Finding of No Significant Impact

Grand Isle and Vicinity Louisiana Beach Erosion and Hurricane Project PL 84-99

Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

US Army Corps of Engineers ®
New Orleans District

April 2026

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT
7400 LEAKE AVENUE
NEW ORLEANS LA 70118-3651

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
(FONSI)

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

GRAND ISLE AND VICINITY
LOUISIANA BEACH
EROSION AND HURRICANE PROJECT PL 84-99
JEFFERSON PARISH, LOUISIANA

EA #608
EA608-202-00-B2P-1770651673

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Planning and Environment Division South, New Orleans District (Corps) has prepared Environmental Assessment (EA), EA #608, in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The EA for the Repair & Rehabilitation of Damaged Federal Hurricane / Shoreline Risk Reduction Project for Post-Hurricane Ida Repairs addresses performance and longevity of beach nourishment opportunities and feasibility in the town of Grand Isle, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana. The final recommendation is contained in the report of the Chief of Engineers, dated 25 September 2025.

The EA, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated various alternatives that would improve the performance and longevity of beach nourishment projects, ultimately reducing the scope of future repairs following high and low frequency storm events in the study area.

Description of the Proposed Action

The recommended plan is the Locally Preferred Plan (LPP) and includes:

- The Proposed Action of construction of up to 35 segmented stone breakwaters and up to 20 navigational light platforms (NLPs) on the Gulf side of Grand Isle, Louisiana within 400 feet of shore (Proposed Action). These breakwaters would form a new breakwater field connecting two existing breakwater fields. Activities consist of barging stone to the construction site where it would be placed to construct breakwaters and would include the construction of NLPs.
- Access would be through open water. Material would be loaded onto barges and access to the breakwater construction area could be through two existing passes (Barataria Pass to the east or Caminada Pass to the west), or from the Gulf. There would be no dredging for access associated with the Proposed Action. Because of this limitation, the exact elevation contour in which breakwaters would be constructed and the exact distance from shore would vary based on site conditions and the draft of the barges.
- Breakwaters would consist of geotextile, core and bedding stone, and armor stone. Approximately 230,000 tons of armor stone, 42,000 tons of core and bedding stone, and 74,000 square yards of geotextile would be installed. All breakwaters would be constructed within 400 feet of shore, but the distance offshore could vary across the proposed breakwater alignment due to barge access constraints. In addition, the length and gap of each breakwater could also vary across the alignment due to barge access constraints. Each segmented breakwater would be approximately 250 feet long with a maximum width of 65 feet and a top elevation of +6 feet North American Vertical Datum

of 1988 (NAVD 88). The resulting breakwaters would be approximately 4-6 feet from the seafloor or approximately 3 to 5 feet above the water surface, depending on water surface elevation. Each individual breakwater would be approximately 250 feet apart. All activities associated with the construction of the breakwaters would be water-based and via barge. Barge mounted draglines and excavators would be used to place the geotextile fabric and rock.

In addition to a "no action" plan, the Proposed Action breakwater alignment was evaluated. The No Action plan evaluated the impacts associated with not implementing the Proposed Action and represents the Future without Project (FWOP). Beach erosion would continue shoreward in the unprotected 16,000-foot gap until it reaches the storm risk reduction sand dune in the FWOP condition. The dune would be directly impacted by storm events and would not adequately perform as intended. What once was land would become Waters of the U.S. Habitat and nesting areas for wildlife would decrease. Infrastructure would become unstable which could result in failure as the island gradually becomes uninhabitable as dune and beach convert into open water. The Proposed Action plan would include constructing up to 35 segmented stone breakwaters and up to 20 NLPs. Further details of each alternative are located in Section 2 of EA #608.

The design for the Proposed Action was developed by the Non-Federal Sponsor (NFS), the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board of Louisiana (CPRAB), working in conjunction and coordination with MVN. Multiple breakwater alignments were considered for optimum design and placement (Appendix C). Additionally, a modeling report called "*Grand Isle Breakwaters Analysis & Design Final Report*" was prepared for CPRAB which analyzed alternatives (October 3, 2024). A copy of this report which details the alternatives analysis and selection of the proposed plan for further evaluation by USACE is available upon request.

