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**US Army Corps
of Engineers**

Philadelphia District

Public Notice

Public Notice No.
CENAP-PLE-22-01

Date
22 FEB 2022

In Reply Refer to:
Environmental Resources Branch

**MORDECAI ISLAND, BEACH HAVEN, NEW JERSEY
PROJECT MODIFICATION FOR ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION
(SECTION 1135)
DRAFT FEASIBILITY REPORT AND INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT**

Pursuant to Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT the Philadelphia District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has completed a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to address ecosystem restoration at Mordecai Island located in Beach Haven, Ocean County, New Jersey (Figures 1 and 2). The draft EA titled: "Mordecai Island, Beach Haven, New Jersey, Project Modification for Ecosystem Restoration (Section 1135) Feasibility Study and Integrated Environmental Assessment" is available for public review and comment. The environmental assessment evaluates alternatives for ecosystem restoration to address habitat loss due to erosion at Mordecai Island. The recommended plan identified in the EA will help to protect the island from further erosion and restore approximately 11.5 acres of intertidal habitat previously lost. The non-Federal sponsor for this study is the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

The USACE is proposing to construct a rubble mound breakwater off the western edge of Mordecai Island that will extend for 3,000 linear ft. and have an average height of 7.6 ft. from the bay bottom. The rubble mound breakwater will have a crest width of 3 feet and 2H:1V side slopes. Sill vents, at a crest elevation matching Mean Low Water (MLW), will be placed every 160 feet along the structure to allow for water flow and circulation behind the structure during the full tidal cycle. Each sill vent will be 40 feet long. Following construction of the breakwater, approximately 30,000 cy of sand will be obtained from normal maintenance dredging of the NJIWW and placed behind the structure to restore approximately 11.5 acres of lost intertidal marsh habitat and beach nesting bird

habitat. The restored marsh habitat will be planted with elevation appropriate wetland vegetation. In addition to the restored intertidal habitat, the rubble mound structure and accompanied sand fill will also significantly reduce future erosion of the island (Figure 3).

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been developed for this project and is being circulated to the appropriate State and Federal agencies; local, State, and Federal officials; and private organizations.

Impacts to Water Quality have been evaluated in accordance with the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines of the Clean Water Act and are not adverse. In accordance with Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, a Water Quality Certification is being requested from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

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 is being requested from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

It has been determined that the proposed work is not likely to adversely affect listed species or their critical habitat pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act as amended. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act is ongoing for this project.

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 NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service on all actions, or proposed actions, permitted, funded, or undertaken by the agency, that may adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). An EFH assessment has been prepared for this project and is being coordinated with NOAA/National Marine Fisheries Service.

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

All practicable means to avoid or minimize adverse environmental effects have been incorporated into the recommended plan. The ecosystem restoration project being proposed will have a positive impact on the island and the surrounding habitat by restoring lost intertidal wetlands and providing additional nesting habitat for beach nesting birds and diamondback terrapins.

The public and all agencies are invited to comment on this proposal. Copies of this EA and other related documents can be obtained by visiting:

<https://www.nap.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Public-Notices-Reports/>

Any person may request, in writing, to the District Engineer, within the comment period specified in this notice (February 22 – March 24, 2022), 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 and/or in the report titled: “Mordecai Island, Beach Haven, New Jersey, Project Modification for Ecosystem Restoration (Section 1135) Feasibility Study and Integrated Environmental Assessment” should be directed to PDPA-NAP@usace.army.mil no later than 30 days from the date of this notice.

FOR THE DISTRICT ENGINEER:

FOR Peter R. Blum, P.E.
Chief, Planning Division
Philadelphia District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

