



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MOBILE DISTRICT  
P.O. BOX 2288  
MOBILE, AL 36628-0001

**CESAM-PD-EC**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE NO. FP19-MsCIP01-13**

**MARCH 29, 2019**

**JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE**

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS,  
MOBILE DISTRICT  
AND  
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY,  
OFFICE OF POLLUTION CONTROL  
AND  
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**FOR**

**COMPREHENSIVE BARRIER ISLAND RESTORATION BORROW AREA  
EXPANSION AND ADDITION  
MISSISSIPPI COASTAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM  
MISSISSIPPI SOUND, HARRISON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI**

**A FEDERALLY AUTHORIZED PROJECT**

Interested persons are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mobile District, is proposing to add a new borrow area and modify the currently approved borrow areas for the restoration of Ship Island as part of the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program (MsCIP), Mississippi Sound, Harrison County, Mississippi.

This Public Notice is issued in accordance with the rules and regulations published in the Federal Register on April 26, 1988. These regulations provide for the review of the dredging programs for federally authorized projects. These laws are applicable whenever dredged or fill materials may enter navigable waters. The recipient of this notice is requested specifically to review the proposed action as it may impact water quality, relative to the requirements of Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act. We also request comments on any other potential impacts.

**WATERWAY AND LOCATION:** Mississippi Sound, Harrison County, Mississippi

**DESCRIPTION OF THE AUTHORIZED PROJECT:** The project as authorized includes the restoration of Ship Island using sandy material dredged from 16 borrow areas, including up to a possible 19.8 million cubic yards (mcy) of material from Petit Bois Pass- Alabama (PBP-AL) East and West that would be purchased from the state of Alabama. Restoration of the Mississippi barrier islands, and ecosystem restoration to reduce storm damage to the Mississippi Gulf Coast was authorized by Public Law 111-32 dated June 24, 2009.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION:** Recent increases in dredging work across the country has caused dredging prices to increase. Due to the increases in dredging costs and project funding constraints, the Mobile District proposes to do the following in lieu of purchasing sandy material from Alabama (See **Table 1**):

*Ship Island Borrow Area Option 2:* expand the currently authorized area (referred to as Ship Island Borrow Area Option 3) from approximately 183 acres and 2.7 mcy to approximately 634 acres and 7.8 mcy. (**Figure 1**)

*PBP-OCS West (1 through 6):* expand authorized dredging boundaries to include 150-foot "anchorage only" area, as well as an additional 3 feet of maximum allowable overdepth on top of the current 2 feet of allowable overdepth, for a total maximum allowable dredge volume of 13.6 mcy (current authorization is for 5.1 mcy maximum allowable dredge volume). (See **Figure 2** and **Figure 3** for proposed depths) (Note: additional depths beyond those previously described in the 2016 MsCIP Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) do not exceed 3 feet.)

*PBP-OCS East (1 through 5):* expand authorized dredging boundaries to include 150-foot "anchorage only" area, as well as an additional 3 feet of maximum allowable overdepth on top of the current 2 feet of allowable overdepth, for a total maximum allowable dredge volume of 3.8 mcy (current authorization is for 1.2 mcy maximum allowable dredge volume). (See **Figure 3** for proposed depths) (Note: additional depths beyond those previously described in the 2016 MsCIP SEIS do not exceed 3 feet.)

*Ship Island Pass (Old Gulfport Harbor Channel):* utilize 22 acres and approximately 0.5 mcy of material as an additional borrow area option. (**Figure 4**) (Note: borrow area limits and depths do not exceed those previously described in the 2010 EA for the West Ship Island North Shore Restoration.)

**WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION:** Pursuant to the Clean Water Act, state water quality certification is required for the proposed actions described above. The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) issued a Water Quality (WQ)



certification for the dredging of material in Mississippi state waters, and the placement of dredged material at Ship Island on April 8, 2016 (WQC No. WQC2016005). An additional WQ certification to include the expansion of the Ship Island Borrow Area Option 2, portions of the PBP-OCS West sites that fall in state waters, as well as the addition of the Ship Island Pass (Old Gulfport Harbor Channel) as a borrow area will be requested. Upon completion of the required comment period, a decision relative to water quality certification will be made by MDEQ.

**COASTAL ZONE CONSISTENCY:** Pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), the proposed action is consistent with the Mississippi Coastal Program to the maximum extent practicable. The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources granted Coastal Zone Consistency (CZC) for the placement of fill at Ship Island on April 6, 2016. USACE, Mobile District has determined the proposed action is consistent to the maximum extent practicable and will request a modified CZC from the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources following the distribution of this Public Notice and comment period.

