FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Fairfield and New Haven Counties, Connecticut
Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study
and Environmental Assessment

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New England District (Corps) has conducted an environmental analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended. The Final Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Assessment (IFR/EA) dated August 2020 for the Fairfield and New Haven Counties Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study addresses coastal storm risk management opportunities and feasibility in the City of New Haven, Connecticut. The final recommendation will be contained in the report of the Chief of Engineers.

The Draft IFR/EA, incorporated herein by reference, evaluated various alternatives that would reduce coastal storm damages in the study area. The recommended plan is the National Economic Development (NED) Plan and includes:

- Five road closure structures (one at Long Wharf Drive approximately 60 feet wide by 8 feet high; one at Canal Dock Road approximately 190 feet wide by 7 feet high; one at Brewery Street approximately 65 feet wide by 3 feet high; two at Exit 46, (totaling approximately 160 feet wide and 5 feet high))
- One pumping station which would handle approximately 900 cubic feet of water per second (cfs).
- Enhancement of the Interstate 95 embankment with approximately 5,800 linear feet of “T-wall” type floodwall along with 475 feet of deployable closure structures noted in the first bullet. The proposed floodwall would be built to a height +15 feet NAVD88.

In addition to a “no action” plan, five coastal storm risk management alternatives were evaluated. The alternatives included using the existing Interstate 95 embankment (alternative 3A), enhancing the I-95 embankment with a floodwall (alternative 3B), and building a floodwall along the shoreline of Long Wharf Park and the Maritime Center in New Haven (alternatives 4A and 4B). These alternatives also included a combination of closure structures, pump stations, and potential nonstructural features. A stand-alone non-structural alternative (alternative 2) was also analyzed. Section 4 of the Draft IFR/EA discusses the alternative formulation and selection for this study.

For all alternatives, the potential effects were evaluated, as appropriate. A summary assessment of the potential effects of the recommended plan are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of Potential Effects of the Recommended Plan

	Insignificant effects	Insignificant effects as a result of mitigation*	Resource unaffected by action
Aesthetics	☒	☐	☐
Air quality	☒	☐	☐
Aquatic resources/wetlands	☒	☐	☐
Invasive species	☐	☐	☒
Fish and wildlife habitat	☒	☐	☐
Threatened/Endangered species/critical habitat	☒	☐	☐
Historic properties	☐	☐	☒
Other cultural resources	☐	☐	☒
Floodplains	☒	☐	☐
Hazardous, toxic & radioactive waste	☐	☐	☒
Hydrology	☒	☐	☐
Land use	☒	☐	☐
Navigation	☐	☐	☒
Recreation	☒	☐	☐
Noise levels	☒	☐	☐
Socio-economics	☒	☐	☐
Environmental justice	☒	☐	☐
Soils	☒	☐	☐
Tribal trust resources	☐	☐	☒
Water quality	☒	☐	☐
Climate change	☒	☐	☐

All practicable and appropriate means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects were analyzed and incorporated into the recommended plan. Best management practices (BMPs) as detailed in the IFR/EA will be implemented, if appropriate, to minimize impacts. BMPs to reduce and/or eliminate impacts to aquatic organisms and their habitat (e.g. utilization of silt fences to prevent sediment runoff into local waterways) will be employed during construction. Long-term, beneficial impacts to public infrastructure will occur as a result of the recommended plan.

No compensatory mitigation is required as part of the recommended plan.

Public review of the Draft IFR/EA commenced in December 2019 with the release of the draft report. All comments submitted during the public review period are responded to in the Final IFR/EA and FONSI.

Pursuant to section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that the recommended plan will have no effect on federally listed species or their designated critical habitat. Coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has concluded.

Pursuant to section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determined that no effect to historic properties would occur as a result of the recommended plan. Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer and Tribal Historical Preservation Officers is complete.

Pursuant to the Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended, the recommended plan will not cause a discharge of dredged or fill material. Therefore, a Clean Water Act section 404(b)(1) evaluation was not completed nor will a water quality certification pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act be obtained.

A determination of consistency with the State of Connecticut Coastal Zone Management program pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 will be obtained from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) Office of Long Island Sound Programs (OLISP) prior to construction. The Coastal Zone Management Consistency Determination and Draft IFR/EA was coordinated with the CT DEEP OLISP during the pubic and agency review period beginning in December 2019. All conditions of the consistency determination shall be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts to the coastal zone.

All applicable environmental laws have been considered and coordination with appropriate agencies and officials is on-going.

Technical, environmental, and economic criteria used in the formulation of alternative plans were those specified in the Water Resources Council's 1983 Economic and Environmental Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies. All applicable laws, executive orders, regulations, and local government plans were considered in evaluation of alternatives. 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.

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Date

John A. Atilano II
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Commander