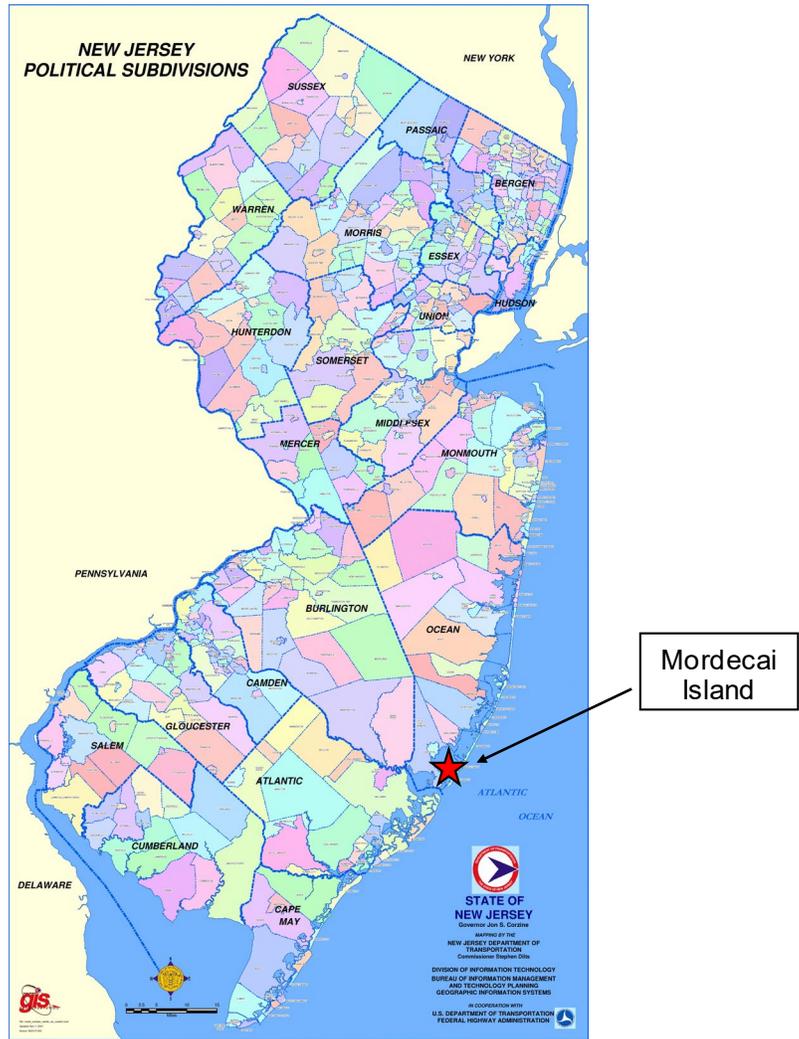


Figure 1: Location of Mordecai Island in New Jersey

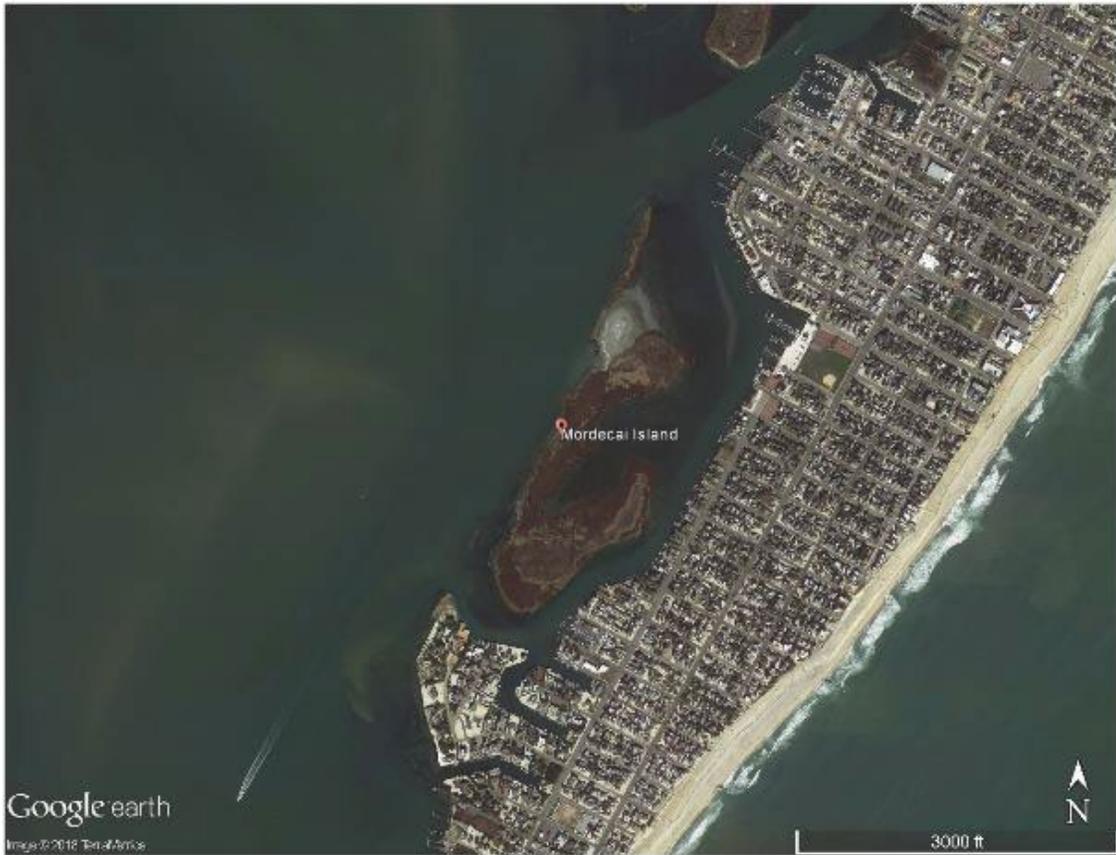


Figure 2: Mordecai Island Project Area



Figure 3: Proposed Ecosystem Restoration Plan (TSP) at Mordecai Island. Shown with Existing Mordecai Land Trust Projects