



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-P/O

30 MAY 1997

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, South Atlantic Division

SUBJECT: Implementation of Section 302 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1996 (WRDA 96) - Mobile Harbor, Alabama

1. Section 302 of WRDA 96 amends Section 201(a) of WRDA 86 on dredged material disposal from Mobile Harbor, Alabama project. The new legislation authorizes that the Secretary, after compliance with applicable laws and after opportunity for public review and comment, may consider alternatives to disposal of dredged material from Mobile Harbor in the Gulf of Mexico, including environmentally acceptable alternatives for beneficial uses of dredged material and environmental restoration. The intent of section 302 is to allow alternatives to deep water disposal in the Gulf of Mexico that would be environmentally and economically beneficial.

2. Maintenance dredging should be accomplished in the most cost effective, efficient, and environmentally sound manner. However, the Mobile District should evaluate alternative disposal options for placement of dredged material from Mobile Harbor. Any examination of other alternatives to Gulf disposal should involve a multi-agency coordination team including Federal, State, and local resource agencies. Mobile District should make efforts to use District Engineer authority to make adjustment to the Federal standard to accommodate section 302 direction, as well as, authorities under Section 204 of WRDA 92, and Section 207 of WRDA 96.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

CHARLES M. HESS
Chief, Operations, Construction
and Readiness Division
Directorate of Civil Works

G. EDWARD DICKEY
Chief, Planning Division
Directorate of Civil Works

Author: Dennis W Barnett SAD at X400
Date: 7/3/97 2:23 PM
Priority: Normal
Receipt Requested
TO: Roger A Burke at sampd_po
Subject: Mobile Harbor, Section 302

----- Message Contents -----

Roger,

I have attached our endorsement to the HQ memorandum on the subject issue as an advance copy. We had given you a copy of the HQ memo when you were recently up here. I think you will find that our endorsement encourages you to look for opportunities to change the O&M plan without putting too many constraints or conditions on you.

Please share with others, especially Operations, as appropriate.

Dennis Barnett

CESAD-ET-P\C (CECW-P\O\30 May 97) (1105-2-10b) 1st End
Mr. Barnett\bjg\404-331-4580\Mr. Deveaux\404-331-6742
SUBJECT: Implementation of Section 302 of the Water Resources
Development Act of 1956 (WRDA 96) - Mobile Harbor, Alabama

Commander, South Atlantic Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,
Room 322, 77 Forsyth Street, S.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3490

FOR COMMANDER, MOBILE DISTRICT

1. Section 302 of WRDA 96 affords an excellent opportunity to revisit the authorized plan for maintenance of Mobile Harbor in the interest of environmental protection and restoration and economic efficiency. Coupled with the high cost of maintaining the project as currently authorized and changing attitudes among environmental interests regarding the value of dredged material as a resource, Section 302 may allow you to develop a "master plan" for maintenance of lower Mobile Harbor that incorporates many positive environmental features and saves O&M funds.
2. As O&M funds for the Mobile Harbor project will permit, you should investigate opportunities to modify the authorized maintenance plan in accordance with Section 302. Any investigations you undertake in this regard should address appropriate adjustments to the "Federal standard" (or Base Plan) for channel maintenance along with any opportunities for use of Section 1135 and 204 authorities to implement pertinent features of the modified maintenance plan.
3. It is paramount that any efforts to modify the authorized maintenance plan for Mobile Harbor be developed in close partnership with the project sponsor, Federal and state resource agencies, environmental groups, and all other stakeholders. In the interest of efficiency and to avoid duplication of effort, we strongly recommend that you use any existing interagency forums, like the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, as a means to engage stakeholders in the development and evaluation of alternative dredged material management strategies.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

CARL R. POSTLEWATE
Director of Engineering and
Technical Services