

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF
THE NAVY (NAVY) LEASE OF SUBMERGED LANDS AT MARE ISLAND TO
ENABLE THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF A FERRY MAINTENANCE
FACILITY, VALLEJO, CALIFORNIA**

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] § 1500-1508) implementing procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the Navy's Procedures for Implementing NEPA (32 CFR Part 775), the Navy gives notice that an Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for the Navy's lease of submerged lands at Mare Island in Vallejo, California.

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is to lease approximately 3.58 acres of Navy-owned submerged lands located within Mare Island Strait. The lease would allow the San Francisco Bay Area Water Emergency Transportation Authority (WETA) to construct and operate the waterside components of a proposed ferry maintenance facility upon the Navy's submerged lands. WETA will be responsible for acquiring any applicable building permits, approvals, and environmental permits prior to development of the property, and will be responsible for implementation of the mitigation measures identified herein.

Purpose and Need: The purpose of the Navy's Proposed Action is to lease submerged lands to enable WETA's construction and operation of the waterside components of a new ferry maintenance facility. This action is needed to assist the local land use authority in effectuating its base reuse and redevelopment, as envisioned in the City of Vallejo's *Mare Island Specific Plan* (City of Vallejo, 2008).

Existing Conditions: The lease area evaluated in the EA is comprised of 3.58 acres of Navy-owned submerged lands in the Mare Island Strait along the shoreline near Waterfront Avenue, between 6th and 7th streets on Mare Island. The lease area is located within the submerged lands of the former Mare Island Naval Shipyard, which is on the western edge of the City of Vallejo in Solano County, California, approximately 30 miles northeast of the City of San Francisco.

WETA is proposing to relocate the existing Vallejo-Baylink Ferry Maintenance Facility from its current location on Mare Island approximately 0.5 miles northwest of the lease area in the City of Vallejo, California. WETA is proposing to construct and operate a new ferry maintenance facility that would be located on both 3.58 acres of the Navy's submerged lands in Mare Island Strait and on landside property that is not owned by the Navy. The Navy's proposed action—the submerged land lease—would allow WETA to construct and operate the waterside components of the proposed ferry maintenance facility (e.g., berths) within the Navy's submerged lands.

This EA is required because the Navy still retains ownership of the submerged lands, and the proposed use of the property by WETA for the waterside components of the ferry maintenance

facility was not specifically evaluated in the Navy's previous NEPA analysis in the 1998 Mare Island Naval Shipyard Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report.

Scope of the EA: The EA assessed the potential direct, indirect, short-term, long-term, and cumulative impacts on the human environment resulting from the submerged land lease and the subsequent construction and operation of the waterside components of the ferry maintenance facility. The Proposed Action evaluated in the EA is limited to the Navy's lease of submerged lands and does not include the landside portion of the proposed maintenance facility. However, construction and operation of the landside components of the facility was analyzed in the EA to assess and disclose potential indirect and cumulative effects.

The EA documents the Navy's compliance with the requirements of NEPA, as amended; the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Sections 1500-1508); and Navy procedures for implementing NEPA (32 CFR Part 775).

Resource areas examined in the EA include the physical environment (geology, topography, and soils; groundwater; surface water; air quality and greenhouse gases; noise and vibration; visual resources; transportation; land use), biological resources (i.e., marine biota), cultural resources (historic properties, archaeological resources, and architectural resources), hazards and hazardous materials, socioeconomics, and utilities. The EA also addressed potential cumulative impacts that may result from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the region.

Consistent with CEQ NEPA regulations (40 CFR Section 1506.6, Public Involvement) and Navy policy, the Draft EA was made available to agencies and the public for a 15-day comment period. This review period allowed the public to be involved in the preparation of the EA. No comments were received.

After the close of the public comment period, WETA refined the design of the proposed project, which resulted in a minor modification of surface water coverage for both build alternatives (Alternatives 1 and 2—further discussed below) beyond what was presented in the Draft EA. This minor design modification results in a negligible increase to the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts presented in the Draft EA for both Alternative 1 and Alternative 2. Based on coordination with resource and permitting agencies, no changes are necessary to either resource agency permit conditions or the mitigation measures presented in the Draft EA to accommodate the design modification.

