US Army Corps
Of Engineers
Wilmington District

PUBLIC NOTICE

Issue Date: February 27, 2023
Commenting Deadline: No Comments Solicited
Corps Action ID #: SAW-2016-02091

All interested parties are hereby advised that the Wilmington District, Corps of Engineers (Corps) has published a Notice of Intent (NOI) in the Federal Register to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Town of North Topsail Beach's shoreline protection proposal to implement the New River Inlet Master Management Plan (NRIMMP) at the north end of North Topsail Beach, Onslow County, North Carolina. The plan includes the construction of a terminal groin on the southwest shoulder of New River Inlet and the placement of fill material along the Town's oceanfront shoreline. This work is being proposed in conjunction with the Town's existing May 27, 2011, Department of the Army (DA) authorization that allows maintenance dredging within a designated footprint of the inlet's ebb tide channel. The current inlet management component, which has a permit expiration date of December 31, 2041, is being considered by the Town as a long-range strategy that may not provide significant north end protection for 15 to 20 years. As stated by the Town, the extreme severity of the erosional threat necessitates the need for immediate action to supplement the Town's existing shore protection project with the proposed terminal groin structure. Consequently, the Town's purpose of the proposed NRIMMP is to help mitigate the ongoing severe and chronic erosion of the Town's north end oceanfront shoreline and provide for the protection of residential structures, infrastructure, recreational assets, and natural resources.

The Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS for this project is published in the Federal Register on February 27, 2023 and can be found on the Federal Register website, https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/fr/2023/02/27. After connecting with the website, click on February 27, 2023, and you have four choices to access the NOI. Two of the ways for pulling up the NOI is by clicking the "PDF" and then typing in "North Topsail Beach" in the search key, or click on "TOC", then "Army, Corps of Engineers Department".

Please note that this notice is for informational purposes only and no comments are being requested at this time. A future notice will be issued at the completion and release of the Draft EIS and comments will be solicited at that time.

Specific plans and location information are described below. This Public Notice is also available on the Wilmington District Web Site at http://www.saw.usace.army.mil/Missions/RegulatoryPermitProgram/PublicNotices.aspx

Applicant: Town of North Topsail Beach
Attn: Ms. Alice Derian (Town Manager)
2008 Loggerhead Court
Town of North Topsail Beach, North Carolina 28460

Contracting Engineer: ATM
Attn: Mr. Fran Way
941 Houston Northcutt Blvd, Suite 201
Mount Pleasant, South Carolina 29464

Authority

The Corps will evaluate this project pursuant to applicable procedures for Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act; and will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to assess the proposal. The Corps will be coordinating with North Carolina Division of Coastal Management and North Carolina Division of Water Quality in the development of the Draft EIS to ensure the process complies with all State requirements. In addition, the Corps will be initiating consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act and initiating Essential Fish Habitat consultation with the NMFS pursuant to Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Location

The project site is located at 34.526763, -77.337396, adjacent to the New River Inlet, at the end of New River Inlet Road (SR 1568) and encompasses both the inlet and oceanfront shoreline in North Topsail Beach, Onslow County, North Carolina.

Project Description

Under the DA authorization issued on May 27, 2011, the Town conducted the initial 2012/2013 channel realignment and north end oceanfront nourishment event. After the channel dredging, the north end shoreline experienced higher than expected erosion rates, resulting in the rapid loss of the placed beach fill material. During the initial post-construction year (2013), essentially all of the material placed on approximately 3,700 linear feet of the northern most end eroded and returned to the inlet. Additionally, ebb channel shoaling and thalweg migration exceeded the established thresholds in just 18 to 24 months. By August 2014, accelerating north end erosion led the Town to seek an emergency permit for construction of a sandbag revetment to protect threatened homes and infrastructure on the north end. In February 2015, the Town completed construction of an approximate 2,000 linear-ft sandbag revetment that extends north from the existing Topsail Reefs revetment to New River Inlet. In total, the north end is currently protected by an approximate 3,600 linear-ft sandbag revetment.

With the channel realignment not protecting the northern end as expected and the sandbag revetment being a short-term alternative, the Town reevaluated other protection

