



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
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NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

JUN - 9 2008

Minas M. Arabatzis, Chief
Planning Division
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Philadelphia District
Wanamaker Building
100 Penn Square East
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3390

Dear Mr. Arabatzis:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the draft environmental assessment (DEA) and finding of no significant impact (EA/FONSI) for the Alternate Offshore Borrow Area for the Cape May Inlet to Lower Township Storm Damage Reduction Project and the Lower Cape May Meadows - Cape May Point Environmental Restoration Project, Cape May County, New Jersey.

The DEA documents the potential environmental impacts of a third change to the Cape May Inlet to Lower Township Storm Damage Reduction Project and the Lower Cape May Meadows - Cape May Point Environmental Restoration Project as described in the 1980 Final Supplement to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for that project. The previous two changes were documented in environmental assessments in 1998 and 2002. This DEA addressed the need to evaluate an alternative sand source to be utilized for the above referenced projects, both of which include sand placement for berm and dune restoration. Initial construction has been completed for both projects but additional sand is required for future nourishment cycles. Several borrow pit areas and the no action alternative were evaluated. The preferred alternative, Borrow Area K, is approximately 480 acres and lies approximately 14,000 to 19,000 feet offshore of Cape May Inlet.

Our comments on the DEA are as follows:

- EPA could not locate the general conformity analysis referenced by the Statement of Conformity. The Corps should provide documentation of the general conformity applicability determination and full conformity analysis (if applicable) prior to signing a FONSI. If the conformity analysis was previously completed, the Corps may provide a copy of the analysis along with supporting materials

showing how the proposed change to the project would affect the original conforming finding.

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (<http://www.ipcc.ch/index.htm>) has indicated that global climate change is a major cause of increased sea level rise. In addition, weather patterns are changing and storm events are becoming more intense. As such, you should analyze and discuss how global warming may affect the project.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this document. Should you have any questions concerning our comments, please contact Lingard Knutson, of my staff, at (212) 637-3747.

Sincerely yours,



Grace Musumeci, Chief
Environmental Review Section
Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch