

**The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
New Jersey Back Bays Coastal Storm Risk Management
Feasibility Study**

**Interim Report Comment Response Document
8 May 2019**

The Philadelphia District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) would like to thank stakeholders and the general public for their comments on the New Jersey Back Bays (NJBB) Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study Interim Report. These diligent and informed comments will inform ongoing analyses and will be incorporated into the Draft Feasibility Report scheduled for release in the Spring of 2020.

A total of 147 comments within 36 separate comment submittals have been evaluated towards facilitating the overarching goal of the NJBB Study which is to reduce the risk of damages from future storms and the future impacts of sea level change (SLC) and to identify strategies to increase resilience and preparedness in the Back Bays of New Jersey. This strategy is most effectively realized through the consideration of a comprehensive plan consisting of structural, nonstructural and natural and nature based features (NNBF).

The majority of comments were received from Federal resource agencies and non-profit organizations, with a lesser amount of comments from individual municipalities and interested stakeholders. The majority of comments addressed the environmental impacts of structural features, namely storm surge barriers (Figure 1). Specifically, these comments addressed the need for a detailed EIS ultimately, impacts to tidal flow and circulation, impacts to natural and cultural/historical resources, sediment transport and distribution, recreational opportunities, and impacts to Federal agency resources and managed lands. Continued, ongoing environmental modeling will assist in addressing these study facets and the finding will be communicated to interested parties during future study milestones. Interest was also expressed regarding historical rates and future habitat loss estimates, as well as ecological services consideration in benefit calculations.

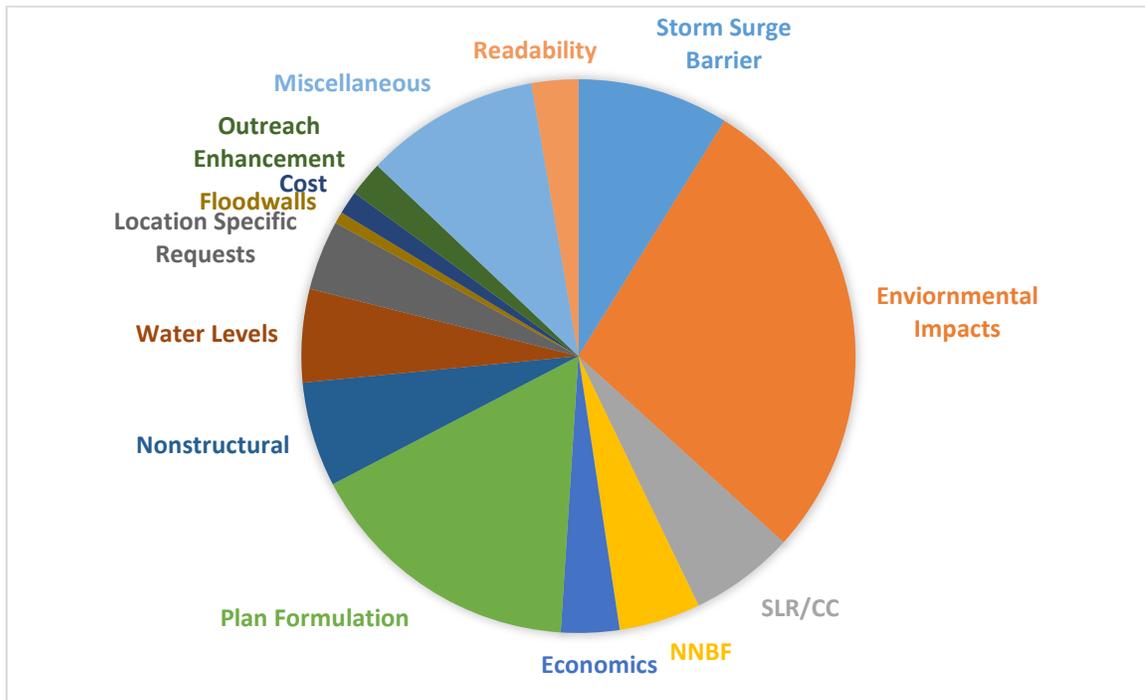


Figure 1. NJBB Interim Report Comment Classification

A number of comments were also made on the plan formulation aspects of the study and address measure screening and ranking methodology including consideration of data gaps/uncertainty as well as risk and uncertainty in structural measure formulation and associated assumptions. Additional plan formulation topics addressed the inclusion of regional management plan perspectives, and enhanced outreach. Further comments reflected the need to more comprehensively consider sea level rise projections (including land subsidence) and clearer identification of strategies to manage the risk from future sea level rise. Commenters suggested clarification or enhanced/continued analyses of nonstructural measures, benefit and cost analyses, design and associated assumptions, and induced flooding and high frequency flooding analyses and associated stormwater management. Interest was also expressed regarding coastal lake analysis refinement, innovative technologies including flumes/culverts and glass floodwalls, location specific requests, Green Acres Program consideration refined definition of resilience, and report readability improvements including resilience plan components.

As discussed in the NJBB Communications and Outreach Plan available on the study webpage at <https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/New-Jersey-Back-Bays-Coastal-Storm-Risk-Management/>, public, stakeholder and agency outreach, meetings and webinars will be held in the future as the USACE incorporates these comments on the Interim Report. The study team anticipates that public webinars will be held both in the Winter of 2019 associated with the Tentatively Selected Plan Milestone Meeting as well as in the Spring of 2020 associated with the release of the draft feasibility report. Regular resource agency meetings will also be held on a regular basis. News Releases, study webpage updates and communications through email will be provided associated with major milestone events. As

always, emails from the public can be delivered to PDPA-NAP@USACE.ARMY.MIL.

The USACE and the NJBB Project Delivery Team thanks you for your interest in the NJBB Study, and looks forward to continued association moving forward.