**USE BY OTHERS:** The proposed action is not expected to create significant impacts to land and water use plans in the vicinity. Use of the waters in the vicinity of the project area includes fishing and recreational boating.

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) CONSIDERATIONS:** In accordance with the requirements of NEPA, a draft Environmental Assessment (EA), prepared by USACE, Mobile District, has been tiered from the MsCIP SEIS dated January 2016, as well as the October 2010 West Ship Island Northern Shoreline Restoration EA. Both of these documents are on file and available for review on the MsCIP webpage at <https://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Program-and-Project-Management/Civil-Projects/MsCIP/MsCIP-Downloads/>. The tiered draft EA for this proposed action is available for review in USACE, Mobile District office or at <https://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning-Environmental/Environmental-Assessments/>.

**SECTION 404 (B)(1) EVALUATION REPORT:** WQ impacts associated with the proposed action have been identified in an evaluation report prepared in accordance with Public Law 92-500, and Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines promulgated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act. The Draft Section 404

(b)(1) Evaluation Report is available for review on the district website at <https://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning-Environmental/Environmental-Assessments/>. The report concludes that only minor and short-term turbidity impacts would result from the implementation of the proposed action.

**ENDANGERED/THREATENED SPECIES:** Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the proposed project is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service Protected Resources Division (NMFS-PRD). Federally protected species that may be found within the project area include the West Indian manatee (*Trishechus manatus*), Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*), Piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), Red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), Loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), Green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), and the Giant manta ray (*Manta birostris*). The overall potential impacts to threatened and endangered species are summarized in the 2016 MsCIP SEIS, the 2010 West Ship Island Northern Shoreline EA, and their associated Biological Opinions (BO). The determinations made in these documents would not change for the proposed action.

The NMFS-PRD concluded in their 2015 issued BO that the Ship Island restoration project is likely to adversely affect, but is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Gulf sturgeon. In addition, it was determined in the 2010 issued BO that the dredging of the Ship Island Pass (Old Gulfport Channel) is not likely to destroy or adversely modify Gulf sturgeon critical habitat. The proposed action would have similar effects as described in the above documents.

In addition, the NMFS-PRD concluded that the Ship Island restoration project is likely to adversely affect, but is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the Loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, Green, and Leatherback sea turtles. The proposed action would have similar impacts. Informal consultation with the NMFS-PRD has been initiated for the Giant manta ray through a separate effort for the Ship Island restoration. The species is not likely to be adversely impacted by the project, or the proposed action.

The USFWS determined the Ship Island restoration project is likely to adversely affect, but will not jeopardize the continued existence of the Piping plover and Red knot, and designated critical habitat for the Piping plover will not be adversely modified. The



proposed action is expected to have similar impacts. Coordination with the USFWS and NMFS-PRD is ongoing for the proposed action, but a concurrence from both agencies is anticipated.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES CONSIDERATION:** The present project's Area of Potential Effect (APE), which encompasses the proposed borrow areas, has been subjected to archaeological surveys to identify potential historic properties, or has been previously dredged. Specifically, Phase I archaeological remote sensing surveys were conducted of the proposed Ship Island borrow expansion area, the PBP-OCS East 1–5 borrow areas, the PBP-OCS West 1–5 borrow areas, and the PBP-OCS West 6 borrow area. While these surveys identified numerous magnetic anomalies and acoustical contacts representing potential historic properties within the APE, all of these potential properties are located outside the proposed borrow areas and will be avoided.

The Ship Island Pass (Old Gulfport Channel) Borrow Area was subjected to maintenance dredging as part of the former Navigation Channel alignment and was repeatedly dredged for beach nourishment on West Ship Island between 1974 and 2012 for the National Park Service. Previous studies also did not identify any historic properties in the area. Because this borrow site has been repeatedly dredged and no historic properties were identified during previous research, there is no reason to believe that historic properties exist within the Ship Island Pass (Old Gulfport Channel) Borrow Area. Therefore, pursuant to 33 CFR § 336.1(6) an archaeological survey of the Ship Island Pass (Old Gulfport Channel) Borrow Area was not conducted.

