



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

Philadelphia District

Public Notice

Public Notice No.
CENAP-PLE-25-04

Date
June 16, 2025

In Reply Refer to:
Environmental Resources Branch

**NEW JERSEY INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY
BENEFICIAL USE OF DREDGED MATERIAL AT EAST POOL
EDWIN B. FORSYTHE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Atlantic County, New Jersey**

In accordance with Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended, notice is hereby given that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Philadelphia District, has prepared a final Environmental Assessment (EA) and signed a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Beneficial Use of Dredged Material at East pool – Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. The EA/FONSI considers changes in the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) titled: *New Jersey Intracoastal Waterway - Beneficial Use of Dredged Material at East Pool- Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge* that was prepared in 2020. The original plan has been modified since the issuance of the draft EA on November 6, 2020 (Public Notice #CENAP-PL-E-20-3). To date, the plan evaluated in the 2020 EA has not been implemented. The current modified plan includes additional channel maintenance dredging to include a segment of channel from the U.S. Coast Guard markers 135 to 145 in Great Bay (Figures 1, 2, and 5). The originally proposed channel maintenance from 2020 will also be lengthened from USCG markers 152 to 160 to include up to channel marker 163 (Figures 3 and 4). This modification will increase the total volume of material to be beneficially used from 10,000 cubic yards (proposed in the draft EA) to approximately 75,000 cubic yards.

The USACE is proposing to conduct maintenance dredging of the New Jersey Intracoastal Waterway (NJIWW) in the vicinity of Shad Island and in Great Bay (both in Atlantic County) to beneficially place the material within the East Pool of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) – Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge (EBFNWR), Oceanville, NJ, which is an intertidal saltmarsh impoundment (Figures 2 & 7). The Service reports significant losses of intertidal marsh habitats due to subsidence and conversions to open water, which are important for trust wildlife species including the eastern black rail and saltmarsh sparrow. The Service is interested in restoring the marsh habitats by increasing the current marsh elevation to intertidal elevations, with an ultimate goal of restoring tidal flow and elevations to match those surrounding the impoundment. To accomplish this restoration, the Service estimates that up to approximately 1 million cubic yards of sediment would be required to achieve the desired marsh elevations.

With the project modifications proposed, approximately 75,000 cubic yards of silts, fine sands, and clays would be hydraulically dredged to remove shoals between USCG markers 152 and 163 and 135 to 145 to maintain the NJIWW channel to its authorized depth of -6 ft. MLLW with 1-foot over-depth to -7 ft. MLLW (Figures 3 to 6). Approximately 45 acres of estuarine soft subtidal bottom habitat would be impacted within the authorized channel dimensions. This dredge and fill placement project is expected to last 3 – 4 months between September and December 2025. The dredged material placement site within the East Pool (Figure 7) was developed in coordination with the Service. Tidal range within the East Pool is very narrow where mudflat occurs approximately 0.75 ft. above the base impoundment elevation of +0.2 ft. NAVD and marsh ranges occur at 0.75 -1.0 ft. Elevations higher than 1.0 ft NAVD are inhabited by *Phragmites*. The selected plan includes the placement of approximately 1 ft. to 2 ft. of dredged material to raise the substrate elevations of open-water habitat to an intertidal mudflat and/or marsh elevation. Monitoring of material behavior (settlement and consolidation) and marsh vegetation recruitment will occur. Ultimately, the Refuge intends to incrementally restore full tidal flow in the East Pool over time while gradually building elevation and the extent of salt marsh vegetation using a range of restoration strategies. High marsh is an essential breeding habitat for both saltmarsh sparrow and Eastern black rail and both species occur in the surrounding salt marshes of the Great Bay. Approximately 25 acres of subtidal open water in the impoundment are anticipated to become intertidal mudflat and saltmarsh and approximately 50 acres of subtidal open water may receive a thin layer deposition of sediment from the placement operations. The fill material would be dredged from the adjacent federal channel and brought to the impoundment via a floating pipeline. The material will be discharged via pipeline and may be piped through a “Y” distributor directly into the pool for infilling to the surrounding marsh elevation. Containment of the fill will be within the impoundment and low-pressure ground equipment may be used to achieve the desired elevation and topography, possibly with the use of hay bales and coir logs/wattles to direct flow and/or allow sediment to drop out and build elevation.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, a draft Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI) was prepared for this project, and was circulated to the appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and the interested public on November 6, 2020. This public notice presents the changes made to the plan that include additional channel dredging and additional material placement within the East Pool impoundment. The project modifications subsequent to the draft EA result in increases in sediment being placed in the East Pool Impoundment. A determination was made that this increase in sediment placement is not substantial and does not warrant a supplement to the draft EA. Comments from the original draft EA and subsequent coordination were addressed in the Final EA, which can be obtained from the following link:

<http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/PublicNoticesReports.aspx>.

In accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, Water Quality Certification (WQC) was provided by the New Jersey Department of Environmental

Protection (NJDEP) by letter dated December 21, 2020. The NJDEP has subsequently confirmed that the project modifications remain consistent with the WQC issued in 2020.

In accordance with Section 307 (c) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, an activity affecting land or water uses in a State's coastal zone must comply with the State's Coastal Zone Management Program. A certification of compliance was received from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection by letter dated December 21, 2020. The NJDEP has subsequently confirmed that the project modifications remain consistent with the WQC issued in 2020.

It has been determined that the proposed work would not adversely affect listed species or their critical habitat pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act as amended. Consultations were subsequently conducted on the modified plan with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) that resulted in Not Likely to Adversely Affect determinations from both agencies.

Review of the National Register of Historic Places indicates that no registered properties, or properties listed as eligible for inclusion, would be impacted.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with NMFS on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The NMFS provided conservation recommendations by memo dated November 16, 2020, and the USACE provided a response letter in accordance with Section 305(b)(4)(B) of the MSA by letter dated December 17, 2020. A subsequent review of the project modifications resulted in the issuance of new conservation recommendations from NMFS with the USACE providing a Section 305(b)(4)(B) response letter dated June 4, 2025.

All practicable means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects have been incorporated into the recommended plan.

The aforementioned documents in this notice are available at <http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/PublicNoticesReports.aspx>.

FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER:

FOR

Adrian Leary
Chief, Planning Division
Philadelphia District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

