

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL BACK BAY COASTAL STORM RISK MANAGEMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY

MONTHLY PLANNING MEETING

Date:	April 20, 2023
Time:	1:00PM - 2:30PM
Meeting Location:	WebEx Virtual Meeting https://usace1.webex.com/meet/jason.s.harrah

IN ATTENDANCE: 44 ATTENDEES IN TOTAL

USACE

- Jason Harrah, Marty Durkin, Katie Lebow, Katie Bailey, Amanda Bredesen, Chris Bukolt, Darren Pecora, David Ruderman, Jackson Hooten, Joel Belsterling, Katie Gwin, Larbi Kandil, Patrick Snyder, Zuzana Chovanec

City of St. Augustine

- Jessica Beach, Caitlyn Sargent

USFWS

- Brendan Myers

FDOT

- Terri Newman

GTMNERR

- Lia Sansom

NPS

- Kurt Foote, Gordie Wilson

Public

- Jeff Milhorn, Rachel Rhode

St. Johns County

- Mark Nelson

Bill Tredik, cajacoby, Doug Dycus, Doug White, Eric Seckinger, Erin, Jen Lomberk, Kaitlyn Dietz, Kaylee Rose, Kellie Tyler, Lauren, Mitchell Moore, Nikki Dix, Sandy Flowers, Westly Woodward

STUDY OVERVIEW

- Corps Feasibility Studies typically are a formal 3-year process used to identify water resource problems, formulate and evaluate solutions, determine federal interest, and prepare recommendations

- This begins when a local sponsor asks USACE to address a particular issue through a formal letter to the district commander
 - Cost shared with a sponsor that has the legal and financial authority and capability to provide funding and real property requirements needed for a study and future project
- Before USACE becomes involved in a study:
 - Study Authority: Typically, in Water Resource Development Act (WRDA)
 - Federal Appropriations: Annual President's Budget, Work Plans, Supplements
- St. Augustine Back Bay Study Authority and Funding
 - House Resolution 2646 (June 21, 2000): St. Johns County, Florida
 - Total Study Cost: \$3M (Split 50/50) to date \$1.5M Federal Received and \$1.5M Non-Federal.
- SMART Planning Studies
 - USACE used a new study process called SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Risk Informed, Timely) planning for conducting civil works feasibility studies
 - The goal is to complete the study within 3 years at no more than \$3M
 - Study begins at signing of Feasibility Cost Share Agreement (FCSA)
 - Study ends when the Chief of Engineers signs a "Chiefs Report" and transmits it to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, then to Office of Management and Budget, and then to Congress for authorization to construct in a future WRDA bill
 - Waivers are required to exceed the \$3M, 3-year limitations
- Study Timeline
 - 4 separate phases and 5 key decision milestones
 - Scoping is completed up to the Alternatives Milestone (scheduled for May 1, 2023)
 - Alternative Evaluation and Analysis will include a lot of modelling and data to formulate and decide on a Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP)
 - TSP becomes the recommended plan at the Agency Decision Milestone to complete the process
- Project Implementation
 - Once the study is completed, we move to the "Pre-Construction Engineering and Design" but construction is dependent on future WRDA authorizations.
- Evaluation of Alternatives
 - During the process, the Corps will consider many alternatives
 - Each of these are evaluated based on:
 - Effectiveness
 - Cost
 - Environmental Impacts
 - Public/Agency/Stakeholder Feedback
 - Real Estate
 - Socioeconomic Considerations
 - Adverse Impacts
 - Risk Reduction
 - Aesthetics

- EXAMPLES (these are not final or specific to this study, just examples from other Back Bay studies the Corps has done)
 - Storm Surge Barriers
 - Floodwalls
 - Elevating Structures, Floodproofing, Ring Walls, Acquisition
 - Natural and Nature-Based Features
- Key Factors for a Successful Study
 - Sponsor, Agency, and Public Involvement throughout ALL phases of the project
 - Development of an environmentally sound project that meets policy regulations
 - Study fill array of alternatives to include:
 - Soft Structural (i.e. beach nourishment, dune construction, living shorelines, etc.)
 - Hard Structural (i.e. coastal armoring, groins, breakwaters, etc.)
 - Non-Structural (i.e. acquisition, relocation, elevating, floodproofing, etc.)
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)
 - Umbrella law that facilitates project coordination by integrating compliance requirements that may otherwise proceed independently
 - NEPA does not manage or protect a specific resource, however, under each environmental law and policy considered, there are minimization and mitigation measures
 - Applies to all Federal actions
 - Requires USACE to disclose proposed actions and alternatives
 - Consider, evaluate, and document effects of proposed actions as part of *overall* planning and decision-making
 - Cooperate with Federal, State, and local governments, private organizations, and concerned citizens
- Public Involvement
 - Scoping ended March 10
 - Public notices will be published when the Draft and Final NEPA are ready for review
 - Additional information will be made available on the project website: <https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Shore-Protection/St-Johns-County/City-of-St-Augustine-Florida-Back-Bay-Feasibility-Study/>
- Study Area
 - Includes entire COSA Municipal Boundary
 - 17 Distinct Neighborhoods to be evaluated as a part of this feasibility study
 - 3 Separate Land Masses (Davis Shores area, Main St. Augustine area, Ravenswood & Oyster Creek area)
 - Environmental Justice Communities
 - Interconnected Water Bodies:
 - Atlantic Ocean
 - St. Augustine Inlet
 - IWW

- Salt Run
 - San Sebastian River
- Very comprehensive approach with complex modeling to find solution for this study. Each area presents its own unique challenges
- Problems and Opportunities
 - Developed among our Federal, State and Local partners at a planning charrette in February 2023.
 - Within the City of St. Augustine, flooding attributable to coastal storms, rainfall, riverine flow, tidal fluctuations, and sea level rise is:
 - Causing damages to structures and infrastructure and degrading cultural and environmental resources
 - Negatively impacting critical infrastructure and the health and life-safety of residents
 - Negatively impacting businesses, organizations, and industry
 - Within the City of St. Augustine opportunities exist to:
 - Maintain or improve environmental resources
 - Achieve incidental benefits from preventing nuisance flooding
 - Maintain the quality of tourism and recreation experiences
 - Improve community understanding of flood risks
 - Provide equitable benefits to economically disadvantaged and minority communities
 - Environmental justice aspect is a key focus for current administration
- Objectives and Constraints
 - The “period of analysis” is from completion of construction, estimated 2038, out 50-years in the future to 2084
 - Objectives to be achieved within the City of St. Augustine over a 50-year period of analysis from 2035-2084:
 - Reduce risk of flood damages
 - Reduce risks to health and life-safety
 - Preserve cultural and natural resources and maintain aesthetic quality
 - Reduce flooding impacts to the local economy
 - Constraints on plan formulation are limited to:
 - Do not increase flood risk in any areas adjacent to the project area without mitigation
 - Do not violate Federal laws or Policy
 - Local Considerations include:
 - Avoid or minimize adverse effects to cultural resources
 - Consideration of local affordability
 - Avoid or minimize encroaching on navigational or recreational features
 - Avoid environmental impacts
 - Avoid or minimize impacts to community cohesion
 - Consider local responsibilities for technical operations and maintenance

KEY ONGOING ACTIVITIES

- Study Schedule and Budget:
 - Proposed Study Schedule 5 years 9 months
 - Proposed Study Budget: \$7.3M
- Next 30 Days: April 20 – May 17
 - Alternatives Milestone Meeting May 1, 2023
 - Initial flood driver screening May 17, 2023
 - Neighborhood outreach meetings beginning May 9, 2023
 - Begin Future Without-Project (FWOP) modeling using HECRAS and G2CRM

SCHEDULE REVIEW:

- SMART Planning process:
 - Alternatives Milestone Meeting (AMM) – May 1, 2023
 - Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) Milestone Meeting – Feb 2, 2027
 - Most of the study will be taking place between the AMM and TSP
 - Agency Decision Milestone – Nov 3, 2027
 - Final Report Milestone – May 22, 2028
 - Chief's Report – Sep 15, 2028
- 30/60/90 Day Lookahead

FCSA Executed		1/9/2023	1/9/2023
ALTERNATIVES MILESTONE MEETING (AMM) PHASE		1/9/2023	5/9/2023
Jacksonville District (SAJ) Project Delivery Team (PDT) / City Kick-off Meeting(s) & General Coordination	PM/PDT	1/9/2023	5/9/2023
Public Scoping Period	ENV	2/8/2023	3/10/2023
Scoping Letters Sent Out (Public, Agency, G2G , Section 106 Letter/SHPO)	ENV/CR	2/9/2023	2/9/2023
USACE Internal VT Technical Meeting with Planning Centers of Expertise (PCXs) and Communities of Practice (CoPs)	PF	2/9/2023	2/9/2023
Planning Charrette	PM/PDT	2/22/2023	2/24/2023
Scoping Meeting	ENV	2/22/2023	2/22/2023
Finalized Problems, Opportunities, Objectives, and Constraints	PF	2/24/2023	3/24/2023
Identify Initial Array of Alternatives	PF/PDT	2/24/2023	3/24/2023
Section 1002 Letter Sent to Sponsor	PM	3/1/2023	3/1/2023
Initial Array of Alternatives Identified with General Design Scope	PF/PDT	3/10/2023	4/5/2023
Initial Flood Driver Screening (Scope Decision Point)	EN	3/10/2023	5/17/2023
Coordination for Collecting and Compiling Data for Inventory	ECON/PDT	3/10/2023	10/27/2023
Refined Existing Data Inventory & Analysis / New Data Collection & Analysis	ECON/PDT	3/10/2023	10/27/2023

Inventory of Existing & Future Cultural Resources with Mapping	CR	3/13/2023	4/5/2023
Inventory of Existing & Future Environmental Resources with Mapping	ENV	3/13/2023	4/5/2023
Inventory of Existing & Future Economic Resources with Mapping	ECON	3/13/2023	4/5/2023
Inventory of Existing & Future Flooding with Mapping (just 4-8 flood scenarios to be used for the AMM)	EN	3/13/2023	4/5/2023
Inventory of Existing Geological Conditions with Mapping	EN	3/13/2023	4/5/2023
Inventory of Existing & Future Local Projects with Mapping	PF	3/13/2023	4/5/2023
Initial Entries into Risk Register	PF	3/13/2023	4/5/2023
Review Plan (Complete Draft) Sent to PCX-CSRM for Review & Endorsement	PF	3/13/2023	4/7/2023
Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) Coordination w/USFWS	ENV	3/13/2023	4/24/2023
GIS & Inventory of Baseline Structure Elevations & Properties Built Prior to 1978 (Cultural, Real Estate, GIS)	CR/GIS/RE	3/13/2023	11/20/2023
Identify Initial Area of Potential Effect (APE)	CR	3/14/2023	4/24/2023
SAJ Vertical Team Alignment Memo (VTAM) to South Atlantic Division (SAD)	PF/PM	3/20/2023	4/12/2023
Identify Potential Hazardous, Toxic and Radioactive Waste (HTRW) Issues associated with Initial Array of Alternatives	HTRW	3/22/2023	5/1/2023
Pre-IPR Discipline Specific VT Coordination Meetings As Needed	PDT	3/27/2023	4/12/2023
Web Map Viewer	EN	4/3/2023	5/1/2023
Parametric Costs for Initial Array of Alternatives	EN	4/5/2023	4/24/2023
Real Estate Considerations for Initial Array of Alternatives	RE	4/5/2023	4/24/2023
Environmental Resource Considerations for Initial Array of Alternatives	ENV	4/5/2023	4/24/2023
AMM Read Ahead Prep & Presentation Dry Runs	PF	4/5/2023	4/28/2023
Vertical Team (VT) IPR #1 Status Update	PF/PDT	4/12/2023	4/12/2023
Pre-AMM Discipline Specific VT Coordination Meetings As Needed	PDT	4/17/2023	4/28/2023
Data Gathering and Digital Elevation Model (DEM) creation	EN	4/17/2023	5/30/2023
Develop Environmental Resources Subgroup	ENV	4/24/2023	5/1/2023
Develop Cultural Resources Subgroup	CR	4/24/2023	5/1/2023
AMM Milestone Meeting		5/1/2023	5/1/2023

Complete/Review/Send SAD VTAM (to cover 3x3x3 exception package) to Headquarters (HQ)	SAD	5/2/2023	5/9/2023
TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN (TSP) PHASE		5/9/2023	2/2/2027
TSP Phase Supervisor Support	PDT	5/9/2023	2/2/2027
General PDT Coordination & Participation	PDT	5/9/2023	2/2/2027
Neighborhood Outreach Meetings	PM/PDT	5/9/2023	2/2/2027
Ongoing Draft Report Writing and Preparation to have complete draft report and appendices by the TSP.	PDT	5/9/2023	2/2/2027
Environmental Surveys	EN	5/9/2023	2/2/2027
GIS Support (Web Mapper, Figures, Story Map, etc) through TSP	EN	5/9/2023	2/2/2027
Future Without-Project (FWOP) Hydrologic Engineering Center's River Analysis System (HEC RAS) Modeling for Generation 2 Coastal Risk Model (G2CRM) Hydrographs	EN	5/17/2023	10/5/2023
Characterize Systems Protective System Elements (PSEs)	EN/ECON	5/17/2023	10/19/2023
Coordinate with H&H as needed to characterize storms and any other H&H data	EN/ECON	5/17/2023	10/27/2023
Delineate Study Area into Model Areas	EN/ECON/PF	5/17/2023	10/27/2023
Develop Modeling Strategy for Comprehensive Benefits	PF/PDT	5/17/2023	10/27/2023
Engineering Inputs for G2CRM (including Coastal Hazards System (CHS) based storm suite from Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC))	EN	5/17/2023	12/5/2023

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

- City of St. Augustine
 - Thanks for the overview of this complex and difficult study
- Federal
 - USFWS
 - There seems to be a large time for when consultations with the service might occur
 - USACE to provide an "Environmental Only" schedule to the service
 - CBRA system unit discussion/consultation will occur soon
 - CBRA zones going into the back bay area is unique and an unusual challenge for this project
 - ESA Section 7 consultations
 - Proposed action area from the service may fall outside the municipal boundary
 - Actions within the city limits will possibly have large upstream and/or downstream effects
 - NPS
 - Still seeking funding for some treatments for the seawall by the Castillo de San Marcos

- FDEP
 - No comments at this time
- FDOT
 - No comments at this time
- St. Johns County
 - Coordinating with the State requirements for the resiliency efforts by the city
- Public
 - Rachel Rhode: Does that mean the city has requested Section 8106?
 - Jeff Milhorn:
 - For Brendan Myers, will adjustments be made to the CBRA Zone in St. Augustine to enable federal funding & construction within this region?
 - How do ongoing efforts by the city and other agencies sync with this feasibility study that will take over 10-years to begin construction?
 - Caitlyn Sargent in response to Jeff Milhorn:
<https://www.citystaug.com/DocumentCenter/View/6317/City-of-St-Augustine-Resiliency-Updates-Packet>, Pg. 25
 - To the group... knowing that there are ongoing efforts (including projects) how to ensure synchronization across these multiple efforts with different time horizons?
 - The Corps understands that the city can't wait for the study to be completed before starting to protect themselves, so the USACE will incorporate those projects into the study throughout the process when determining the future with and future without project
 - Sandy Flowers: Excited to have the Corps doing this study and will be attending every meeting

UPCOMING PUBLIC MEETINGS/ENGAGEMENTS

- 12 May 2023: Ravenswood Community Meeting
- 18 May 2023: Monthly Planning Meeting
- 27 May 2023: SARNA Ravenswood Quarterly Meeting
- 15 June 2023: Monthly Planning Meeting
- 20 July 2023: Monthly Planning Meeting
- 30 July 2023: COSA Neighborhood Council Meeting