

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE

CHARLESTON DISTRICT, U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

69A Hagood Avenue

Charleston, South Carolina 29403-5107

and

S.C. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Bureau of Water, Division of Water Quality

Water Quality Certification and Wetlands Section

2600 Bull Street

Columbia, South Carolina 29201

and

S.C. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Bureau of Coastal Management

1362 McMillan Avenue, Suite 400

North Charleston, South Carolina 29405

NOTE: THIS IS A U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS CIVIL WORKS PROJECT

Planning and Environmental Branch
Refer to: P/N # SAC-CW-2025-0002

2 JUNE 2025

Little River Federal Navigation Project Horry County, South Carolina and Brunswick County, North Carolina

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Charleston District proposes to perform the work described herein with due consideration and review given to the relevant provisions of the following laws and others as applicable:

- The Clean Water Act of 1972, as amended (33 U.S.C. 1251, et. seq.).
- Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531, et. seq.).
- The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321).
- The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531, et. seq.).
- The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (U.S.C. 470, et. seq.).
- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1801, et. seq.).

The purpose of this notice is to advise all interested parties of proposed maintenance activities of the Little River Inlet Federal Navigation project.

In order to give all interested parties an opportunity to express their views

NOTICE

is hereby given that written statements regarding the proposed work will be received until

30 Days from the Date of this Notice

from those interested in the activity and whose interests may be affected by the proposed work.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project involves maintenance dredging of the Little River Inlet Federal Navigation Project in South Carolina (Figure 1). The Little River Inlet Navigation Project was authorized by the Senate Public Works Committee and the House Public Works Committee on October 12, 1972, under authority of Section 201 of Public Law (PL) 89-298, 1965 Flood Control Action. The authorized project provides for a 12-foot deep, 3,200-foot long, 300-foot wide entrance channel across the ocean bar, and a 10-foot deep, 9,050-foot long, 90-foot wide inner channel. The channel is stabilized by two jetties, with sand-transition dikes connecting the structures to the shore. In 1982, initial dredging of the Little River Inlet entrance channel removed 513,000 cubic yards of material which was subsequently used to construct the sand dikes associated with the jetties. In 1984, an additional 292,000 cubic yards of new work material was removed from both the entrance and inner channels and placed on the front beach of Waties Island, South Carolina. Construction of the Little River Inlet was completed in 1984. No maintenance dredging has occurred since the initial construction was completed.

The proposed action involves hydraulic cutterhead dredging of the Federal navigation channel to the authorized depth of 12 feet and width of 90 feet in the inner channel and 300' width in the entrance channel. Approximately 100,000 cubic yards of beach quality sand will be removed from the inner channel shoaling areas and used to stabilize the existing upcoast sand dike and rebuild the associated berm. Upon completion of construction, the sand dike will be planted with appropriate native vegetation to aid in erosion control. Construction is anticipated to occur from late 2025-early 2026.

Sediment testing was conducted in January 2025 and samples were analyzed for grain size. Based on a physical particle analysis conducted, the fill material is predominantly silica sand, with 90% or greater sand content.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

This document serves as a public notice on behalf of the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES), Bureau of Water (BOW) for water quality certification. A certification is required from SCDES stating that the proposed dredging will be conducted in a manner consistent with the Clean Water Act. Persons wishing to comment on State Certification are invited to submit same in writing to SCDES, Attention Michelle Culbreath, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, South Carolina 29201, within 30 days of the date of this notice.

This document also serves as a public notice on behalf of the SCDES, Bureau of Coastal Management (BCM) for coastal zone consistency. USACE has concluded that this project is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of South Carolina's Coastal Zone Management Program.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act, the Charleston District is preparing a Supplemental Information Report (SIR) to update environmental compliance efforts and confirm the validity of the 1977 Revised Final Environmental Impact Statement. Once completed, the SIR will be available for review online at:
<https://www.sac.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/NEPADocuments/>.

Species listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and under the jurisdiction of both U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) occur in the project area. Actions proposed on this project were considered under previous consultation detailed in the 2020 South Atlantic Regional Biological Opinion (SARBO) and preclude the need for further consultation with NMFS as Charleston District will adhere to all applicable project design criteria per the SARBO. USACE has determined that the project may affect, not likely to adversely affect the West Indian Manatee, green sea turtle, Kemp's ridley sea turtle, leatherback sea turtle, loggerhead sea turtle, piping plover, *rufa* red knot, and seabeach amaranth; and may affect, not likely to adversely affect for *rufa* red knot proposed critical habitat. USACE initiated informal consultation with USFWS on May 29, 2025.

Pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Charleston District has initiated consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, and numerous Indian Tribes. Various terrestrial and submerged cultural resources surveys have been performed within the project area, and a search of South Carolina's ArchSite and the Office of Coast Survey's Wrecks and Obstructions Database reveals that there are no known historic properties within the project area. All work is being performed in previously disturbed areas with little potential for remaining cultural resources. Consultation with is ongoing.

Pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Charleston District will comply to the extent practicable with the conservation recommendations and best management practices included in the *Programmatic Essential Fish Habitat Consultation for USACE Activities and Projects Regularly Undertaken in South Carolina*. Therefore, impacts to essential fish habitat and habitat areas of particular concern associated with maintenance dredging activities will not result in significant effects on managed species and habitats.

USACE is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by USACE to determine whether to proceed with the project. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, Tribal cultural or religious effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are also

used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this proposed project. Requests for a public hearing shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. These requests should be made to SCDES at the addresses listed above.

Questions or comments concerning this notice should be directed to Ms. Erica Fritz by email at erica.fritz@usace.army.mil

Lindsey A. LaRocque

Lindsey LaRocque
Acting Chief, Planning and Environmental Branch

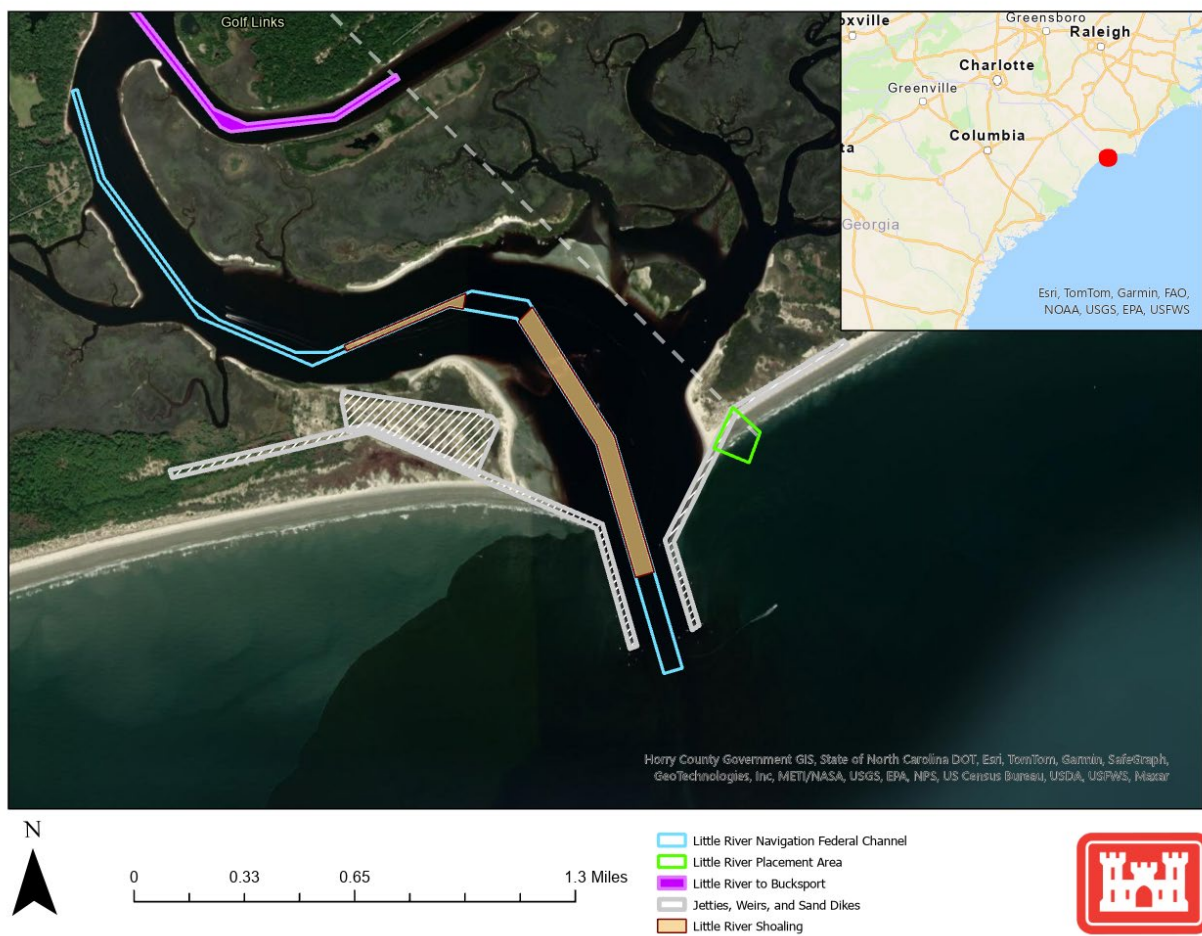


Figure 1. Overview of Little River Inlet