The additional breakwaters would reduce beach erosion and increase sand accretion by reducing longshore sediment transport through salient and/or tombolo formation along the gulf side beach. This would serve as the protection berm between the gulf and the risk reduction sand dune.

For safety purposes, up to twenty (20) NLPs would be installed along the line of newly constructed breakwaters. The NLPs would measure two feet wide by 4 feet wide and could be placed on every third breakwater structure. For each platform, a barge mounted pile driver would be used to drive piling to construct a tripod shaped structure upon which a NLP would be mounted.

Factors Considered in Determination

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the Proposed Action is listed in Table 1:

Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Proposed Action

	Less than significant effects	Less than significant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Barrier Systems	☒	☐	☐
Waters of the United States	☒	☐	☐
Soils and Water Bottoms	☒	☐	☐
Aquatic Resources / Fisheries	☒	☐	☐
Essential Fish Habitat	☒	☐	☐
Beaches	☒	☐	☐
Wildlife	☒	☐	☐
Threatened and Endangered Species	☒	☐	☐
Cultural Resources	☐	☐	☒
Recreation Resources	☒	☐	☐
Aesthetics	☒	☐	☐
Socio-economic Resources	☒	☐	☐
Air Quality	☒	☐	☐
Noise	☒	☐	☐
Hydrology	☒	☐	☐
Water Quality	☒	☐	☐
Sediment Dynamics	☒	☐	☐

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the Proposed Action. Best management practices (BMPs) as detailed in the EA will be implemented, as appropriate, to minimize impacts.

No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the Proposed Action. Access to the project area will be by floating plant. No digging of water-based access channels is required. No land-based staging or access is needed. The contractor would be required to prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan and apply for coverage under a General Permit, as appropriate, for review and approval by USACE.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA): The ESA is designed to protect and recover T&E species of fish, wildlife and plants. CEMVN initiated consultation August 14, 2025, with USFWS and identified several T&E species that are known to occur in the Project Area. T&E species that may occur are the eastern black rail (Laterallus jamaicensis ssp. jamaicensis), hawksbill sea turtle (Eretmochelys imbricata), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (Lepidochelys kempii), Atlantic loggerhead sea turtle (Caretta caretta), piping plover (Charadrius melodus), rufus red knot (Calidris canutus rufa), and West Indian manatee (Trichechus manatus). Because all construction is water based with no impacts to beach habitats, the USFWS reviewed the project for effects to Federal trust species under their jurisdiction and currently protected by the ESA of 1973 and found the project, as proposed, is "not likely to adversely effect" those species on December 15, 2025. (Appendix B)

An Expedited Informal Consultation under Section 7 of the ESA was submitted to NMFS on October 14, 2025, and assigned the ECO number of SERO-2025-02841. The NMFS concurred with the agency's (USACE) conclusions that the proposed action "is not likely to adversely affect

the NMFS ESA-listed species and/or designated critical habitat" in a letter dated January 30, 2026. (Appendix B)

FISH AND WILDLIFE COORDINATION ACT OF 1934: The Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA) provides authority for the USFWS involvement in evaluating impacts to fish and wildlife from proposed water resource development projects. It requires that fish and wildlife resources receive equal consideration to other project features. It requires federal agencies that construct, license or permit water resource development projects to first consult with the USFWS, NMFS and state resource agencies regarding the impacts on fish and wildlife resources and measures to mitigate these impacts. Section 2(b) requires the USFWS to produce a Coordination Act Report (CAR) that details existing fish and wildlife resources in a Project Area, potential impacts due to a proposed project and recommendations for a project. The USFWS reviewed the proposed activities described in EA #608 and a Final CAR was received dated March 18, 2026. Recommendations were provided in the Final CAR and CEMVN responded in the Final EA. (Appendix B)

