

The USACE Navigation Program
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ABSTRACT

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) navigation assets include almost 1,100 coastal navigation projects and inland river systems. While these projects are Congressionally authorized, constructed and eligible for Operation and Maintenance, due to increasing maintenance costs and reduced budgets the USACE actively maintains about 300 of these projects. Annual maintenance dredging of these 300 channels averages about 250 million cubic yards of sediment. Therefore, in maintaining these projects the USACE strives to identify and implement sustainable solutions to more effectively utilize and manage sediments in a manner that enhances the environment and reduces costs. Common solutions or adaptive management strategies include placing sediments on shorelines or in the nearshore rather than transporting the sediments to upland or offshore disposal sites; utilizing beach quality sediments from upland sites to assist in reducing shoreline erosion; bypassing sediments downdrift to locations which more effectively keep sediments in the littoral system; reducing sedimentation at the sources; and linking multiple projects to reduce timeframes and costs for planning, permitting, and dredging, as well as combining mobilization and demobilization of dredges to a region. While these strategies assist in reducing shoreline erosion and improving storm protection for infrastructure along our coasts, additional benefits include improving environmental habitat. The USACE Navigation and Regional Sediment Management (RSM) Programs are working with our partners and stakeholders to identify and implement adaptive management strategies to optimize the use of sediments. Through coordination with our partners and stakeholders, we can work together to better understand the needs and priorities for sediment resources, the timeframes and requirements to incorporate the needs and priorities into the USACE navigation and dredging process, and to coordinate actions to streamline adaptive management actions to optimize use of sediments along the US coastlines.

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