



U.S. ARMY



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
New England District

PUBLIC NOTICE

In Reply Refer to: Christina Comeau

Email: nae-pn-nav@usace.army.mil

Phone: (978) 318-8705

Programs and Project Management Division

Date: February 24, 2026

Comment Period Closes: March 24, 2026

PUBLIC NOTICE MAINTENANCE DREDGING OF HYANNIS HARBOR FEDERAL NAVIGATION PROJECT BARNSTABLE and YARMOUTH, MASSACHUSETTS

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New England District, plans to perform work within in the navigable waters of this District subject to the provisions of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 (P.L. 95-217). Preparation of a 404(b)(1) evaluation is underway pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for discharges of dredged material into waters of the U.S.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), USACE has determined that the Proposed Action is a “major Federal action” as defined in 42 U.S. Code § 4336e(10)(A). USACE also determined that the Department of Defense (DoD) has an established categorical exclusion (CATEX) that applies to the proposed project. DoD NEPA Implementing Procedures, Parts 1.2(a)(1) and 1.4(d), June 30, 2025. CATEXs established by DoD, are available for all DoD components, including the USACE Civil Works Program, to use regardless of original establishing agency (i.e., any DoD component can use another DoD component’s CATEX). USACE is applying the Department of the Navy CATEX 37, “Maintenance dredging and debris disposal where no new depths are required, applicable permits are secured, and disposal will be at an approved disposal site” to the Proposed Action. DoD NEPA Implementing Procedures: Appendix A, June 30, 2025 (90 Federal Register 27857). USACE determined the appropriate level of NEPA review is a CATEX and preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) is not required.

The proposed work involves maintenance dredging of a feature of the Hyannis Harbor Federal Navigation Project (FNP) in Barnstable and Yarmouth, Massachusetts, and is authorized in accordance with Title 33, Parts 335-338 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The FNP was authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1827 and has been modified multiple times between 1871 and 1997 to meet local needs.

Project Description: The Hyannis Harbor FNP provides for a channel that is -13 feet deep at Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW), running approximately 2.8 miles from deep water in Nantucket Sound, through Lewis Bay, to a -13-foot MLLW turning basin and a pair of -12-foot MLLW anchorages in the inner harbor. Additionally, a 50-acre, -15.5-foot

MLLW federal anchorage is situated behind a stone breakwater along the western side of the channel in the outer harbor.

Purpose of Work: The purpose of this work is to remove restrictive shoaling and restore the Hyannis Harbor FNP to its authorized dimensions to provide safe navigation conditions to all vessels in the harbor. The Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket Steamship Authority (SSA) is home-based in Hyannis Harbor. The SSA's legal charter requires it to continually provide reliable dependable service as the only lifeline to the Islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Hyannis Harbor is integral to the evacuation route from Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket in the event of a hurricane. The SSA has reported very shallow conditions and several minor groundings at low tide. Recent surveys of the entrance channel indicate that portions of it have been reduced to depths as shallow as -10 feet MLLW. Given these conditions and the depth of the vessel drafts using the FNP, shoaled areas have created hazardous conditions especially for the SSA ferries. Aside from safety concerns, the harbor serves as one of Hyannis' major economic drivers and tourist hubs. Maintenance dredging of the project is needed to provide safe access to the inner harbor area at all tidal stages. Maintenance dredging of all or some parts of Hyannis Harbor FNP by the USACE occurs approximately every 10 years. The only other dredging that has occurred in Hyannis Harbor in the last five years is a public works construction project on Dunbar Point, Barnstable, where 70 cy of material was removed to replace and install a new 30-inch culvert pipe.

Alternatives: The preferred alternative (Proposed Action) involves maintenance dredging of approximately 40,000 cubic yards (cy) of sandy material from the seaward portion of the FNP entrance channel by hopper and/or mechanical dredge and placement of the sandy material at a nearshore placement site off Craigville Beach henceforth referred to as the Craigville Beach Nearshore Placement Site (CBNPS) (Figure 1). Maintenance dredging is currently proposed to take approximately three weeks during late spring-early summer (May - July) when a government-owned hopper dredge is scheduled to perform work at other FNPs in New England. If this project cannot be completed in one dredge cycle, dredging may be performed in subsequent years to complete the required dredging during the late spring-early summer (May - July) using a Government-owned hopper dredge or by a contracted hopper or mechanical dredge during the typical mechanical dredge window of October 1 – January 15. The Proposed Action will be located within the U.S. territorial sea with the furthest point of the project area being approximately one mile from the territorial sea baseline.

In addition to the Proposed Action, the 404(b)1 will evaluate a No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, USACE would not dredge the FNP in Hyannis Harbor and any environmental impacts resulting from the Proposed Action would be avoided. However, this alternative would allow shoal conditions in the channel to continue and likely worsen over time. Continued shoaling would cause vessels to run aground more frequently during low tides, hampering the efficient operations of the SSA and increasingly dangerous situations for commercial fishing vessels, for recreational

boaters, especially transients, who are unfamiliar with local conditions. These restrictions to navigation would negatively affect the harbor's fishing and tourism trades and provide inadequate depths for its continued use.

Additional Information: The draft EA and FONSI are available upon request. Additional information may be obtained from Ms. Christina Comeau, Project Manager, Civil Works/IIS Project Management Branch, Programs and Project Management Division, at the return address shown, or by email at nae-pn-nav@usace.army.mil or telephone at (978) 318-8705.

