

**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
PANAMA CITY HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS
TO BAY HARBOR CHANNEL
LIMITED REEVALUATION REPORT (LRR) WITH
INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA**

Waterway and Location: Panama City Harbor is located on St. Andrew Bay, an arm of the Gulf of Mexico, about 105 miles east of Pensacola, Florida and 230 miles northwest of Tampa, Florida. The existing navigation project at Panama City Harbor, Florida was authorized by the River and Harbor Act of 1948 (House Document 559, 80th Congress). Project improvements to Bay Harbor Channel were authorized by Section 201 of the Flood Control Act of 1965 (House Document 196, 92nd Congress, 2nd Session) and by resolutions of the House Public Works Committee on June 14, 1972, and the Senate Public Works Committee on June 21, 1972.

The authorized project provides for a channel approximately 3.7 miles long extending from deepwater in St. Andrew Bay across Lands End to the Gulf of Mexico, 300 feet wide and 40 feet deep; in the bay and across Lands End, and 450 feet wide, 42 feet deep and about 1.1 miles long in the approach channel in the Gulf, and is protected by two rubble jetties; branch channels 38 feet deep and 300 feet wide, leading from the inner end of the main entrance channel westward to the Panama City Port Authority (PCPA) terminal at Dyers Point and eastward to the Bay Harbor Terminal, about 3.4 and 3.6 miles in length, respectively; turning and maneuvering areas comprising about 55 acres opposite Dyers Point, and 42 acres opposite Bay Harbor, both at a depth of 38 feet; and an anchoring and loading basin for Lighter Aboard Ship (LASH) type intermodal carriers, 40 feet deep and containing about 177 acres in St. Andrew Bay near the inner end of the main entrance channel; a channel in Watson Bayou, 100 feet wide and 10 feet deep from that depth in St. Andrew Bay to the highway bridge, about 1.75 miles; and a channel 100 feet wide and 8 feet deep in Grand Lagoon to a point about 2,400 feet east.

As District Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mobile District, it is my duty in the role of responsible Federal official to review and evaluate, in light of public interest, the stated views of other interested agencies and concerned public, the environmental effects of this proposed action.

My evaluation and findings are as follows:

1. Description of the Proposed Action for Which These Findings are Made.

The proposed action for the improved Federal navigation channel at Bay Harbor will deepen the channel from the existing depth of -32 feet mean lower low water (MLLW) to -36 feet MLLW, which will allow the current vessel fleet calling at the PCPA to enter and exit at a deeper draft. The final Bay Harbor Channel will be approximately 3.5 miles long with a depth of 36 feet, a width of 300 feet, and a turning basin with a length of 1,700 feet and a width of 1,100 feet. Excavation includes an additional 2 feet for allowable overdepth and will require the removal of approximately 372,000 cubic yards

of material. Shoaling of the improved navigation channel would be minimal; however, to ensure channel depths, it is anticipated future Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of the navigation channel would require the removal of approximately 30,000 cubic yards on a 4-year dredging cycle.

2. Coordination. Mobile District has coordinated the recommended proposed action with Federal, state, and local agencies and issued a Public Notice, dated January 14, 2016, to solicit comments. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided its Planning Aid Letter, in accordance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958, as amended (48 Stat. 401; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), on September 18, 2015, and provided their Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report on April 08, 2016. The National Marine Fisheries Service provided its concurrence of the USACE "No Effects" determination to Essential Fish Habitat by email dated March 2, 2016. The Environmental Protection Agency requested additional information and through further coordination, provided final comments by email dated March 14, 2016. The State Historic Preservation Office of Florida provided concurrence of the USACE "No Effect" determination to cultural resources by letter dated January 19, 2016. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection issued water quality certification for the Project on January 27, 2016. No comments were received by members of the public.

3. Environmental Effects and Impacts. This proposed action will be in compliance with all environmental laws. A "No Action" alternative and several action alternatives were considered in addition to the "Proposed Action". The Proposed Action meets the USACE Environmental Operating Principles, and minimizes environmental impacts to protected resources to the maximum extent practicable.

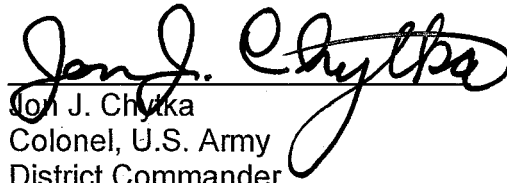
4. Determination. Based on the Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared for this project, I have determined that this action does not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the action does not require the preparation of a detailed statement under Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.). My determination was made considering the following factors discussed in the EA to which this document is attached:

- a. The proposed action would not significantly impact any threatened or endangered species potentially occurring in the project area.
- b. No significant cumulative or secondary impacts would result from implementation of this action.
- c. The proposed action would not significantly impact cultural resources.
- d. The proposed action would result in no significant impacts to air or water quality.
- e. The proposed action would result in no significant adverse impact to fish and wildlife resources.
- f. The proposed action will not cause any environmental health risks or safety risks that may disproportionately affect children and complies with Executive Order 13045, "Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks."

g. The proposed action will not cause any disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority populations and low-income populations and complies with Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations."

5. Findings and Conclusions. The proposed action to improve the Bay Harbor Channel would result in no significant environmental impacts.

Date: 15 JUN 2016


Jon J. Chyka
Colonel, U.S. Army
District Commander