MAGNUSON-STEVENS FISHERIES CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT: The Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) as amended, Public Law 104-208, addresses the authorized responsibilities for the protection of EFH by NMFS in association with regional fishery management councils. The NMFS has a "finding" with the CEMVN on the fulfillment of coordination requirements under provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. In those findings, the CEMVN and NMFS have agreed to complete EFH coordination requirements for federal civil works projects through the public review and comment period on NEPA documents prepared for those projects. On March 18, 2026, NMFS responded by email stating EFH consultation requirements of the MSFCMA have been fulfilled and they do not object to the proposed activity. (Appendix B)

NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT OF 1966: Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that the recommended plan has no effect on historic properties. In a letter dated November 3, 2025, SHPO concurred that the proposed breakwater construction would have no effect on historic properties. (Appendix B)

TRIBAL CONSULTATION: NEPA, Section 106 of the NHPA, Executive Order (EO) 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments), the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, and related statutes and policies have a consultation component. In accordance with CEMVN's responsibilities under NEPA, Section 106, and EO 13175, CEMVN offered the following federally-recognized Indian Tribes the opportunity to review and comment on the potential of the Proposed Action to significantly affect protected tribal resources, tribal rights, or Indian lands: Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Caddo Nation of Oklahoma, Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana, Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, Seminole Tribe of Florida, and Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana. The Alabama-Quassarte Tribal Town concurred with the determination on 13 October 2025, and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma concurred with the determination on 13 November 2025; no other Tribal comments were received.

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 401 COMPLIANCE: The CWA sets and maintains goals and standards for water quality and purity. Section 401 requires a Water Quality Certification from the LDEQ that a proposed project does not violate established effluent limitations and water quality standards. CEMVN applied for a State (WQC) and it was received dated March 18,

2026. LDEQ concluded the activity will not violate water quality standards as provided for in LAC 33:IX.Chapter 11. (Appendix A)

CLEAN WATER ACT SECTION 404(B)(1) COMPLIANCE: Pursuant to the Clean Water Act of 1972, an evaluation to assess the short- and long-term impacts associated with discharge of dredged and fill materials into waters of the United States resulting from this Project was initiated December 2, 2025. The 404(b)(1) evaluation was completed and signed March 19, 2026. (Appendix A)

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT: The Coastal Zone Management Act requires that "each federal agency conducting or supporting activities directly affecting the coastal zone shall conduct or support those activities in a manner which is, to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with approved state management programs." In accordance with Section 307, a Consistency Determination was prepared for the proposed Project and was coordinated with the Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy (LDCE) in an email dated October 22, 2025. In a letter dated December 3, 2025, LDCE concurred with CEMVN's Coastal Zone Consistency Determination. (Appendix B)

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS: If the Proposed Action is changed significantly or is not implemented withing one year, CEMVN will reinitiate coordination with the USFWS to ensure that the Proposed Action would not adversely affect any federally listed threatened or endangered species, or their habitat.

If any unrecorded cultural resources are determined to exist within the proposed project site, work would not proceed in the area containing those cultural resources until a CEMVN archeologist has been notified, and coordination with the Louisiana SHPO and federally recognized Tribes has been completed.

The construction contractor would be required to: (A) Prepare SWPPP for review and approval by CEMVN and apply for coverage under a General Permit as appropriate; (B) Obtain a Stormwater General Permit from the LDEQ and comply with all applicable conditions and requirements set forth in the issued permit; (C) Comply with any applicable conditions and requirements included in the Water Quality Certification issued by LDEQ for the proposed project; (D) Comply with any applicable special conditions set forth in the Coastal Consistency Determination issued for the proposed project by the Louisiana Department of Conservation and Energy.

The construction contractor would be required to comply with USFW and NMFS guidelines for protecting West Indian manatees, sea turtles, and bottlenose dolphins during construction of the proposed project.

All applicable environmental laws have been considered, and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials has been completed.

Public Involvement

Public review of the EA and FONSI was completed 27 February 2026. All comments submitted during the public review period are addressed in Appendix D.

Decision

Based on this report, the reviews by other Federal, State and local agencies, Tribes, input of the public, and the review by my staff, it is my determination that the recommended plan would not cause significant adverse effects on the quality of the human environment; therefore, preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

21 April 2026
Date

[redacted]
Scotty M. Autin
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Engineer