Alternatives Analyzed: Three alternatives were considered in the EA: Alternative 1, Alternative 2, and the No Action Alternative. Alternative 1 has been identified as the preferred alternative.

Alternative 1 is the issuance of a 3.58-acre lease agreement for a portion of Navy-owned submerged lands for the construction and operation of the waterside components of a new ferry maintenance facility to be owned and operated by WETA. The waterside improvements would cover approximately 14,687 square feet of water surface. This total would include approximately 8,787 square feet of newly constructed facilities, with the remaining 5,900 square feet consisting of the existing service float (4,080 square feet), and a loading float (1,800 square feet) that would be relocated from the current maintenance facility for reuse at the new site.

The waterside improvements include construction of three full-service berths and one maintenance berth for the vessels. The berths would be separated by two 124-foot-long finger floats and one 200-foot-long maintenance float, and would span approximately 450 linear feet along the waterfront. A fifth berth would be adjacent to the quay wall, and would be used infrequently if a large land-based crane was needed for heavy maintenance and repairs. The berths would include concrete floating docks with steel-pipe guide piles, and fendering sized to accommodate the ferry vessels. Basic utility services, such as fueling, potable water, shore power, sewage disposal, and hose bibs to wash down the vessels, would be provided at each berth. In addition, the three full-service berths would have utility connections for bilge water, waste oil, lube oil, and compressed air. Other components of the waterside facility would include lighting, power, a tool shed, ship's store shed, diver access platform, access gangway, security systems, communications systems, main gangway, access portal, and roll-up security gate. The waterside facility would be primarily used for overnight moorage, daily fueling, and light maintenance of WETA vessels. Light maintenance work would involve vessel repairs that do not require heavy equipment or removal of major vessel components. Heavy maintenance activities would occur on an infrequent basis. Limited passenger service is envisioned to occur on trips between the maintenance facility and the existing Vallejo Ferry Terminal, with primary passenger service to San Francisco continuing to occur from the existing terminal. Construction for the waterside improvements would occur between August 1 and October 15.

WETA would be responsible for obtaining all applicable permits required prior to the construction and operation of the facility. WETA would also be responsible for complying with all applicable local, State, and Federal laws; mitigation and avoidance measures; and permit conditions. The requirement for WETA to obtain all permits and comply with local, State and Federal laws would be memorialized in the Navy lease agreement.

Under Alternative 2, the Navy would enter into a lease agreement for the same area as Alternative 1. WETA would subsequently construct in-water berths and associated waterside improvements for the operation of a new maintenance facility at the project site within the same lease area as Alternative 1. Although similar to Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would encompass a larger waterside footprint and include two additional berths. Alternative 2 waterside improvements would cover approximately 16,987 square feet of water surface, roughly 2,300 square feet more than Alternative 1, and would include two additional berths as compared to Alternative 1. Similar to Alternative 1, the berths would include concrete floating docks with steel-pipe guide piles and fendering sized to accommodate the ferry vessels. The berths would be provided with basic utility services and connections. Ancillary waterside components, such as lighting and security systems, would also be the same as described above for Alternative 1.

Construction of Alternative 2 would use the same construction equipment, methods, and schedule as described for Alternative 1. As with Alternative 2, WETA would be responsible for obtaining all applicable permits required prior to the construction and operation of the facility. WETA would also be responsible for complying with all applicable local, State, and Federal laws; mitigation and avoidance measures; and permit conditions. The requirement for WETA to obtain all permits and comply with local, State, and Federal laws would be memorialized in the Navy lease agreement.

Under the No Action Alternative, the Navy would not enter into a lease agreement. Without the lease agreement, WETA would not construct and operate the waterside portion of the project site. Construction of the proposed full-service berths and maintenance berths would not occur. Operations at the current maintenance facility would continue.

Other reuse alternatives, including other development scenarios for the project area, were eliminated from consideration because they were not considered feasible or reasonable, given the purpose and need of the Proposed Action.

Environmental Effects: The EA examined the potential environmental consequences of the Proposed Action and any impacts associated with the reasonably foreseeable reuse of the property. Implementation of the Proposed Action, with identified mitigation measures, would not significantly impact the quality of the human or natural environment. The following is a summary of environmental consequences of the Proposed Action (Alternative 1 in the EA), and where applicable, the mitigation measures that will be implemented by the project proponent, WETA.