options and determined that a terminal groin would provide supplemental protection at this location. This project alternative would involve the construction of a terminal groin on the north end ocean beach at New River Inlet and the recurrence of beach nourishment on adjoining north end shoreline using beach compatible sand derived from the inlet outer bar channel realignment dredging events (Figure 1). The terminal groin would consist of a 2,021-ft-long sheet pile and rubble-mound structure with several distinct components, including a 345-ft-long sheet pile anchor section extending landward of the primary dune, an 894-ft-long sheet pile upland section extending seaward from the primary dune across the inlet/oceanfront dry beach, and a 782-ft-long rubble mound in-water section extending seaward of the MHW line. The anchor and upland sheet pile groin sections would have maximum crest elevations of +5 feet NAVD that are slightly lower than the natural beach berm elevation of +6 ft NAVD (Figure 2). The in-water rubble-mound section, consisting of 4- to 6-ft-diameter granite armor stone, would have a crest elevation of +5 feet NAVD, a crest width of 5 feet, and a base width of ~40 feet (Figure 3). Conventional land-based heavy equipment would be used to construct both the onshore and in-water groin sections. Construction of the onshore (anchor and upland) sections would involve excavating the groin footprint, installing sheet pile and armor stone scour aprons to design specifications, covering the completed structure with the original excavated material, and grading the work area to reestablish pre-construction beach profiles. Depending on the position of the shoreline, construction of the in-water groin section may require work from a temporary trestle, or an embankment, built out from the shoreline using existing beach material. It is anticipated that all of the stone for groin construction would be hauled in by trucks from the quarry site. Once the structure is in place, beach fill material would be placed southward of the terminal groin to construct the north end beach fill and groin fillet. The groin fillet would consist of a tapered fill section extending 2,000 feet southwest from the groin along the seaward margin of the +6-ft berm. Initial construction of the fillet and a projected four-year maintenance nourishment event would require ~310,000 cy of beach fill. Based on a four-year nourishment cycle, an estimated volume of ~2.35 million cubic yards of beach fill would be required over a total 30-year period.

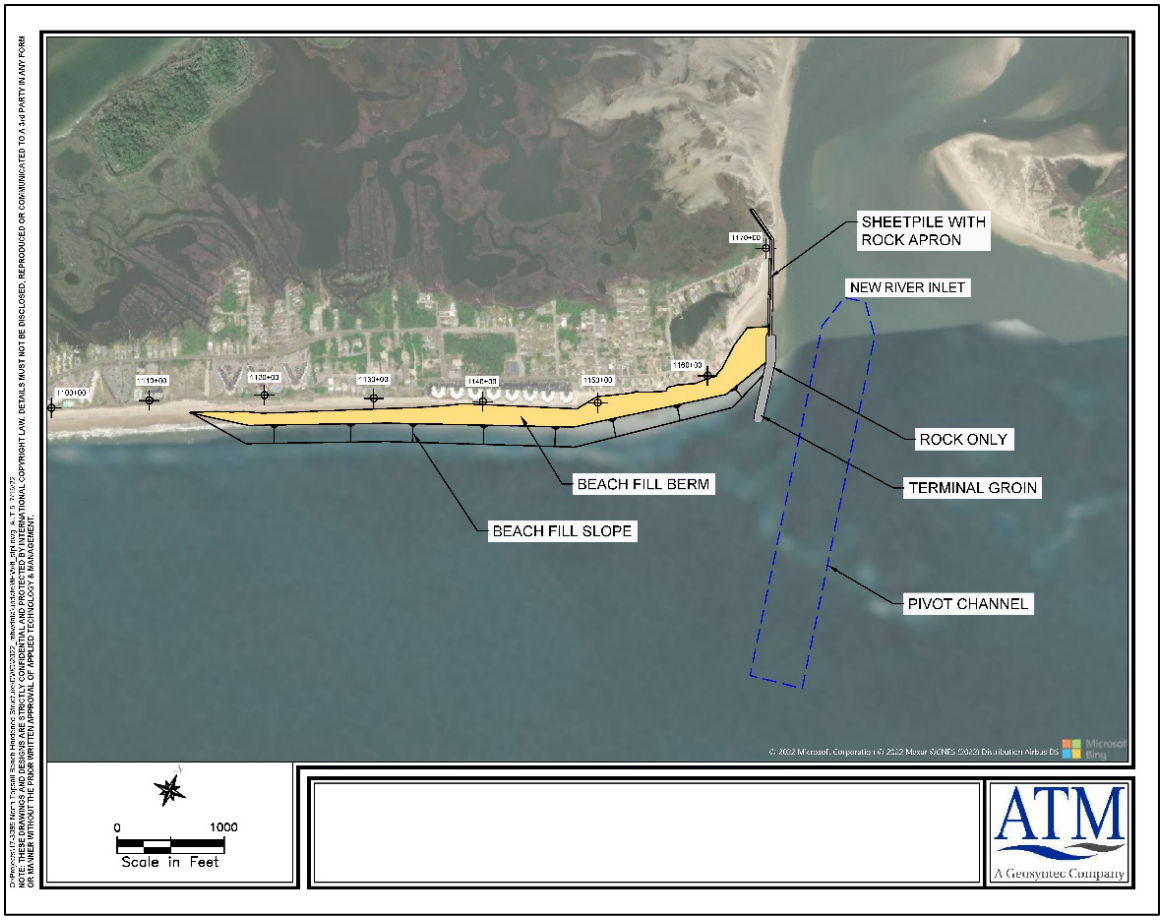

Figure 1. Alternative 5 (Town's Preferred Alternative) Beach Fill, Terminal Groin, and Pivot Channel Layout

