

CWG Review 1: Spring 2015

Tier 1 Information:

1. Management Action

N-113 Eliminate Lake Worth inlet and Port Expansion project to reduce siltation on coral reefs and keep coastal communities and habitat in balance.

2. Intended Result (Output/Outcome)

What is the end product/result of this management action?

- The intended outcome of this action is the preservation of existing habitat and community (below and above the water) including estuarine and ocean resources and the reduction in siltation of existing habitat in the ICW. This recommended management action applies to a proposed USACE project.

3. Duration of Activity

Is this a discrete action or a recurring activity? Explain.

- Discrete

4. Justification

What issue or problem will this management action address? Explain.

- This recommended management action is being put forth due to the proposed Lake Worth Inlet and turning basin dredging (expansion) project and its highly potential negative impacts on the environment and the community. It is a way to address the bigger issue of large scale economic development project that outweighs the environments health. Recent port expansion projects have resulted in extreme and unanticipated environmental impacts. There is a need to adequately document estuarine resources which may not have been accurately depicted when the project was initially proposed.

5. Potential Pros

What are the potential advantages associated with this management action?

- Protecting the coral reefs and coral reef habitats that surround these inlets – both inside and outside the inlets.
- Protecting environmentally responsible economic development
- Keeping our natural and artificial ecosystems intact and thriving, stopping the project has backing of Palm Beach mayor and residents
- Protecting seagrasses and manatees (especially in winter when manatees congregate in the inlet), maintain balance between economic benefits from aquatic and coastal (such as Peanut Island) recreation with ecosystem health.

6. Potential Cons

What are the potential disadvantages associated with this management action?

- Will encounter resistance from people and entities with money invested in the inlet dredging project, possibly slow import and export of products
- Preventing possible increase in job opportunities and economic growth

7. Location

County/Counties: Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, Other?

- Palm Beach County

Relevant Habitats: Coral reef, seagrass, watershed, etc.?

- All

Specific Location: City, site name, coordinates, etc.?

- Lake Worth Inlet and Lagoon

8. Extent

Area, number, etc.

- In and around the inlet

9. Is this action spatial in nature?

- Yes

Do you believe this recommended management action could be informed by the Our Florida Reefs Marine Planner Decision Support Tool?

If yes, you will proceed to the next section on Marine Planner Information.

- No

Tier 2 Information:

WHY?

1. Strategic Goals & Objectives to be Achieved

Refer to the [SEFCRI Coral Reef Management Goals and Objectives Reference Guide](#).

- FL Priorities Goal C3 Obj 4: Establish appropriate coastal construction guidelines and educate the public and elected officials on the need to consider the impacts of coastal construction. FL Priorities Goal C4 Obj 3: Build capacity and develop interagency procedures and protocols within coral reef management agencies along the Florida Reef Tract and Ecosystem to effectively participate in planning review and permitting processes for development, coastal construction and water-management projects and initiatives. SEFCRI LAS MICCI Issue 1 Goal Obj 2: Avoid and minimize impacts on coral reef ecosystems from dredge and fill activities and infrastructure (pipelines, outfalls, cables) installation on coral reef ecosystems. Reduce the aerial extent of project-related impacts.
- MICCI: Issue 1: Obj 1: Prj 3; Obj 3, and Issue 2: Obj 1;

2. Current Status

Is this activity currently underway, or are there planned actions related to this recommendation in southeast Florida? If so, what are they, and what is their status.

- Many are against this dredging project, currently the Army Core of Engineers has not granted the permit, but it's under review.
- Palm Beach County's Artificial Reef and Estuarine Enhancement Committee has submitted a letter to the Corps of Engineers recommending that the proposed project be removed from consideration.
- This project has not been appropriated yet, while it is still feasible. If congress never funds it, then it will not move forward. Congress has de-authorized a lot of port expansion projects in this last WRDA, and the Core was given time to de-authorize it. To get authorized there needs to be congressional support, so if the project doesn't get the funding from the feds OR from the county the expansion will not move forward.

