



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**

Philadelphia District

# Public Notice

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CENAP-PLE-26-02

Date  
March 30, 2026

In Reply Refer to:  
Environmental Resources Branch

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***DRAFT***  
**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**CLAM CREEK NAVIGATION CHANNEL MAINTENANCE DREDGING AND BENEFICIAL**  
**USE OF DREDGED MATERIAL PROJECT**  
**ATLANTIC COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

In accordance with Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, notice is hereby given that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Philadelphia District, is issuing a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) titled: *Clam Creek Navigation Channel Maintenance Dredging and Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Atlantic County, New Jersey*. The EA evaluates the existing environmental, cultural, and socio-economic conditions for the proposed maintenance dredging of the Clam Creek portion of the Absecon Inlet Federal navigation channel (FNC) and beneficial use of dredged material placement at the Boot Island portion of the Absecon Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The EA also evaluates the *No Action* alternative of not conducting maintenance dredging of the Clam Creek navigation channel and beneficially placing the dredged materials at Boot Island.

The USACE is proposing to conduct maintenance dredging within an approximately 15-acre portion of the Clam Creek navigation channel where depths are less than the authorized -15 feet mean lower low water (MLLW). A contracted hydraulic cutterhead dredge will be utilized to remove between 60,000 cubic yards (cy), to as much as 100,000 cy total of predominantly fine-grained materials (silts and clays) and sand which are proposed to be beneficially placed at Boot Island. The Clam Creek navigation channel provides ingress and egress to the Senator Frank S. Farley State Marina, Gardner's Basin, Snug Harbor, and the Delta Basin from the Absecon Inlet FNC and is used by a significant commercial fishing fleet and recreational vessels. Additionally, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Atlantic City Station and New Jersey State Police (NJSP) Marine Services Bureau Atlantic City Station are located off the north side of the Clam Creek channel and require a reliable channel for their respective missions including critical Search and Rescue operations and Homeland Security duties (USCG) and to address recreational boating issues, fish and game laws, search and rescue missions, and criminal matters (NJSP).

The primary objective for this proposed project is to remove shoaling from the Clam Creek channel, providing safe navigational conditions for commercial, recreational, USCG, and NJSP use. A secondary objective of the project is the proposed beneficial use of

dredged material (BUDM) placements at Boot Island, which is located approximately 2.4-miles northeast of the Clam Creek channel. The Absecon WMA is owned and managed by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Fish and Wildlife (NJFW). The proposed BUDM placement at Boot Island includes three separate areas which have been designed in collaboration with NJFW Coastal Unit staff (Figure 1). The BUDM placement at Boot Island is proposed to restore, protect, and enhance tidal marsh edges and platform elevations, and to create and enhance wildlife habitat. The proposed BUDM placement at Boot Island is intended to directly support the NJFW mission to expand wildlife-related recreational opportunities, promote sustainable human-wildlife coexistence, and conserve and manage New Jersey's fish and wildlife resources.

In addition to the "No Action" alternative, three (3) other alternatives were evaluated. These alternatives include the BUDM placement within Dredge Hole 86, a land-based site for the placement of dredged materials, and the Black Point and Shad Island dredged material placement facilities.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, a draft Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI) has been prepared for this project, and is being circulated to the appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and the interested public. This document is available from the Philadelphia District website for download at:  
<http://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/PublicNoticesReports.aspx>.

Water Quality Certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act was obtained from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection on March 10, 2026. All conditions of the Water Quality Certification shall be implemented in order to minimize adverse impacts on water quality.

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 a letter dated March 4, 2026.

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, a determination that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect listed species or critical habitat was submitted to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Field Office (GARFO) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for review. A GARFO ESA Section 7: Not Likely to Adversely Affect (NLLA) Program Verification Form was provided to NOAA Fisheries and on February 2, 2026, the agency concurred with the USACE's determination that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect listed species under the jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries. Section 7 consultation with the New Jersey Field Office of the USFWS is ongoing. All terms and conditions of the Section 7 consultation with NOAA Fisheries and USFWS shall be implemented in order to minimize take or jeopardize endangered species.

Review of the National Register of Historic Places determined that no registered properties, or properties listed as eligible for inclusion, would be impacted. The determination was submitted to the New Jersey State Historic Preservation Office for review and concurrence.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), requires all Federal agencies to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The EFH Assessment Worksheet was provided to NMFS and the agency provided EFH conservation recommendations on March 24, 2026.

All practicable means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects have been incorporated into the recommended plan. The public and all agencies are invited to comment on the proposed action. More detailed information on this work is available for public review at the Philadelphia District Office.

Any person may request, in writing, to the District Engineer, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this proposal. Requests for a public hearing shall state, in detail, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

All comments on the work described in this public notice should be directed to Mr. Scott Sanderson ATTN: Environmental Resources Branch, by e-mail at [PDPA-NAP@usace.army.mil](mailto:PDPA-NAP@usace.army.mil) or by mail at the address listed below by April 16, 2026.

ATTN: Environmental Resources Branch  
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FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER:

FOR

Scott Sanderson  
Chief, Planning Division  
Philadelphia District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Figure 1. Clam Creek Maintenance Dredging and Proposed Boot Island BUDM Placement Area Project Location Map.