Because all historic properties within the APE will be avoided, USACE, Mobile District has determined that the proposed project will have no effect on historic properties in accordance with 36 CFR §800.4(d)(1). Concurrence on the results of these surveys and USACE's finding of no effect was provided by the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) in a letter dated July 11, 2014, for borrow areas within the State of Mississippi and by the Alabama SHPO in a letter dated October 17, 2014, for borrow areas within the state of Alabama. Therefore, the project is expected to have no significant impact to cultural resources.

**ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT (EFH):** EFH is defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) as "those waters and substrate necessary for fish to spawn, breed, feed or grow to maturity." The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council in accordance with the MSFCMA (PL 94-265) has developed management plans for the following fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico: coastal migratory pelagic, red drum, snappers, groupers, tilefishes, jacks, triggerfishes, hogfish,

shrimp, spiny lobster, and corals. The NMFS-Habitat Conservation Division (HCD) has identified EFH habitats for the Gulf of Mexico in its Fishery Management Plan Amendments. These habitats include estuarine areas, such as estuarine emergent wetlands, seagrass beds, algal flats, mud, sand, shell, and rock substrates, and the estuarine water column. In previous coordination's (September 21, 2010 and April 13, 2016) the NMFS-HCD has agreed with USACE's determination that no significant long-term impacts to EFH would be expected due to the relatively small area of ecosystem that would be affected, and the rapid benthic recovery rates. USACE, Mobile District has determined that for this proposed action impacts are likely to be the same. This determination will be coordinated with the NMFS-HCD and a concurrence is anticipated.

**CLEAN AIR ACT:** Air quality in the vicinity of the proposed action would not be significantly affected by the proposed action. The equipment and machinery would generate some air pollution during construction activities, such as increased particulate levels from the burning of fossil fuels. However, these impacts would be minor and temporary in nature. The proposed action is in compliance with the Clean Air Act, as amended. The project area is in attainment with the National Ambient air Quality Standards parameters. The proposed action would not affect the attainment status of the project area or the region.

**EVALUATION:** The decision whether to proceed with the proposed action will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed action on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits that may be reasonably expected to accrue from the proposed action must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All environmental resources/factors which may be relevant to the proposed action will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. The proposed action will proceed unless it is found to be contrary to the overall public interest.

**COORDINATION:** Among the agencies receiving copies of this public notice are:

Region 4, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson, MS  
U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Atlanta, GA  
U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service, Panama City,  
FL  
U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service, St. Petersburg,  
FL



MARCH 29, 2019

Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District  
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources  
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality  
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Appropriate federally recognized Indian Tribes  
Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office

Other Federal, state, and local organizations are provided copies of this notice and are asked to participate in coordinating the proposed action. USACE, Mobile District request the information contained in this notice be communicated to any other parties who may have an interest in the proposed action.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Any person who has an interest that may be affected by this proposed activity may request a public hearing. Any comments or requests for a public hearing must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within 30 days of the date on this public notice. A request for a hearing must clearly set forth the interest, which may be affected, and the manner in which the interest may be affected.

Correspondence concerning this public notice should refer to Public Notice No. FP19-MsCIP01-13 and should be directed to the District Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-001, ATTN: CESAM-PD-EC. If you require additional information, please contact Ms. Angelia Lewis at (251) 694-4105, or by email at [Angelia.V.Lewis@usace.army.mil](mailto:Angelia.V.Lewis@usace.army.mil).



