

delta channel and the configuration of the ebb tide delta.

Geomorphic analysis indicates that the cumulative shoreline changes on each island were averaged over 3,500 feet of shoreline immediately adjacent to the inlet. When the percent of the ebb tide delta on the Bogue Banks side is small, as it was between 1984 and 2001, the bar channel was located close to Bogue Banks and the portion of the delta on the Bogue Banks side was providing some degree of wave sheltering for the west end of the island. The particular ebb tide delta configuration resulted in a considerable amount of accretion along the 3,500-foot shoreline immediately east of the inlet while Bear Island experienced an almost mirror image response on its ocean shoreline, *i.e.*, erosion. Even though the present ebb tide delta configuration is favorable for the extreme west end of Emerald Isle, the eastward migration of the inlet channel that led to the existing inlet configuration also caused the inlet shoreline of Bogue Banks (the Pointe shoreline) to erode. Not only has the Bogue Banks inlet shoreline eroded in response to the eastward movement of the channel, so has the Bear Island ocean and inlet shorelines. Based on these and numerous other comparisons, the preliminary results of the geomorphic analysis indicates that a centrally located channel, approximating the position and orientation of the channel in 1978, may be beneficial to the inlet shoreline on Bogue Banks (the Pointe shoreline) and the east end of Bear Island.

Copies of the Final EIS will also be available on our regulatory home page at <http://www.saw.usace.army.mil/WETLANDS/>, and click on Emerald Isle Bogue Inlet Channel Relocation Project heading at the top right corner under Fast Track.

Dated: April 1, 2004.

Charles R. Alexander, Jr.,

Colonel, U.S. Army, District Engineer.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Availability for the Draft Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for the Hamilton City Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration, Glenn County, CA

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

ACTION: Notice; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: The comment period for the Draft Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement/Environment Impact Report (DFR/DEIS-EIR) published in the **Federal Register** on Wednesday, March 31, 2004 (69 FR 16902), required comments be submitted on or before May 17, 2004. The comment period has been extended to May 24, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Erin Taylor, Environmental Manager, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 1325 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95814-2922, (916) 557-5140 or fax (916) 557-7202.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Intent To Prepare a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for the Near-Term Ecosystem Restoration Plan for the Louisiana Coastal Area

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

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District (Corps) intends to refocus and modify the Draft Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (Draft PSEIS) for the Louisiana Coastal Area—Louisiana Comprehensive Coastwide Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (LCA Comprehensive Study) and prepare a Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Draft PEIS) for a Near-Term Ecosystem Restoration Plan for the Louisiana Coastal Area. This is a modification of the notice of intent published in the **Federal Register** (67 FR 169093). The

intent of this notice is to describe the rationale for revising the purpose and need for action, the scope of the analysis, and intent to prepare a Draft PEIS for the Near-Term Ecosystem Restoration Plan for the Louisiana Coastal Area.

On April 4, 2002, the Corps announced in the **Federal Register** (67 FR 169093) its intention to prepare a Draft PSEIS for the LCA Comprehensive Study. The original proposed scope of the Draft PSEIS analysis was threefold: (1) Supplement previous Louisiana coastal restoration NEPA-compliance studies; (2) utilize the “lessons learned” from previous Louisiana coastal wetlands restoration efforts; and (3) determine the feasibility of developing the existing Coast 2050 restoration strategies into projects for the creation of a comprehensive coastwide ecosystem restoration plan. Six public scoping meetings regarding preparation of the Draft PSEIS and the feasibility of comprehensive coastwide ecosystem restoration of coastal Louisiana were held at various locations throughout Louisiana in late April 2002. The scoping report was provided to scoping participants and published on the Coast 2050 Web site (Coast2050.gov) in August 2002.

The President’s FY05 Budget, released on February 2, 2004

(<http://www.whithouse.gov/omb/budget/fyw005/corps.html>), contained specific language that refocuses and advances planning, scientific, and restoration efforts that are already underway:

In 2004, the Corps will work to issue a draft report that identifies the most critical ecological needs and proposes a near-term program of highly cost-effective projects to address them. The report will also highlight the key long-term scientific uncertainties and engineering challenges facing the effort to protect and restore the ecosystem, and propose demonstration projects and studies to help answer these questions. The report will focus on the specific coastal areas that require the most immediate attention and on the best way to sequence the proposed work over the next 10 or so years, as we learn what works best. In 2004, the Corps will begin developing studies of potentially promising, long-term ecosystem restoration concepts, with the objective of determining whether they would provide a cost-effective way to create coastal wetlands. An existing Federal-State Task Force established under 1990 legislation will increase its efforts to build and evaluate highly cost-effective fresh-water and sediment diversion projects. This coordinated approach to restoration combines a commitment to address the highest priority needs with a search for innovative solutions. It also ensures that the coastal Louisiana restoration effort will, in the long-term, be able to adapt and evolve as needed, based on the best available science.