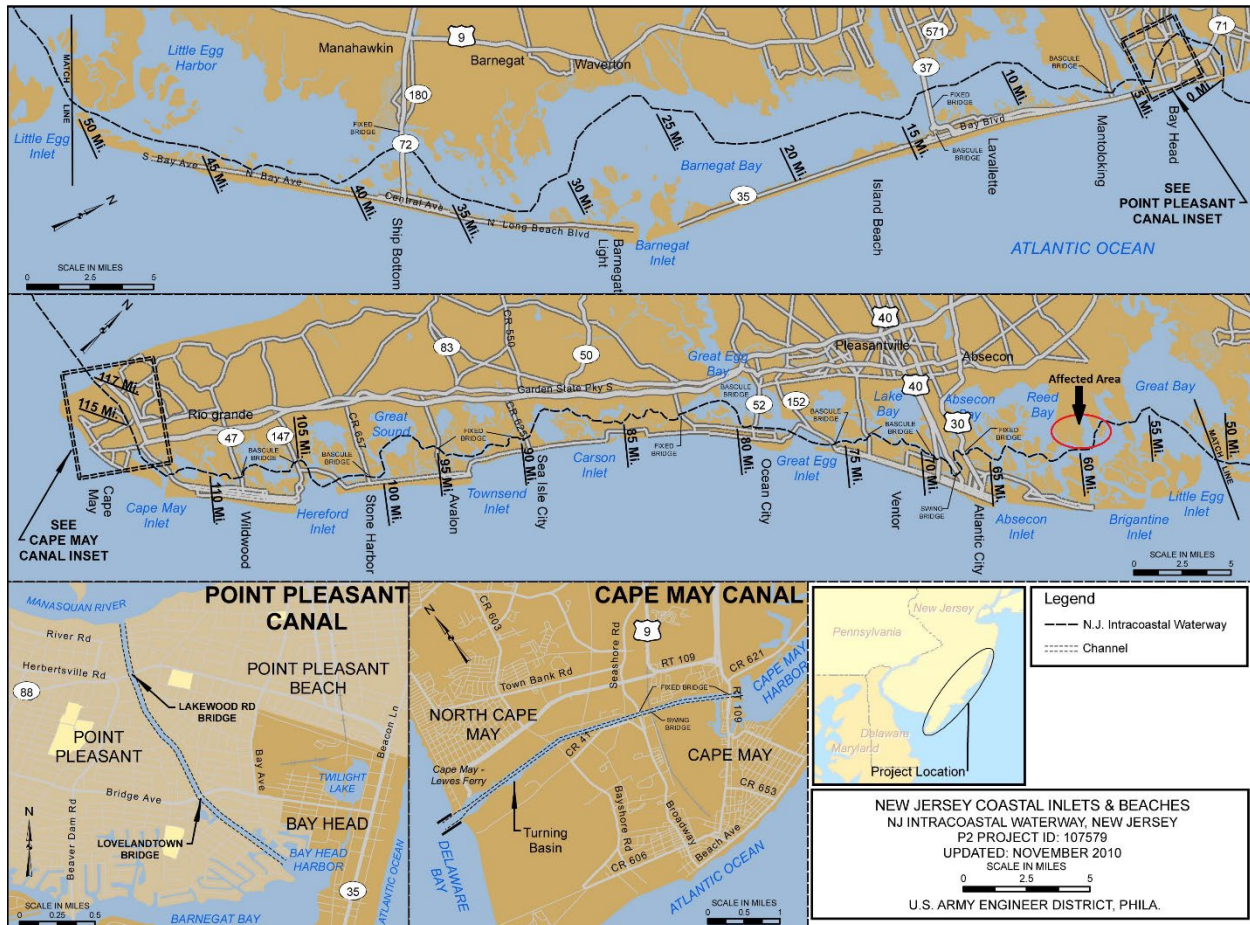


Figure 1. NJIIWW Vicinity Map (Maintenance Dredging and beneficial use placement in vicinity of 57-miles and 60-miles, respectively, in center map).