**CURTIS M. FLAKES**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Mobile District





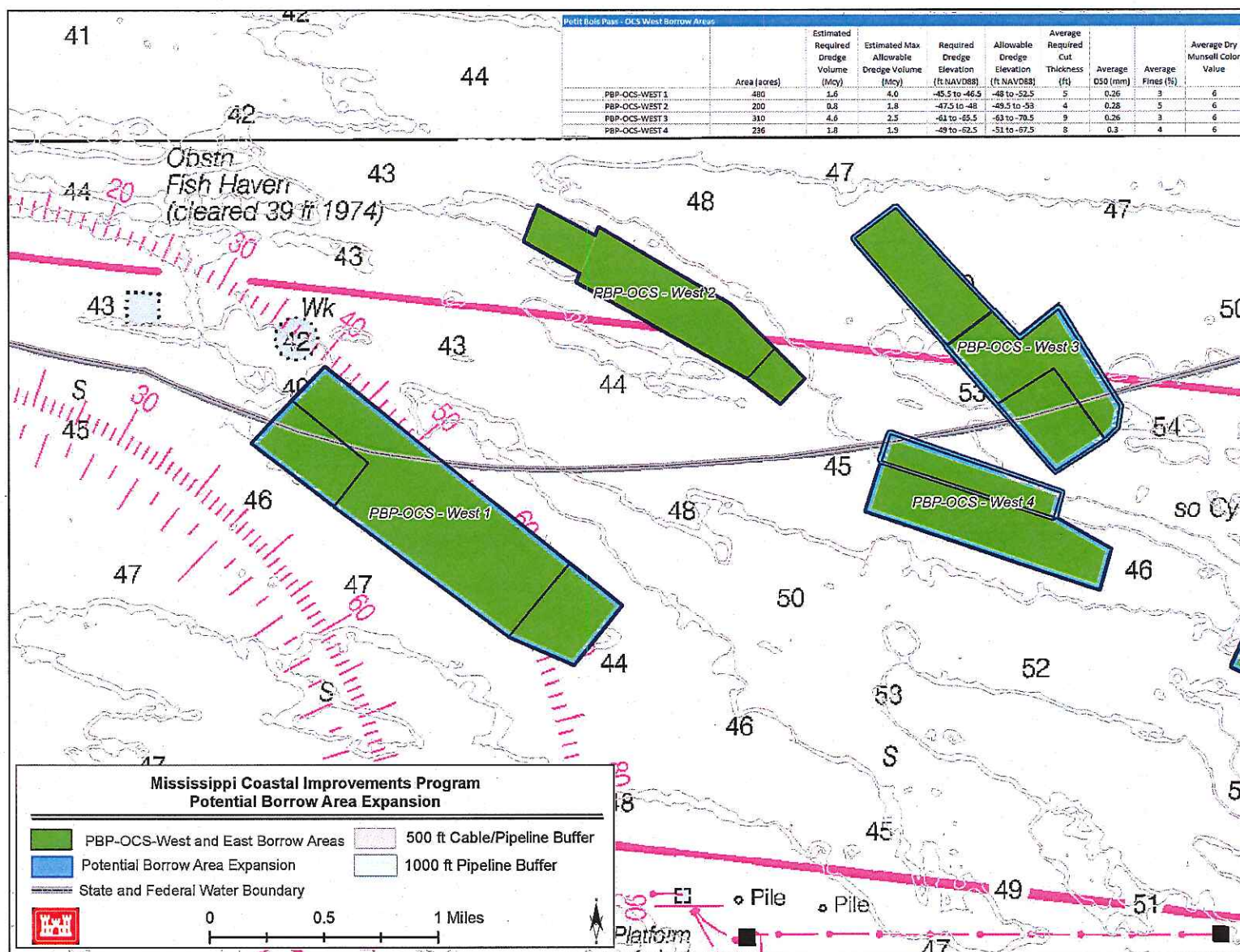


Figure 2: PBP-OCS West 1-4 Borrow Areas

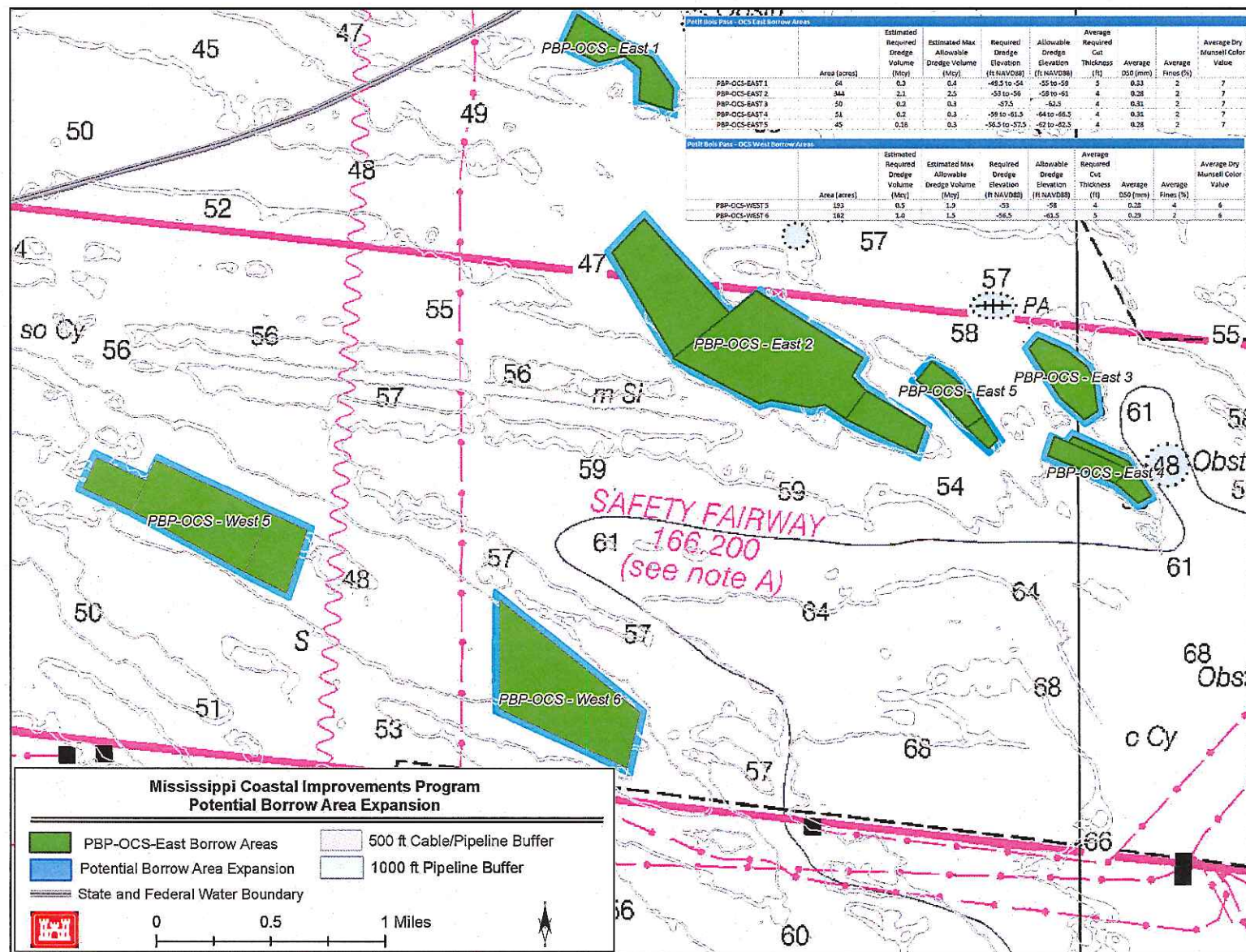


Figure 3: PBP-OCS East 1-5 and West 5-6 Borrow Areas



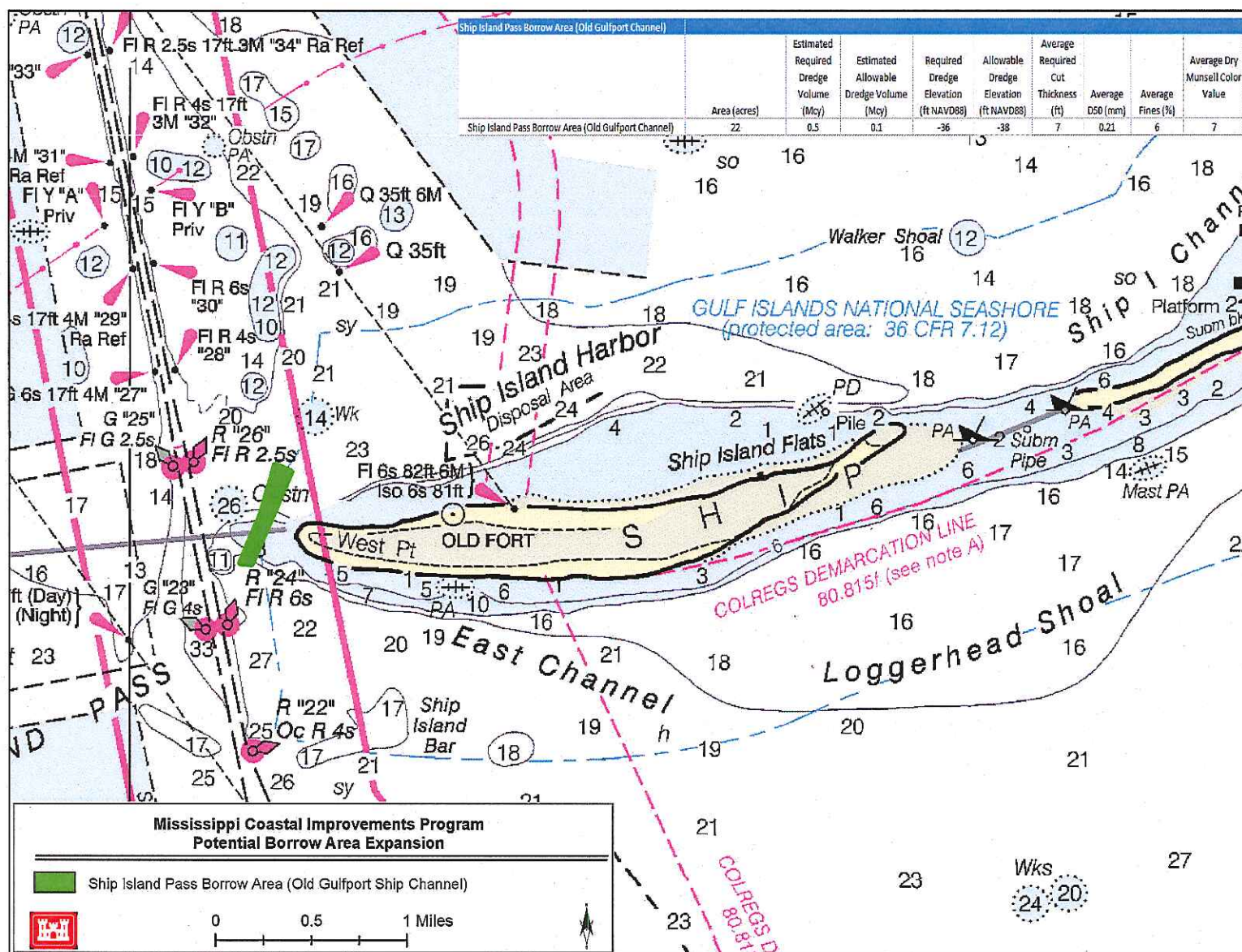


Figure 4: Ship Island Pass Borrow Area (Old Gulfport Channel)

Borrow Area	Current <sup>1</sup> Area (acres)	Proposed Area (acres)	Area Δ (acres)	Current Required Dredge Elevation (ft NAVD88)	Proposed Required Dredge Elevation (ft NAVD88)	Required Dredge Elevation Δ (ft)	Current Allowable Dredge Elevation (ft NAVD88)	Proposed Allowable Dredge Elevation (ft NAVD88)	Allowable