Coordination: The Proposed Action will be coordinated with the following agencies:

Federal:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Region 1
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – New England Field Office
National Marine Fisheries Service – Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

State:

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management
Massachusetts Historical Commission
Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources
Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program

Recognized Tribes:

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah)
Narragansett Indian Tribe

Municipal Officials:

Town of Barnstable
Town of Yarmouth
Hyannis Harbormaster

Other Information:

- a. **Local Sponsors:** Towns of Barnstable and Yarmouth, Massachusetts
- b. **Endangered Species:** The USACE has determined that the Proposed Action may affect, but is not likely to adversely impact, any threatened or endangered species. The project site contains no designated critical habitats. To ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 844), as amended, the USACE will consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to confirm that the Proposed Action will not significantly affect listed species or designated critical habitats.

c. Cultural Resources: The USACE has determined that no historic properties are within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) of the Proposed Action in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended.

The USACE will consult this determination with the Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources (BUAR), the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, the Narragansett Indian Tribe, and the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) in accordance with the NHPA on the Proposed Action. Maintenance dredging of the APE (Hyannis Harbor FNP entrance channel and the CBNPS) will not affect historic properties as none are present. USACE determined no historic properties are present because the FNP has been previously dredged multiple times and disposal will occur at CBNPS, a placement site that has been surveyed and found to be free of historic properties and cultural artifacts. The USACE expects the MA SHPO, BUAR, and Tribes to concur with this determination.

d. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH): The project site is contained within areas designated as EFH as defined by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 for federally managed fish species. The USACE assessed the effects that the project is likely to have on EFH and determined that they will be short-term and localized, and that there will be no significant impacts on designated fisheries resources. The USACE will consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service to ensure that any potential impacts to EFH resulting from the Proposed Action will be minimized.

e. Clean Water Act: A Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) evaluation will be performed and a request for Section 401 Water Quality Certification will be prepared and submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

f. Coastal Zone Management Act: The USACE assessed the effects that the project is likely to have on Massachusetts's coastal zone and determined that they will be short-term and localized, and that there will be no significant impacts. The USACE will also request concurrence from the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management on its determination that the Proposed Action is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Plan.

The USACE's Proposed Action is fully consistent with Massachusetts' enforceable coastal policies because it restores safe navigation by removing shoaling in the federal channel, enhances shoreline resilience through the beneficial reuse of 40,000 cubic yards of clean sandy material at the CBNPS, and supports natural sediment transport processes that stabilize beaches and reduce storm damage risks. The project protects habitats by limiting impacts to localized benthic communities that are expected to recover within 18 months, avoids adverse effects on water quality by using tested, uncontaminated material and securing a 401 Water Quality Certification, and does not affect Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, scenic rivers, or historic sites. It also promotes public access and recreational use by

improving vessel access to Hyannis Harbor and indirectly nourishing Craigville Beach, which sustains tourism and has community value. Overall, the action aligns with state coastal management goals by balancing navigation safety, environmental protection, shoreline stability, and public benefit without introducing new hazards or development pressures.

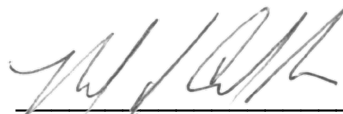
g. Other Dredging Projects: The Proposed Action is not scheduled to overlap with any other known dredging projects in the area.

The decision whether to perform the Proposed Action will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts, of the Proposed Action on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits that reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal will be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors that may be relevant to the Proposed Action will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are water quality, hydrologic setting, physical and chemical environment, biological environment, essential fish habitat, endangered species, historic and archaeological resources, air quality, socioeconomic environment, coastal barrier resources, noise and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

Any person who has an interest which may be affected by the disposal of this dredged material may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the comment period of this notice and must clearly set forth the interest which may be affected and the manner in which the interest may be affected by this activity. Please bring this notice to the attention of anyone you know to be interested in this project. Comments are invited from all interested parties and should be directed to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, 696 Virginia Road, Concord, MA 01742-2751, ATTN: Christina Comeau; or emailed to nae-pn-nav@usace.army.mil within 30 days of this notice.

February 24, 2026

DATE



Mark J. Anderson, Jr.
Deputy District Engineer
USACE, New England District

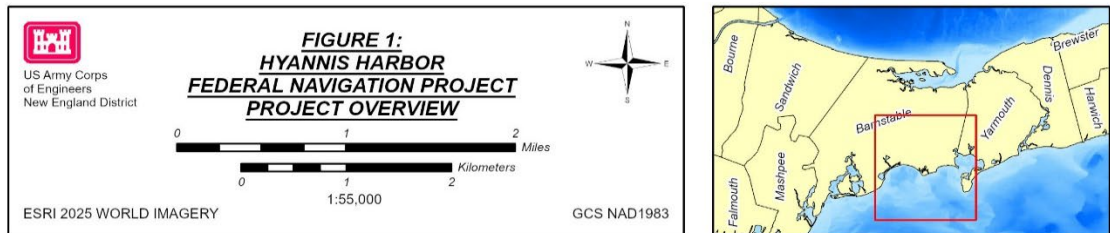


Figure 1: Hyannis Harbor Federal Navigation Project along with proposed dredge and placement areas.