3. Intended Benefits (Outcomes)

What potential environmental benefits or positive impacts might this management action have?

- Increased protection of resources, estuarine and ocean, that have the potential to be impacted by port/inlet modification projects.
- Maintain beauty and enjoyment of the area including around Peanut Island.

What potential social/economic benefits or positive impacts might this management action have?

- Protection of nearby resources that also have economic value to the community especially through tourism and boating in the area.
- Economic problem may not be as big as anticipated as several users of the Port do not require the proposed expansion work. A new cruise ship occupies one of the Port slips that may require the expansion to facilitate

ingress and egress.

What is the likely duration of these benefits - short term or long-lasting? Explain.

- Long-lasting

4. Indirect Costs (Outcomes)

What potential negative environmental impacts might this action have?

The following could happen **WITHOUT** this action

- The anticipated negative environmental impacts include: (1) the threat to sea grass beds by completely removing them; (2) destruction of the Blue Hearon bridge diving area; (3) the inlet will be unsafe to smaller craft vessels (boats and kayakers) due to larger ships accessing the inlet; and (4) destruction to the beaches and coral reefs located to the north and south of the inlet.

What potential negative social/economic impacts might this action have?

- Some anticipated potential negative social/ economic impacts the recommended management action may have includes: (1) the money to run this project and the only benefit will go to the shipping industry not the town or the county of Palm Beach; and (2) the economic problem may not be as large as anticipated since several users of the Port do not require the proposed expansion work. A new cruise ship which occupies one of the Port slips may require the expansion to easier facilitate ingress and egress.

What is the likely duration of these negative impacts - short term or long-lasting? Explain.

- Long lasting

5. Risk

What is the threat of adverse environmental, social, or economic effects arising from not implementing this action?

- If this recommended management action were not to be implemented there will be a loss of existing important resources (corals, coral habitat, hardbottom, seagrass, etc.) and a loss of the economic benefits these resources provide for this area. The community and ecotourism that currently enjoys this area for recreation, water-sports, family-time, etc. could be diminished entirely.

6. Relevant Supporting Data

What existing science supports this recommendation? (Provide citations)

- The methodology for predicating, monitoring and evaluating the outcome from a port expansion project has proven inadequate based on what has happened at the first port expansion project.

7. Information Gaps

What uncertainties or information gaps still exist?

- Uncertainties or information gaps with this recommended management action were not identified.

WHEN?

8. Anticipated Timeframe for Implementation

How long will this recommendation take to implement?

- The anticipated timeframe for implementation of this recommended management action is 0-2 years.
- A portion of the community working group believes that the timeline for OFR will not be timely enough to have an effective action that will actually effectuate change to the project, but would like to keep it an open recommended management action in the event the timelines get pushed back or there is a community effort to stop the project, this way it would be on record as an action of the OFR process was well recommending the expansion not occur.

9. Linkage to Other Proposed Management Actions

Is this activity linked to other proposed management recommendations?

- This RMA is not linked with any other recommended management action.

WHO?

10. Lead Agency or Organization for Implementation

What agency or organization currently has/would have authority? Refer to the [Agencies and Actions Reference Guide](#).

- The Lead Agency for implementation of this recommended management action would be the FDEP, EPA, and USACE.

11. Other Agencies or Organizations

Are there any other agencies or organizations that may also support implementation? Explain.

- Other potential agencies or organizations who could be involved include the US Fish and Wildlife Service, NMFS, NGOs, and Palm Beach County.

12. Key Stakeholders

Identify those stakeholders most greatly impacted by this management action, including those from whom you might expect a high level of support or opposition. Explain.

- The key stakeholders for this recommended management action would be the resource users (i.e. divers, fishermen, and those with ecotourism interests). However, the shipping and coastal construction industries, including the Port of Palm Beach, are anticipated to not support this action.

HOW?