Water Resources: Prior to construction and operation of the proposed ferry maintenance facility, WETA will obtain all applicable permits (including Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act permits) required for activities involving placement of fill and structures in the form of piles in jurisdictional and navigable waters of the U.S. Implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and adherence to water quality permits and approvals would minimize adverse effects on water quality from waterside construction activities and facility operation. With the above measures, there would be no significant impact to water resources.

Noise and Vibration: Pile driving and crane operation would produce short-term, minor construction vibration and noise impacts. The type of equipment to be used during operation of the site is not anticipated to noticeably increase noise or vibration levels in the area and would be consistent with levels at the existing nearby maintenance facility. Accordingly, Alternative 1 would have no significant impact on noise and vibration.

Biological Resources: Construction of Alternative 1 would result in short-term, minor, indirect adverse impacts to special-status fish species and their designated critical habitat, and to Essential Fish Habitat. This alternative would have no long-term adverse impacts to these resources, and with implementation of permit measures, terms and conditions in Biological Opinions, BMPs, and Mitigation Measure BIO-1 (Minimize Impacts to Salmonids and Sensitive Aquatic Species during Construction), there would be no significant impact on biological resources.

Cultural Resources: Alternative 1 would have negligible indirect impacts to cultural resources. Mitigation Measures CR-1 through 4 identify specific measures to avoid and minimize impacts to historic resources and to address archaeological resources in the unlikely event they are encountered. With the above measures, there would be no significant impacts to cultural resources.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials: Environmental cleanup on Mare Island is ongoing, and therefore there is potential for impacts resulting from known or unknown environmental issues. Any necessary notifications or restrictions relating to any existing hazardous substances in the submerged lands will be included in the Navy lease agreement. By complying with Mitigation Measure HZ-1 (Compliance with Navy Lease Agreement) and the provisions included in the submerged land lease, as well as the terms and conditions of the permits and approvals WETA has or will obtain, the potential impacts associated with hazards and hazardous materials would not be significant.

Geology: Minor soil displacement during construction would lead to minor, short-term indirect adverse impacts to soils. With compliance with the California Building Code and implementation of Mitigation Measure GEO-1 (Design Level Geotechnical Investigation), there would be no significant impacts to geology.

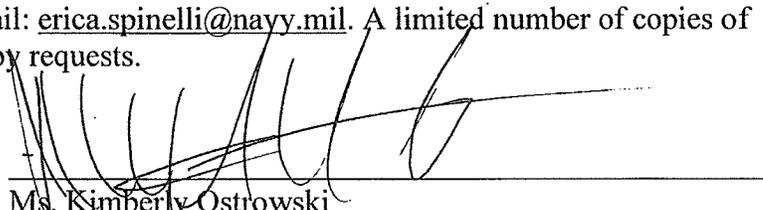
Land Use: The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission issued a Major Permit for the project in June, 2014, indicating consistency with the Bay Plan. Because Alternative 1 is consistent with land use development goals in the study area, there would be no short- or long-term indirect adverse impacts on land use. There would be no significant impact on land use.

Other Resource Areas: The Proposed Action would not result in any significant adverse impacts on air quality (including greenhouse gas emissions and climate change), visual, transportation, socioeconomic and utility resources. WETA will be responsible for acquiring any applicable building permits, approvals, and environmental permits prior to development of the property.

Finding: Based on information gathered during preparation of the EA, the Navy finds that implementation of the Proposed Action, with the identified mitigation measures, would not have a significant impact on the human and natural environment and an EIS is not required for the Navy's lease of submerged lands.

The EA addressing this action may be obtained by interested parties at <http://www.bracpmo.navy.mil/> or by contacting Navy Base Realignment and Closure Program Management Office, ATTN: Erica Spinelli, 1455 Frazee Road, Suite 900, San Diego, CA, 92108. Phone: (619) 532-0980. Email: erica.spinelli@navy.mil. A limited number of copies of the EA are available to fill single copy requests.

3/13/15
Date


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