

Epidemiological Board, Skyline Six, 5109 Leesburg Pike, Room 682, Falls Church, Virginia 22041-3258, (703) 681-8012/4.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** None.

**Gregory D. Showalter,**

*Army Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers

#### Intent To Prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Dade County Beach Erosion Control and Hurricane Protection Project, for a Test Beach Fill Using a Foreign Source of Carbonate Sand

**AGENCY:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Defense.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers intends to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Dade County Beach Erosion Control and Hurricane Protection Project, for a Test Beach Fill Using a Foreign Source of Carbonate Sand. The study is a cooperative effort between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Dade County Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM), the non-Federal sponsor for the project.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Kenneth Dugger, 904-232-1686, Environmental Branch, Planning Division, P.O. Box 4970, Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Beach Erosion Control and Hurricane Protection (BEC & HP) Project for Dade County, Florida was authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1968. The Supplemental Appropriations Act of 1985 and the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (Pub. L. 99-662) provided authority for extending the northern limit of the authorized project to include the construction of a protective beach along the 2.5 mile reach of shoreline north of Haulover Beach Party (Sunny Isles) and for periodic nourishment of the new beach.

Offshore borrow sources of beach quality sediment along the Dade County shoreline have been almost completely depleted, and alternative sources of material will be required in the near future to provide continued renourishment of the Dade County Beach Erosion Control and Hurricane

Protection Project. Although carbonate sediment from offshore borrow sites has traditionally been used for project renourishment, the use of oolitic aragonite or other carbonate sand from non-domestic sources may provide an effective alternative for future renourishment requirements.

Virtually unlimited supplies of beach-quality material are available in the Bahamas Bank, located 65 miles east of the project site, in the Turks and Caicos Islands located approximately 500 miles to the southeast, and possibly other locations. The proposed test fill will be constructed using aragonite from one of these sources. The purpose of the test fill, in addition to providing nourishment to an eroded portion of the Federal project along northern Miami Beach, is to evaluate the physical and environmental performance of aragonite on the beach erosion control project.

The proposed test fill site would be located along northern Miami Beach, and would extend along approximately one mile of shoreline which has been an erosional area since the project was constructed. The proposed site is located far from adjacent inlets, and no significant structures exist in this vicinity to disrupt the "natural" coastal processes. The total volume of the test fill is expected to be approximately 500,000 cubic yards. The currently proposed location for the test fill is between 65th and 80th Streets in Miami Beach (DNR monuments DNR-39 to DNR-44). The exact source of aragonite (or other non-domestic carbonate sand) for the test beach would be determined during the procurement process. Sand sources proposed by contractors would have to meet a set of generic and specifications and pass a screening process for sand characteristics and possible introduction of undesirable benthic organisms or other environmental impacts.

The different properties of the material being placed in the test fill will allow the sediment to be used as a natural tracer material, and data on longshore and cross-shore transport can be gained by studying the movement of this material. In order to evaluate the performance of the test fill, a monitoring program will be established. This monitoring program would consist of four areas of field data acquisition: physical surveys, sediment sampling and analysis, aerial photography, and wave data collection. The field data would be collected over a minimum 5-year period following project construction. The wave gage would be installed and activated prior to construction. Physical surveys, sediment samples, and aerial

photography would be taken immediately before and after project construction, and quarterly for the first year, semi-annually for the second year, and annually thereafter for the remainder of the 5-year monitoring period. Physical surveys, sediment samples, and aerial photography would therefore be taken a total of 11 times during the monitoring program, while the directional wave gauge would be operated continuously during the entire 5-year monitoring period.

In addition, environmental monitoring of the test fill would be performed. The environmental studies would focus mainly on the impacts of the non-native material on sea turtle nesting and benthic infaunal communities.

**Alternatives:** At this time, the only known alternative to performing the test beach fill is not performing the test or the no-action alternative.

