

Corps of Engineers to place sand to protect Grays Harbor's south jetty

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SEATTLE - The Army Corps of Engineers will respond to continuing erosion adjacent to the Grays Harbor south jetty breach fill in Westport, Wash., by placing about 20,000 cubic yards of sand on the dunes that have formed above 1,000 linear feet of shoreline.

The sand placement is intended to protect against the risk of a breach forming and possibly threatening the stability of the south jetty and federal navigation channel.

The Corps coordinated this project with state and local officials and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries as required under the Endangered Species Act. The Washington State Department of Ecology and City of Westport have concurred in the Corps' Coastal Zone Management Consistency Determination submitted for this project. The Corps has prepared a supplement to last year's environmental assessment of sand placement and has found no significant impact.

The Corps awarded Groat Brothers, Inc., of Woodland, Wash., a contract to place approximately 20,000 cubic yards of the material above mean higher high water level adjacent to Half Moon Bay. Sand placement is expected to begin Dec. 15 and take between 15 and 30 days.

The sand is already on site and will be hauled approximately one half mile to the threatened breach fill area. The Corps will work to avoid areas where the agency has planted native dune grass. Any impacted dune grass will be replanted in the spring.

The Corps continues to move forward on its long-term management strategy study for the Grays Harbor navigation project.

The purpose of this study is to assess the threat to the federal navigation project of a breach between the south jetty and adjacent land mass and to recommend the most appropriate long-term strategy to maintain and protect the federal navigation project. The study focuses on the south jetty, Half Moon Bay, South Beach, Point Chehalis, and the navigation channel.