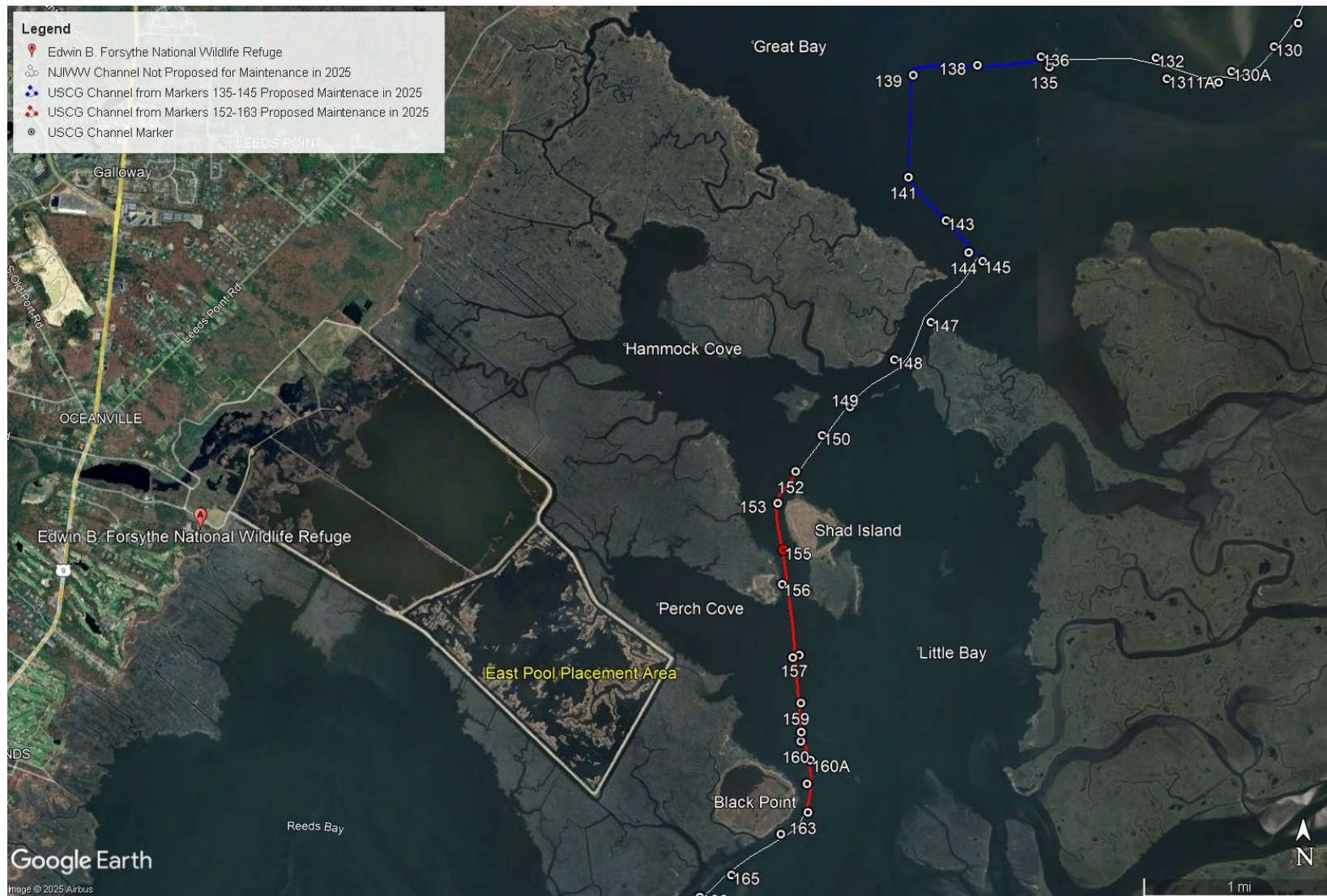


Figure 2. Locations of NJHWW Maintenance Dredging and Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Placement in East Pool impoundment of Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.

