

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
TILLAMOOK MAJOR MAINTENANCE STUDY  
TILLAMOOK COUNTY, OREGON**

Tillamook Bay is located on the Oregon Coast about 47 miles south of the confluence of the Columbia River with the Pacific Ocean. It is a tidal estuary approximately six miles long, north to south, and a maximum of three miles wide. The total area of the bay is approximately 12 square miles at high water and has a tidal prism of 48,000 acre-feet. Five major rivers, the Kilchis, Wilson, Trask, Tillamook, and Miami, all flow into Tillamook Bay. The ocean entrance to the bay is located at the northern end and is protected by two jetties.

The north jetty was authorized in 1912 and completed in 1917, with the latest repairs occurring at the head of the jetty (the end of the jetty) in 1991. According to field measurements, taken in 2003, the north jetty has experienced deterioration and has lost approximately 384 feet from its authorized length. The south jetty was authorized in 1965 and built in three stages starting in 1969 and completed in 1979, with no repairs made since that time. According to field measurements, taken in 2003, the south jetty has lost almost 666 feet from its authorized length.

The purpose of the proposed action (to construct a revetment) is to protect the foredune and jetty root of the north jetty and to repair the jetty heads on both the north and south jetties. This action is necessary to prevent further deterioration and subsequent loss of the jetty heads and trunks, the north jetty root and the United States Coast Guard (USGS) watchtower.

A Major Maintenance Report was prepared in December 2003 which discussed the damage to both the jetties caused by increased wave action due to the increasing numbers of Pacific storms in recent years. The report proposed four alternatives for repair of the jetty (see attached Environmental Assessment (EA)). The proposed alternative to cap (repair the jetty heads) both the north and south jetties and to construct a revetment on the north jetty is the preferred alternative. The repairs to both the north and south jetties heads is critical to avoid a potential breach in the damaged areas of the jetty. For the reasons discussed below, including that the jetty already exists and the repair work will be almost entirely conducted within the existing footprint of the jetty, these repairs will have no significant impact on the human environment.

Construction of the revetment on the north jetty will decrease the erosion of the jetty root which will protect the jetty root as well as the adjacent coast guard watchtower. A thin saddle of foredune is separating the Pacific Ocean from a low-lying area along the significantly deteriorated north jetty root that has not been repaired since construction in 1918. The construction of the revetment will decrease erosion of the foredune and protect the weakened jetty root from significant ocean forces. If the revetment were not constructed, the danger and risk of jeopardizing the integrity of the north jetty is an unacceptable risk. Loss of the jetty would have significant impacts to the environment. A potential breach could cause the destruction of the coast guard tower that is adjacent to the north jetty and filling-in of the Tillamook channel, impacting the vessel traffic in and out of the bay. Past measures to protect the jetty from breaching, such as the placement of sandbags in the same area that the revetment will be constructed, have failed. During severe storms, high waves have displaced and destroyed

the sandbags. The proposed revetment will provide structurally more stable protection against a jetty breach.

The revetment will be constructed on the upper beach from the base of the foredune seaward approximately 60 feet. This is an area which has been confirmed to be of generally bare sand, at the upper limits of typical tides, with occasional debris and drift logs present near the base of the foredune.

Recreational access paths from the parking lot bisect the foredune and direct recreational use through the area where the revetment is to be constructed. The beach access, north jetty, and vantage point for observing storm events attract a substantial number of people to this location. Because of the lack of vegetation, location in the upper beach zone and the relatively heavy use by people, there is very limited use of this area by wildlife. A few individual song sparrows would be expected to utilize the drift zone to a very limited extent. Small aggregations of gulls or migrant shorebirds may occur infrequently at this location but human disturbance would typically preclude their common use of the site. There is no freshwater overflow down the beach or concentration of prey resources such as invertebrates on this upper beach zone to attract gull or shorebird concentrations. The project impacts on wildlife would be very limited due to the existing limited wildlife use attributable to the sparse habitat conditions and the extensive human disturbance that already exists. This area would probably return to levels comparable to that observed at present after construction.

The footprint of the revetment is quite small as compared to the total availability of this type of habitat, both in the immediate area and along the coast. The areas seaward of the revetment are frequently inundated by the ocean during the tidal cycles, and have a more diverse and abundant invertebrate population structure than in the construction area for the revetment. Beach excavation and subsequent replacement of sand and the placement of the revetment will result in the loss of the benthic invertebrate community and its habitat in the construction area. It is anticipated that recolonization post-construction by these invertebrate species would be expected to occur after construction on the restored sand beach. The revetted area would support a different invertebrate species assemblage post-construction given the change from sandy beach to stone revetment.

Construction of the revetment will not impact erosion of the beach adjacent to the jetty. The revetment is set-back from the water line and wave run-up area so that it will only be impacted during high water levels and storm events. This will reduce the impact on sand movement in the area. In addition, coarse sand fill will be placed in front of the revetment and cobble fill to the north of the revetment will offset any increase of forces at selected times. The revetment is designed to slow down the erosion just adjacent to the jetty.

An EA, Biological Assessments for ESA species, an Oregon Coastal Zone Consistency Determination for compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act, and a 404(b)(1) evaluation for the discharge of fill material into the waters of the United States were prepared and submitted to the appropriate agencies to address the environmental considerations associated with the project. The draft EA was sent out for public comment for 30 days and one comment was received concerning a statement made in the EA and in the Coastal Zone consistency document regarding Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands. The commenter stated, and the

Corps agreed, that BLM does not own the adjoining land and therefore the sentence was removed from both documents. The final EA is attached to this document.

Endangered Species Act concurrence letters were received from NOAA Fisheries on June 8, 2004 and from Fish and Wildlife Service on June 24, 2004. A Coastal Zone Consistency Determination was received from Department of Land Conservation Division on July 1, 2004. A Water Quality Certification from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality was received on July 8, 2004 and a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit was received on July 19, 2004.

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment. In light of the facts that the work area of the project is largely limited to the existing footprint of the previously constructed jetties; that the work area beyond the existing footprint is bare sand with little or no productive habitat and that the lack of a project would cause significant impacts to the human environment, therefore I have determined that the proposed action would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Date: 26 August 2004

/Signed/  
Richard W. Hobernicht  
Colonel, EN  
Commanding