



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

CESAW-ECP-PE

NOTICE OF SCOPING PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

PLEASE NOTE: THIS PUBLIC NOTICE IS FOR A USACE CIVIL WORKS PROJECT AND IS NOT A SOLICITATION FOR COMMENT ON A REGULATORY PERMITTING ACTION

**WILMINGTON HARBOR 403 LETTER REPORT AND
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WILMINGTON HARBOR NAVIGATION PROJECT, NORTH CAROLINA**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Wilmington District, Wilmington, North Carolina, in partnership with the state, acting through the North Carolina State Port Authority (NCSPA), is advising Federal, State, and local governmental agencies and the public that USACE, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), has published a notice of intent (NOI) in the federal register that USACE intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to evaluate proposed transportation improvements for the Wilmington Harbor Navigation Project, North Carolina, including deepening and widening of the navigation channel. USACE will be conducting the environmental review in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR part 1500-1508), and USACE Procedures For Implementing NEPA (33 CFR part 230), and other related environmental review requirements. The NOI can be reviewed in its entirety at the following link: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2024-06-07/pdf/2024-12577.pdf>

USACE is conducting scoping for the Wilmington Harbor 403 Letter Report and Environmental Impact Statement and invites federal, state, and local agencies, Tribal Nations, other interested parties, and the general public to participate in the scoping process to present comments regarding the range of actions, alternatives, and potential impacts to be considered in the EIS, including comments regarding opportunities for beneficial use of dredged material. The purpose of the scoping process is to provide information to the public, to serve as a mechanism to solicit full and open agency and public input on alternatives and to identify issues to be analyzed in the EIS. USACE also seeks comments regarding the identification of information, studies, and analyses relevant to the proposed action.

Comment Submittal: USACE is requesting receipt of comments by **July 22, 2024**. The public is invited to submit comments using one or more of the following methods:

Email: WilmingtonHarbor403@usace.army.mil

Mail: US Army Corps of Engineers
Wilmington District
ATTN: Wilmington Harbor 403
69 Darlington Avenue
Wilmington, NC 28403

Online: Online comments may be made through the Public Comment Tool. The Public Comment Tool can be found on the project website:
<https://wilmington-harbor-usace-saw.hub.arcgis.com/>

Public Meetings: USACE will be hosting an in-person open house style public meeting, which will offer opportunities for participants to visit various stations to engage members of our team, learn about the project, ask questions, and submit written comments. Additionally, USACE will be hosting a series of virtual public meetings on topics of interest. These virtual meetings will provide opportunities to learn about the development of the EIS from team members and ask questions. Links to these meetings are included below and can also be found on the project interactive website:
<https://wilmington-harbor-usace-saw.hub.arcgis.com/>

- June 24, 1pm to 3pm - Session 1 - Plan Formulation, NEPA, Cultural Resources, Social Effects, Economics - [Webex Link](#)
- June 26, 1pm to 3pm - Session 2 - Ecological Resources - [Webex Link](#)
- June 27, 1pm to 3pm - Session 3 - Physical Resources - [Webex Link](#)
- June 28, 1pm -to 3pm - Session 4 - Beneficial Use of Dredged Material - [Webex Link](#)
- June 13, 2024 - Open House Public Meeting, [Sunset Park Elementary School](#), 613 Alabama Avenue, Wilmington, NC 28401 3pm to 7pm

Background Information: A draft environmental report and integrated feasibility study for potential navigation improvements to the Wilmington Harbor Federal navigation channel leading from the Atlantic Ocean to the Port of Wilmington, North Carolina, was prepared in 2020 by the NCSPA under the authority granted by Section 203 of Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986. The Port's study area was the existing Wilmington Harbor federal navigation channel that originates offshore and extends approximately 38 miles through the Atlantic Ocean and up the Cape Fear River to the City of Wilmington, NC where it services the Port of Wilmington. The existing project provides for a channel -44 feet Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW) through the ocean bar and

entrance channel, changing to -42 feet (MLLW) extending to just downstream of the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge. The Port of Wilmington has experienced increases in cargo volume and in the size of vessels calling at the port since the last major channel improvements were completed by the USACE under the Wilmington Harbor Project authorized under WRDA of 1996. The project was conditionally authorized under Section 403 of WRDA of 2020: Authorization of Projects Based on Feasibility Studies Prepared by Non-Federal Interests.

The WRDA 2020 Section 403 authorization for the navigation project, Wilmington Harbor, North Carolina, is conditioned upon the resolution of comments from the review assessment of the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Civil Works (ASA(CW)), titled "Review Assessment of Wilmington Harbor, North Carolina Navigation Improvement Project Integrated Section 203 Study & Environmental Report (February 2020)" and dated May 17, 2020. This evaluation is being conducted in response to the comments from the ASA(CW) review.

For additional information about the project, to learn more about how to submit comments, please visit our website:

<https://wilmington-harbor-usace-saw.hub.arcgis.com/>

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Bret Walters
Chief, Planning and Environmental Branch