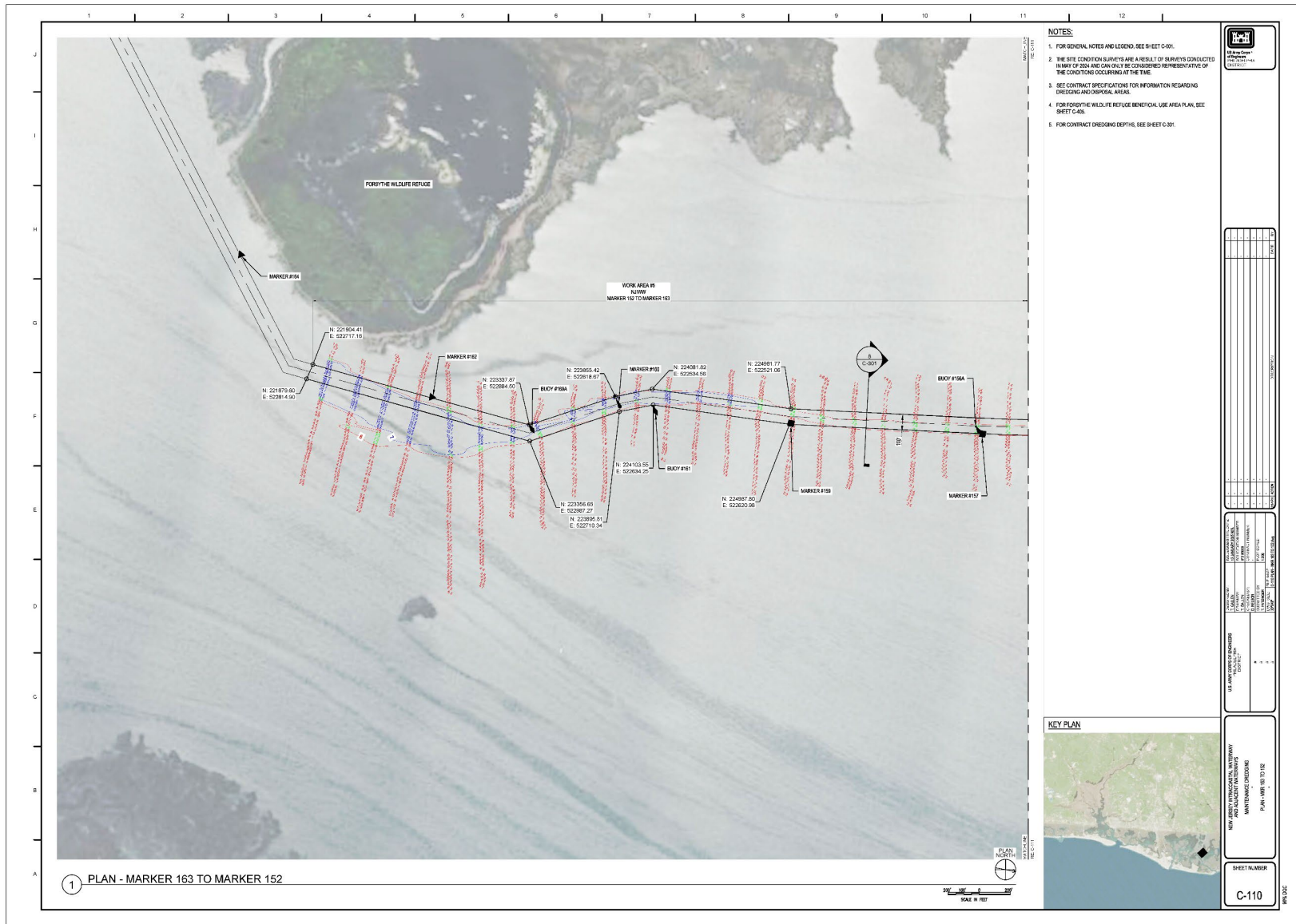


Figure 3. NJIWW USCG Channel Markers 163 to 152 with Bathymetry. Numbers in Red and Green are shoaled locations that require maintenance dredging.

Figure 4. NJIWW USCG Channel Markers 157 to 152 with Bathymetry. Numbers in Red and Green are shoaled locations that require channel maintenance dredging.

