

Pier 23 Replacement, Sediment Remediation, and Slag Removal, Tacoma, Washington

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Background. The 88th Regional Support Command (RSC) proposes replacement of an existing US Army Reserve (USAR) pier structure, and cleanup of adjacent and underlying contaminated sediment and slag, located in Commencement Bay, Tacoma, Washington. Six hundred six feet of wooden pier and pilings would be replaced with concrete pilings and decking. Adjacent contaminated sediment would be removed and appropriate backfill similar to existing sediments would be applied. Contaminated shoreline slag accumulation would be removed. Pier 23 was a wood pile pier constructed prior to World War II. The outboard 610 feet were replaced with concrete in 1946. The remaining inboard 606 feet of timber pier is in a deteriorated condition; it does not meet operational requirements, and is unsafe for USAR personnel.

1. **Project Location.** The Pier 23 property consists of 7.4 acres of submerged land and 3 acres of uplands leased from the Port of Tacoma, and is located on the northwest end of the Port of Tacoma Industrial Yard, between the Hylebos and Blair Waterways along the Commencement Bay shoreline.

2. **Proposed Action.** The proposed project consists of demolishing the shoreward, wooden 606 feet of the pier and replacing it with a new concrete-surfaced pier on concrete pilings. Approximately 1,100 creosote-treated timber piles (structural and fender) would be removed from the wooden section of the pier. These pilings would be replaced with 308 pre-cast concrete piles. Utilities running beneath the pier would also be replaced. All new utilities (fire suppression water, potable water, electric, communications, stormwater, compressed air) would be above deck. The deck is planned to be pre-cast, shipped in and then lifted into place. The deck joints would be grouted and forms would fully contain grout mix. The bents ("pile caps," or long rectangular sections on top of piles that the pre-cast deck would rest on) would be cast in place, as this is the only practical way to account for piles not being in perfect alignment after driving. Like the grouting however, the forms would fully contain the concrete mix used to form the pile caps. There would be security lighting at night that would illuminate the pier and nearby surrounding water during pier operation. There are two options for timber pier demolition and reconstruction, in order to accommodate continued operation of the pier, and to aid sediment remediation. Any in-water work for these options would occur during the approved work window. Army Reserve vessels would be temporarily relocated to either Pier 24 or a floating pier during the construction. Project sediment remediation consists of dredging about 20,000 cubic yards adjacent to the shoreward 200 feet of pier, and backfilling with clean (uncontaminated) material. The area to be dredged would be about 58,000 square feet, and possibly 12 feet in depth in some places. Sediment to be removed does not pose a human health risk, allowing some flexibility in handling and disposal. After a debris sweep is completed, dredging would commence using a mechanical dredge with a closed, environmental bucket wherever possible. Dredged material would be dewatered as necessary to meet the disposal facility's acceptance criteria. Decanted water would be treated (filtered at minimum) and discharged in accordance with the project's water quality certification and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. The dredged area would be backfilled to surrounding

grade with uncontaminated sediment which to the extent possible would include material similar to sediments existing at the site. Dredged material would be taken by barge to be offloaded at an upland site (location to be determined), then shipped by truck and/or train to a permitted landfill for disposal.

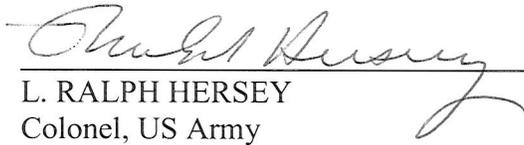
The potential effects of proposed action were compared to the no-action alternative in the final environmental assessment that accompanies this Finding of No Significant Impact. During the public comment period, the final Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact were available online under Commencement Bay, Pier23 Repair Pierce County, Washington at: http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/ers/doc_table.cfm. The 30-day comment period began on February 19, 2009 and ended on March 19, 2009. No comments were received.

3. Summary of Impacts. An environmental assessment has been prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act for the proposed action. The final environmental assessment describes the environmental consequences of the proposed project, which are briefly summarized below.

Potential impacts associated with this work include degradation of water quality (turbidity and contaminant re-suspension) during construction, leaching from the treated timber to adjacent sediments, and increase in ambient noise levels and air emissions during construction. There would be a benefit to aquatic resources from a net removal of contaminated pilings, but potential negative impacts from shock waves during piling. These impacts would generally be localized in nature, short in duration, and minor in scope, and would be offset to the extent possible using best management practices. None of these adverse impacts would be significant either individually or cumulatively. The project is not expected to adversely affect threatened or endangered species, and no impacts to cultural resources are anticipated as a result of the construction activities. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - Fisheries, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation have concurred with these effect determinations. No adverse effects to the visual/aesthetic environment, noise conditions, or safety will occur.

4. Finding. Based on the analysis detailed in the final environmental assessment and summarized above, this project is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment and, therefore, does not require preparation of an environmental impact statement.

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Date



L. RALPH HERSEY
Colonel, US Army
Director, Public Works