FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
REPAIR OF NORTH AND SOUTH JETTIES
MOUTH OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER
CLATSOP COUNTY, OREGON and PACIFIC COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The jetties were constructed at the entrance to the Columbia River to confine tidal currents to obtain scouring velocities in the bar and entrance channels, to help maintain the authorized channel dimensions, and to help protect vessels entering and exiting the river.

The purpose of the action is to ensure the continuing function of the North and South Jetties by repairing critical trunk portions of both Jetties and, when future funding becomes available, rehabilitating the remaining critical sections of both jetties. The premise of the jetty repair is to repair the most vulnerable areas of the North and South Jetties, where the consequences of jetty failure (a breach through either jetty) is high and would rapidly and significantly degrade navigation through the Mouth of the Columbia River (MCR). The intent of the proposed design will be three-fold: 1) Improve the stability of the foundation (toe) of each jetty as affected by scour, 2) Improve the side slope (above and below water) stability, 3) Improve the dynamic stability of each jetty as affected by wave forces impinging on the jetties.

As discussed in the attached Environmental Assessment (EA), both the North and South MCR Jetties contain badly deteriorated areas where degradation has accelerated in recent years due to increased storm activity and loss of sand, upon which the jetties are constructed. Breaching is a likely possibility and would mostly likely occur near the shoreline (especially at the North Jetty). This would allow sand to migrate into the Columbia River navigation channel, thereby disrupting deep draft navigation and increasing dredging requirements. The likelihood of a jetty breach will continue to increase with time and within the next five years there is a high likelihood that a significant breach will occur on either jetty. Costs to repair following a breach are estimated at two to five times higher than if completed prior to the failure.

The proposed immediate repairs will occur along the South and North Jetties at various locations (see Figures in the attached EA). All of the repair locations are critical and need immediate attention. The amounts of stone to be placed on the South and North Jetties have increased from the estimates provided in the draft EA. The quantity has increased from 40,000 tons on the South Jetty to approximately 111,000 tons and on the North Jetty from 30,000 tons to approximately 57,000 tons. This increase is due to recent surveys conducted in 2004, which showed an increase in erosion along both jetties. As discussed in the final EA, the increase in jetty stone amounts will not impact the environment.

The proposed jetty repair work would be conducted by marine and/or land access. For delivery and placement of stone, the contractor will be provided with three options. The contractor may choose to use one method of placement or combine the options. The options are: marine-based using a tow boat and barge; marine based using a barge off-loading platform or land based operations trucking in material through the existing park county and state road systems. These roads may be used to bring in construction equipment and contract employee use during the construction timeframe. The contractor will be responsible for repairing any contractor caused damage to the State Park roads.

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) was sent out for public comment for 30 days on July 9, 2004 and several comments were received and have been addressed in the final EA attached to this document. A request was made from Washington State Parks to add a parking lot along a fire access road at the North Jetty to allow for visitor parking because, during construction, the Benson Beach parking area will be closed due to construction activities. The Corps of Engineers has agreed to construct a less then one acre gravel parking lot along the fire access road. The construction of this gravel parking lot will not impact listed species and will not impact adjacent wetlands.

Biological Assessments for ESA species were sent to NOAA Fisheries (NOAA) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In the BA for listed fish species, the Corps of Engineers found that the project will likely adversely affect the listed species and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). In the Biological Opinion (BO) received from NOAA Fisheries on July 29, 2004, it included Terms and Conditions to implement the reasonable and prudent alternatives outlined in the BO. The Corps will comply with the Terms and Conditions and therefore, the affects will not significantly impact the environment. Copies of this document are available on the Corps of Engineers webpage at: https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/issues/jetty/cms/documents.asp.

In the BA for listed wildlife, the Corps found that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely effect the listed species. An Endangered Species Act concurrence letter was received from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on September 13, 2004, which agreed to several conservation measures proposed by the Corps of Engineers to minimize the impacts to bald eagles and marbled murrelets. The conservation measures are: trucks will not unnecessarily stop along the haul road; trucks will be prohibited from using compression brakes on haul roads except for emergencies situations and trucks will only be allowed to use haul roads during daylight hours. Copies of this document are available on the Corps of Engineers webpage at: https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/issues/jetty/cms/documents.asp.

An Oregon and Washington Coastal Zone Consistency Determination for compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act were submitted to the Department of Land Conservation (DLCD) and Development and the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) on July 9, 2004. The Corps consistency determination found that the MCR Jetty repair project was consistent with local and statewide planning goals. DLCD concurred with this finding on November 5, 2004 and Ecology concurred on December 30, 2004 with conditions. Copies of these documents are available on the Corps of Engineers webpage at: https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/issues/jetty/cms/documents.asp.

A 404(b)(1) evaluation for the discharge of fill material into the waters of the United States were prepared and submitted to the appropriate agencies to address the environmental considerations associated with the project on July 9, 2004. The Corps concluded in this document that the discharge of dredged or fill material as a result of this project will be clean sand and suitable for unconfined flowlane or upland disposal. Water quality permits were received from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) on November 10, 2004 and from Ecology on December 30, 2004. Copies of these documents are available on the Corps of Engineers webpage at: https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/issues/jetty/cms/documents.asp.

As part of the construction project, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit is required for disturbed areas over one acre in both the States of Oregon and Washington. The jetty repair project will have two five acre construction staging areas at both the North and South Jetties. An NPDES permit for the North Jetty was received from the Environmental Protection Agency on December 27, 2004 and an NPDES permit for Oregon from ODEQ for the South Jetty was received on January 19, 2005. Copies of these documents are available on the Corps of Engineers webpage at:
https://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/issues/jetty/cms/documents.asp.

I have reviewed the Environmental Assessment. In light of the facts that the work area of the project is largely limited to the existing footprint of the constructed jetties; that the construction staging areas will have minimal impact on productive habitat and that not constructing the project would cause significant impacts to the human environment, I have determined that the proposed action would not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Date: 24 JAN 2005

// Signed//
Richard W. Hobernicht
Colonel, EN
Commanding