act (33 USC §§ 1401–1445, 16 USC §§1431 et seq., also 33 USC 1271).

Background

In March of 2011 a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register, and a formal scoping meeting was held in March of 2011. Since that time the NEPA team, consisting of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and their technical consultants, have been

coordinating with the Mississippi State Port Authority (MSPA) and other state and federal agencies to compile, review, and collect information to evaluate the proposed project and its potential effects. At this time we are working to prepare the Draft EIS for public review and comment.

The NEPA Team:



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
(the Lead Agency)



Mississippi Development Authority and National Marine Fisheries Service
(Cooperating Agencies)



The Mississippi State Port Authority at Gulfport
(the Applicant)



The Public and Local Stakeholders

www.PortofGulfportEIS.com

Public Involvement Background

A public scoping meeting was held in spring of 2011 to solicit comments from the public in regards to the original permit application and proposed project. An informational public workshop was hosted in August 2012 to inform the public of the status of the project and NEPA process. This scoping meeting is taking place due to project modifications, which largely consist of deepening and possible widening of the existing navigation channel from the federally authorized dimensions.

Written comments may be submitted by June 17, 2013, to:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District
c/o Mr. Damon M. Young, P.G.
P.O. Box 2288
Mobile, AL 36628-0001

Comments may also be submitted via e-mail by June 17, 2013, to:
Port.GulfportEIS@usace.army.mil

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Project

Essentially, the proposed expansion is intended to create operational efficiency and additional space for new tenants to operate at the Port of Gulfport and to increase the number of containers that move through the Port each year. The proposed expansion would allow the Port to bring in new tenants and grow in size and throughput resulting in additional jobs and other direct and indirect economic benefits.

Purpose: Contribute to long-term economic development of the State of Mississippi and Gulf Coast Region by expanding the Port footprint and facilities.

- Allow for additional growth at the Port
- Increase Port throughput
- Provide increased employment opportunities
- Increase economic benefits associated with the Port

Need: The Port is limited in regards to physical growth

- Increased TEU throughput = increased jobs and economic benefits
- Additional space is needed for more tenants to increase TEU throughput

Purpose and Need for Application Modification
 (Addition of Proposed Changes to Channel)

- Addition of the navigation channel to the Port expansion project would attract tenants utilizing larger ships, which would increase throughput and thereby help meet the long-term economic development goals of the State and the Port.

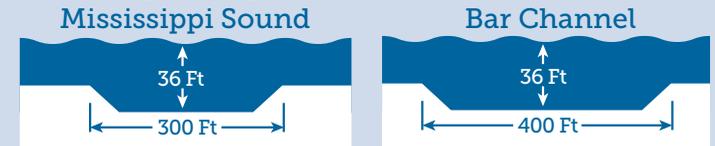
TEU: Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit, based on the volume of one 20-foot-long container
Throughput: Amount of TEUs processed by a port



Example of a TEU, or Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit.



Existing Navigation Channel Dimensions



Project Modifications

The originally proposed project, as described in the application filed on March 17, 2010, was modified in 2011 by the MSPA to reduce the overall potential impact from 700 acres of open water benthic habitat in the Mississippi Sound to 200 acres and to not include any impacts to the Gulfport Harbor Federal Navigation Channel or Turning Basin. This aspect has changed.

The latest modification proposes additional dredging and dredged material placement to modify the navigation channel for a length of approximately 20 miles from the current federally authorized dimensions. The federally authorized turning basin would also be modified, as would the proposed turning basin expansion. The proposed project would include modifications to the authorized navigation channel and other navigation

features necessary for efficient port operations. These modifications would include the navigation channel depth of 47 feet in the Mississippi Sound and 49 feet in the Bar Channel plus advance maintenance and allowable over depth requirements. Modification to navigation features adjacent to the port facilities include deepening the existing federal turning basin area and port berthing areas, a turning basin expansion, and new berthing areas. The depth of these features would be appropriate to the deeper navigation channel. Widening the channel may be requested based on results of planned ship simulations. Final channel design and associated environmental impacts will be addressed during the permitting and EIS process.