Dredge Elevation Δ (ft)	Current Total Dredge Volume (mcy)	Proposed Total Dredge Volume (mcy)	Total Dredge Volume Δ (mcy)
Ship Island	183	634	451	-36	-36	0	-38	-41	-3	2.7	12.9	10.2
PBP-OCS West 1	420	480	60	-46.5 to -47.5	-46.5 to -47.5	0	-48 to -49.5	-48 to -52.5	-3	3.1	5.6	2.5
PBP-OCS West 2	192	200	8	-47.5 to -48	-47.5 to -48	0	-49.5 to -50	-49.5 to -53	-3	1.6	2.6	1
PBP-OCS West 3	275	310	35	-61 to -65.5	-61 to -65.5	0	-63 to -67.5	-63 to -70.5	-3	5.5	7.1	1.6
PBP-OCS West 4	195	236	41	-49 to -62.5	-49 to -62.5	0	-51 to -64.5	-51 to -67.5	-3	2.4	3.7	1.3
PBP-OCS West 5	155	193	38	-53	-53	0	-55	-58	-3	1.3	2.4	1.1
PBP-OCS West 6	146	182	36	-56.5	-56.5	0	-58.5	-61.5	-3	1.5	2.5	1
PBP-OCS East 1	51	64	13	-49.5 to -54	-49.5 to -54	0	-51.5 to -56	-55 to -59	-3	0.4	0.7	0.3
PBP-OCS East 2	302	344	42	-53 to -56	-53 to -56	0	-55 to -58	-58 to -61	-3	2.9	4.6	1.7
PBP-OCS East 3	39	50	11	-57.5	-57.5	0	-59.5	-62.5	-3	0.3	0.5	0.2
PBP-OCS East 4	43	51	8	-59 to -61.5	-59 to -61.5	0	-61 to -63.5	-64 to -66.5	-3	0.3	0.5	0.2
PBP-OCS East 5	29	45	16	-56.5 to -57.5	-56.5 to -57.5	0	-58.5 to -59.5	-62 to -62.5	-3	0.3	0.5	0.2
Ship Island Pass (Old Gulport Channel)	n/a	22	n/a	n/a	-36	n/a	n/a	-38	n/a	n/a	0.6	n/a

Note: 1 Current is defined as the coordinated design documented within the 2016 MS-CIP SEIS

**Table 1:** Current Borrow Areas as Authorized, Proposed Modifications, and Differences.