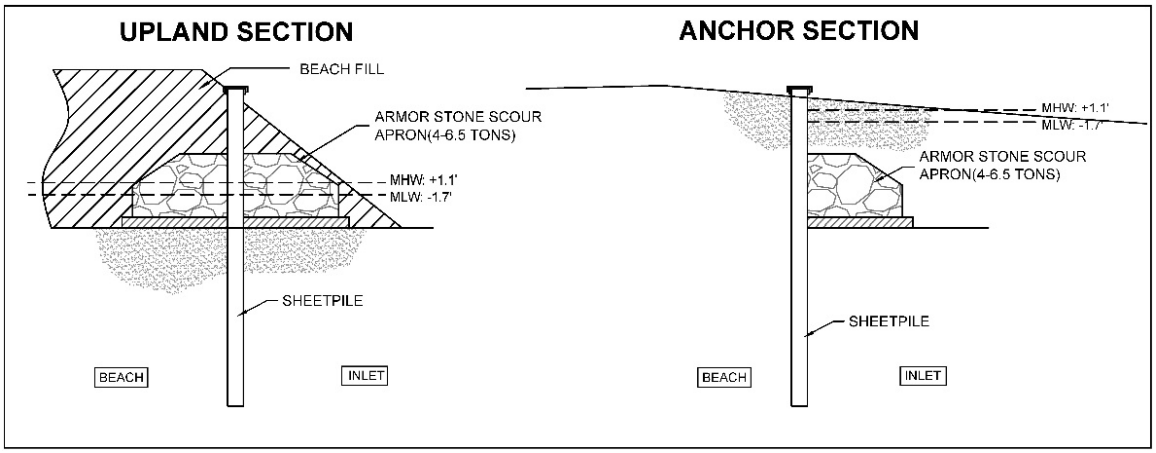

Figure 2. Terminal Groin Anchor and Upland Cross Sections

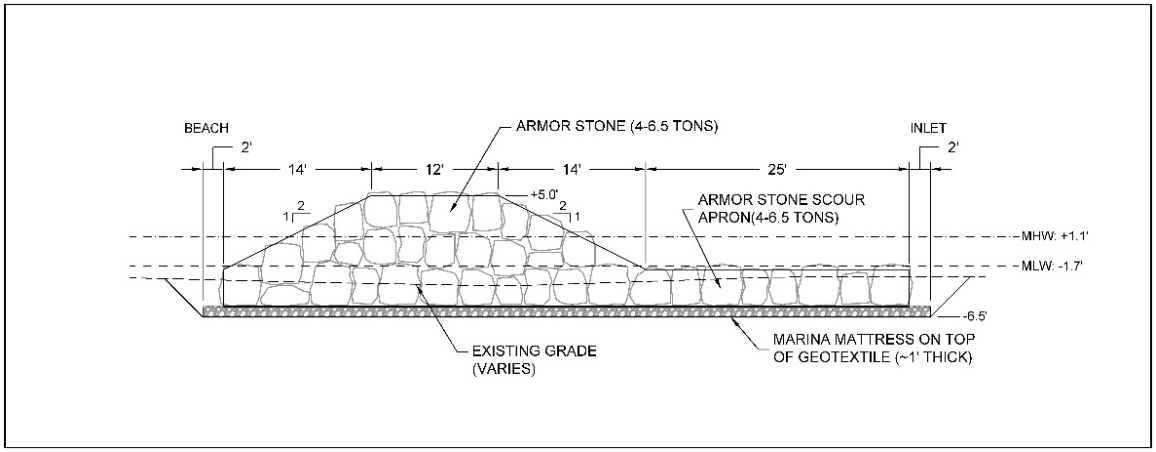

Figure 3. Terminal Groin In-water Cross Section

Several alternatives, including various borrow areas, are being considered for shoreline protection in the northern end of the island. At this time, the following alternatives have been considered to be reasonable options in light of the Town's overall purpose and each will be evaluated in the EIS: 1) No Action (Continuation of existing USACE-authorized Beach and Inlet Management), 2) Abandon and Retreat (No use of existing USACE-authorized Beach and Inlet Management and/or other USACE permitting actions), 3) Beach Nourishment Only, 4) Beach Nourishment and Terminal Groin (No use of existing USACE-authorized Beach and Inlet Management), and 5) Beach Nourishment, Terminal Groin, and Use of existing USACE-authorized Inlet Management (Town's Preferred Alternative).

As disclosed in the Notice of Intent, questions pertinent to the Town's proposed action and development of the EIS can be addressed to this office, Attention: Mickey Sugg, Wilmington Regulatory Field Office, by e-mail at mickey.t.sugg@usace.army.mil or by telephone at (910) 251-4811.