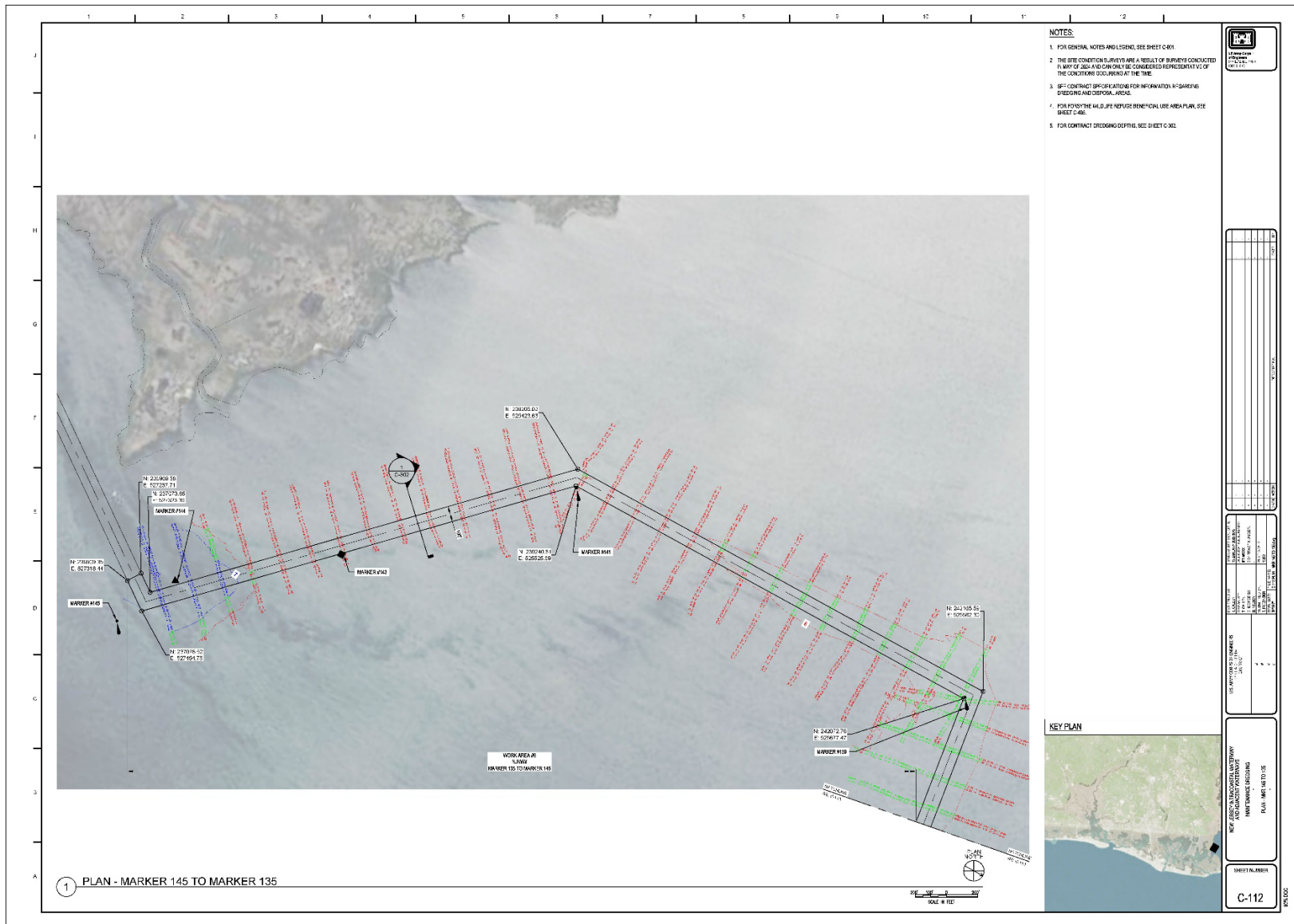
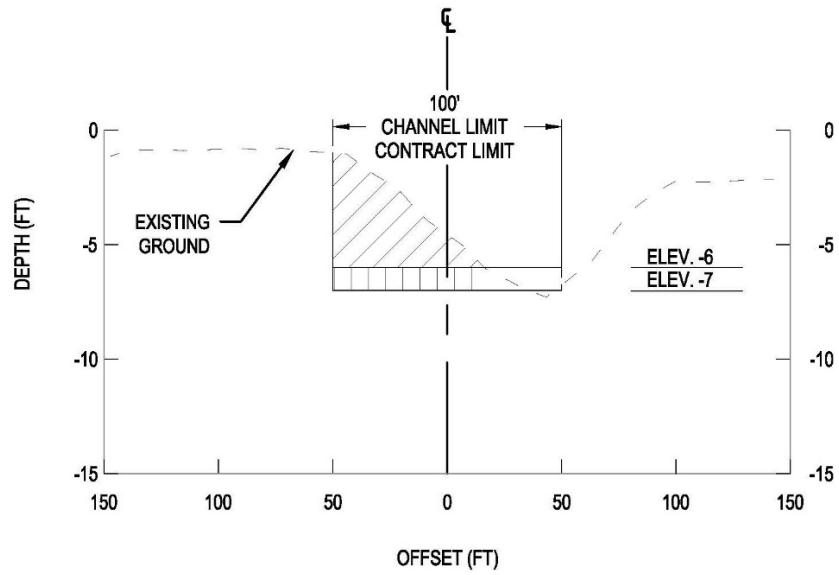
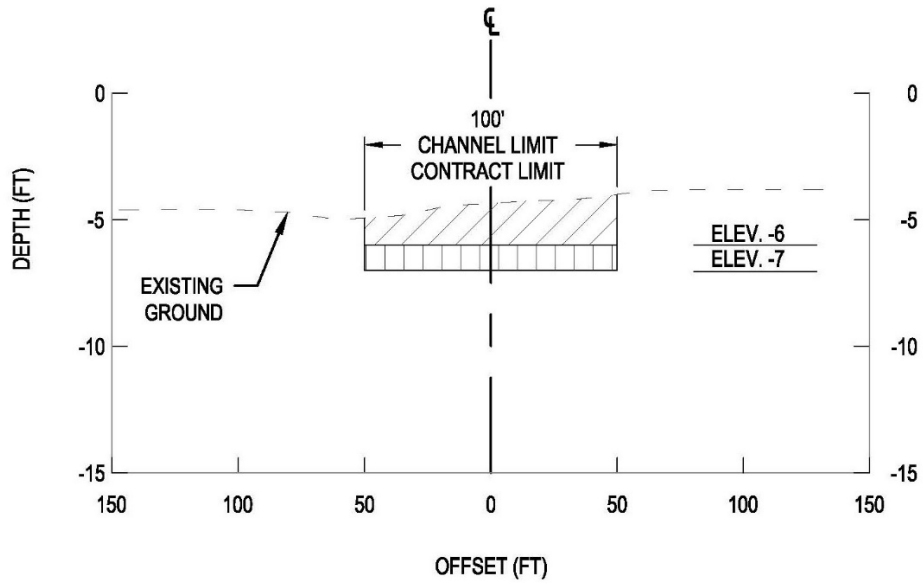


Figure 5. NJIWW USCG Channel Markers 145 to 135 with Bathymetry. Numbers in Red and Green are shoaled locations that require channel maintenance dredging.



