



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
SEATTLE DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 3755  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98124-3755

November 23, 2005

CENWS-PM-PL-ER

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**  
**Quillayute River Federal Navigation Project**  
**Routine Operation and Maintenance**

**1. Background.** The Quillayute River Navigation Project was authorized by the River and Harbor Act of 3 July 1930 and modified by the River and Harbor Acts of 2 March 1945 and 3 September 1954.

The purpose of the project is to provide and maintain depth within the small boat basin at the town of La Push, Washington and maintain passage from the boat basin to the Pacific Ocean while maintaining the spit that protects the channel and boat basin. This harbor of refuge has the only Coast Guard search and rescue station along 100 miles of coast between Grays Harbor and Neah Bay. The Quileute Reservation where the project occurs offers livelihood for approximately 300 Quileute Tribal members (fishing) and approximately 50 non-Indians, including Tribal staff, businesses, and Coast Guard personnel.

The Quillayute River Navigation Channel is dredged and maintained by the Seattle District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) on an as needed basis to maintain an entrance to the Quillayute Marina at La Push, Washington. Without this maintenance dredging, shoaling would reduce the ability of boats (fishing and pleasure craft) and Coast Guard ships to enter and leave safely during low tide conditions. In accordance with Public Notice CENWS-OD-TS-NS-19 dredging will occur in the navigation channel when shoaling becomes critical to the navigable water way.

**2. Proposed Action.** The proposed project consists of maintenance dredging of approximately 75,000 to 100,000 cubic yards (c.y.) from the entrance and navigation channel and boat basin via pipeline dredge. Currently, maintenance dredging occurs approximately every other year. When weather conditions permit, a clamshell dredge is used to dredge the mouth of the Quillayute River (entrance) if shoaling begins to block or hinder entrance into the channel. All of this material is used beneficially to enhance surf smelt habitat on the ocean side of the revetment with the exception of 10,000 c.y.'s that is provided to the Quileute Tribe for their beneficial use. This material is currently being used for construction purposes within the reservation. The work window is between November and March of any given year to avoid surf smelt and migrating salmon in accordance with the Quileute Tribal recommendations.

**3. Summary of Impacts and Compliance.** The attached Environmental Assessment (EA) and Biological Assessment (BA) describe the expected environmental impacts of the proposed action. The dredging and disposal activities will result in temporary disruption of water quality, air quality, and noise. All of these impacts will be minor. Construction will occur at times designated by the Quileute Tribal fisheries to avoid surf smelt spawning and juvenile salmonid out-migration. No threatened and/or endangered species use the project site to the extent that they would be adversely impacted. Commercial and sport fishing would not be affected significantly by the project. Cultural resources and Native American concerns would not be affected significantly by the project. There are no known cultural resources sites within the project area as documented in the Final Environmental Impact Statement dated February 1986 and are hereby incorporated as reference. The section 404(b)(1) evaluation prepared for the project determined that the project includes appropriate and practicable steps to minimize adverse impacts to the aquatic ecosystem, and that there is no practicable alternative that would have less impact on the aquatic environment.

This project fully complies with all applicable environmental laws and regulations including the Endangered Species Act. A BA was prepared and transmitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on September 28, 2004 with a determination of “not likely to adversely affect bald eagles, marbled murrelet, brown pelican, humpback whale and Steller sea lion.” Concurrence was received on October 19, 2004 from NMFS and December 22, 2004 from USFWS for the period 2004 – 2009.

**4. Findings.** Based on the attached environmental documentation, coordination and analysis conducted by the project sponsor and Corps environmental staff, I have determined that the proposed action will not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. The proposed action 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

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Debra M. Lewis  
Colonel, Corps of Engineers  
District Engineer