13. Feasibility

Is there appropriate political will to support this? Explain.

- The mayor of Palm Beach does not support this project Town of Palm Beach-Town Manager Peter Elwell does not support this project

What are the potential technical challenges to implementing this action? Has it been done elsewhere?

- we are going up against corporations that have a lot of money to see this project go through

14. Legislative Considerations

Does the recommendation conflict with or actively support existing local, state, or federal laws or regulations? Explain.

- There were no legislative considerations that were taken into account.

15. Permitting Requirements

Will any permits be required to implement this action? Explain.

- There are no permitting requirements with this recommended management action.

16. Estimated Direct Costs

Approximately how much will this action likely cost? (Consider one-time direct costs, annual costs, and staff time, including enforcement.)

- The estimated direct cost of implementing this recommended management action is a onetime cost of <\$10,000 to initiate some conversations and/or produce some materials to educate the community on why this project should not go forward.

Will costs associated with this activity be one-time or recurring?

- -One time

17. Enforcement

Does this require enforcement effort?

- No

18. Potential Funding Sources

Identify potential funding organizations/grant opportunities, etc.

- A potential funding source can be acquired through the residents of Palm Beach that have the funding available and want to protect their property value or value of places to recreate.

19. Measurable Outcomes/Success Criteria/Milestones

How will the success of this recommendation be measured? How will you know when the intended result is achieved?

- A way to provide a means to measure the success of this recommended management action would be the halt of the project or the port expansion gets deauthorized.

SEFCRI/TAC Targeted Questions:

1. **TAC** - Is the recommendation likely to achieve the intended result? Explain.

Tier 1 – #2 (Intended Result - Output/Outcome)

- Yes if the project is stopped impacts to resources would not occur.

2. **TAC** - Is the recommendation sufficient to address the identified issue or problem? Explain.

Tier 1 – #4 (Justification)

- It is unclear how opposition to dredging Lake Worth Inlet would be implemented and by whom. I believe additional details are needed to determine if the recommendation is sufficient.

3. **TAC** - Is the recommendation technically achievable from a science or management perspective? Explain.

Tier 2 – #8 (Anticipated Timeframe for Implementation) and Tier 2 - #13 (Feasibility)

- Yes, projects have been deauthorized in WRDA

4. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors** - Has this been done (by SEFCRI, other agencies or organizations in the SEFCRI region)? Explain.

Tier 2 – #2 (Current Status)

- In other regions yes projects have been deauthorized

5. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors** - Is this recommendation a research or monitoring project? (Recommendations should be turn-dirt management actions, not the step you take before a management action). Explain.

- no

6. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors** - If either of the following applies to this management action, provide feedback on which information submitted by the Community Working Groups may be more appropriate, or if entries should be merged. Explain.

- a. There are different viewpoints for an individual management action (i.e. two working group members provided separate information, as indicated by a '/' marking between them).
- b. Information submitted for this and other draft management actions is sufficiently similar that they might be considered the same.

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7. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors** - Non-agency Question: Is the recommendation technically achievable from your stakeholder perspective? If not, do you have suggestions that would allow this to become technically achievable from your stakeholder perspective? Explain.

Tier 1 - #5 (Potential Pros), Tier 1 - #6 (Potential Cons), Tier 2 - #3 (Intended Benefits), Tier 2 - #4 (Indirect Costs) and Tier 2 - #12 (Key Stakeholders)

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8. **SEFCRI Team, PPT & Other Advisors** - Agency Question: Is the recommendation technically achievable from a management perspective? If not, do you have suggestions that would allow this to become technically achievable from your agency's management perspective? Explain.

Tier 2 – #10 (Lead Agency or Organization for Implementation) and Tier 2 - #11 (Other Agencies or Organizations)

- If it is deauthorized yes, and/or if there are additional costs than were originally scoped when the USACE authorized it, and if the county is unwilling to bare those additional costs then the project would not go forward.

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