8 TYPICAL SECTION - NJIWW - MARKER 152 TO 163
AS SHOWN



1 TYPICAL SECTION - NJIWW - MARKER 135 TO 145
AS SHOWN

Figure 6. Typical Cross Sections of NJIWW Maintenance Dredging Locations

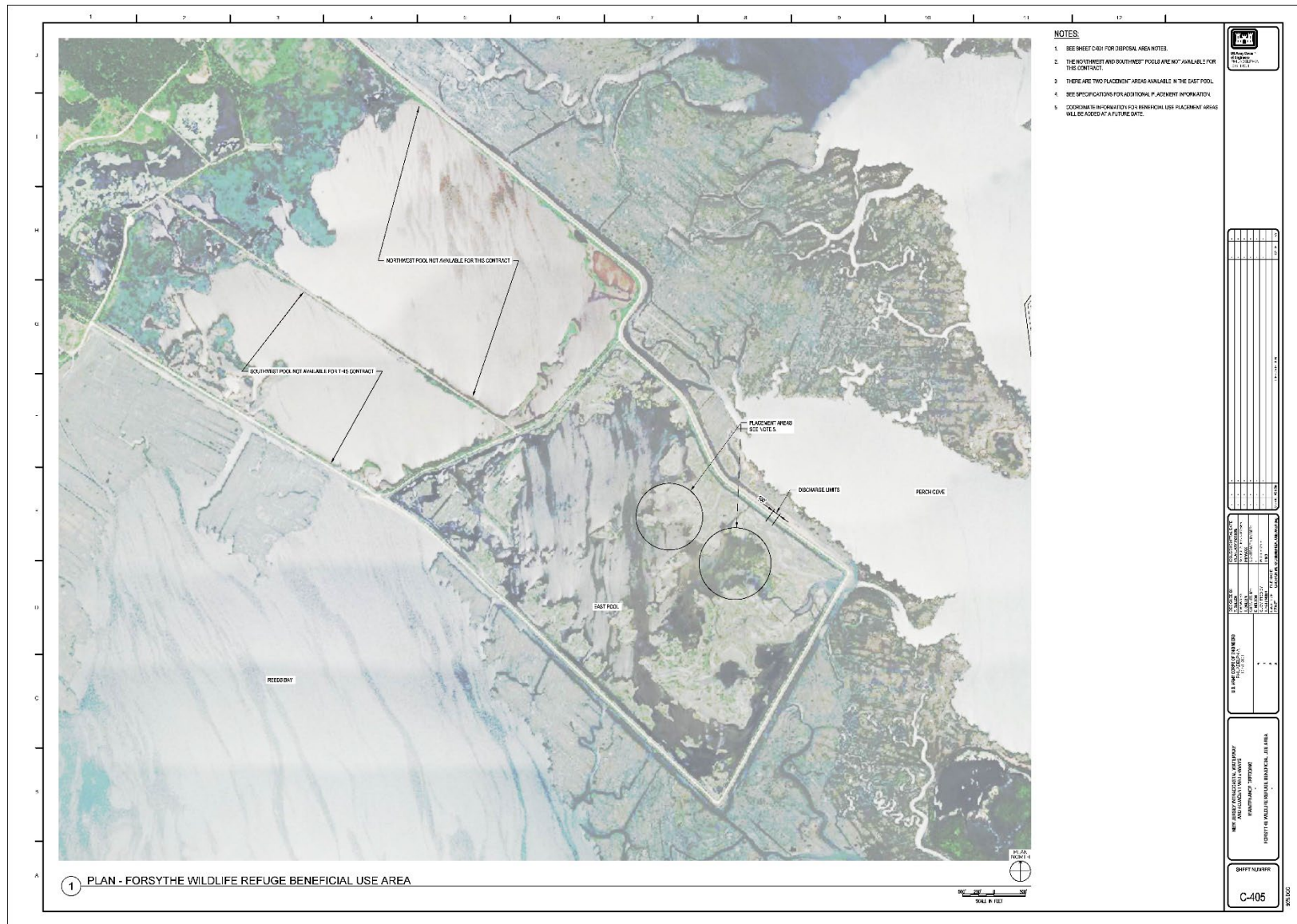


Figure 7. Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Placement Plan Area at the East Pool Impoundment – Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.