**Issues:** The EIS will consider impacts on coral reefs and other hardbottom communities, endangered and threatened species, shore protection, water quality, aesthetics and recreation, fish and wildlife resources, cultural resources, energy conservation, socio-economic resources, and other impacts identified through scoping, public involvement, and interagency coordination.

**Scoping:** A copy of this notice will be sent to interested parties to initiate scoping. All parties are invited to participate in the scoping process by identifying any additional concerns on issues, studies needed, alternatives, procedures, and other matters related to the scoping process. At this time, there are no plans for a public scoping meeting.

**Public Involvement:** We invite the participation of affected Federal, state and local agencies, affected Indian tribes, and other interested private organizations and parties.

**Coordination:** The proposed action is being coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, with the FWS under the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and with the State Historic Preservation Officer. In addition, we have coordinated with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the dredging industry, certain foreign government representatives, academic experts, and other interests on this matter.

**Other Environmental Review and Consultation:** The proposed action would involve evaluation for compliance with guidelines pursuant to Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act;

application (to the State of Florida) for Water Quality Certification pursuant to Section 401 of the Clean Water Act; certification of state lands, easements, and rights of way; and determination of Coastal Zone Management Act consistency.

**Agency Role:** As the non-Federal sponsor and leading local expert; DERM will provide extensive information and assistance on the resources to be impacted, mitigation measures, and alternatives.

**DEIS Preparation:** It is estimated that the DEIS will be available to the public on or about October 9, 1998. We plan to post the DEIS on the environmental documents page of the Jacksonville District's web site. (<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/pd/env-doc.htm>.)

Dated: August 7, 1998.

**George M. Strain,**

*Acting Chief, Planning Division.*

[FR Doc. 98-22470 Filed 8-20-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Navy

#### Notice of Availability of Invention for Licensing; Government-Owned Invention

**AGENCY:** Department of the Navy, DOD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The following invention is assigned to the United States Government as represented by the Secretary of the Navy and is available for licensing by the Department of the Navy: U.S. Patent Application Ser. No. 08/940,043 entitled "Fiber-Reinforced Phthalonitrile Composite Cured With Low-Reactivity Aromatic Amine Curing Agent," Navy Case No. 78246.

**ADDRESSES:** Requests for copies of this patent application should be directed to the Office of Naval Research, ONR 00CC, Ballston Tower One, 800 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia 22217-5660, and must include the Navy Case number.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. R.J. Erickson, Staff Patent Attorney, Office of Naval Research, ONR 00CC, Ballston Tower One, 800 North Quincy Street, Arlington, Virginia 22217-5660, telephone (703) 696-4001.

(Authority: 35 U.S.C. 207, 37 CFR Part 404.)

Dated: August 12, 1998.

**Michael I. Quinn,**

*Commander, Judge Advocate General's Corps, U.S. Navy, Federal Register Liaison Officer.*

[FR Doc. 98-22473 Filed 8-20-98; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Pit Disassembly and Conversion Demonstration Environmental Assessment and Research and Development Activities

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Finding of no significant impact.

**SUMMARY:** An environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared to assess potential environmental impacts associated with a U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) proposed action to test an integrated pit disassembly and conversion process on a relatively small sample of pits and plutonium metal at the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in New Mexico. The proposed action would involve performing work in a series of interconnected gloveboxes using remote handling, automation, and computerized control systems to minimize operator exposure where possible, increase safety, and minimize the amount of waste generated by the process. Based on the analysis in the EA and considering comments received, DOE has determined that the proposed action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Therefore, the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required. The EA also discusses other on-going research and development activities, which have already been reviewed pursuant to NEPA, and which concern pit disassembly and conversion, potential mixed oxide (MOX) fuel fabrication, and immobilization of surplus plutonium.

**ADDRESSES AND FURTHER INFORMATION:** Single copies of the EA and further information concerning the proposed action are available from: Mr. G. Bert Stevenson, NEPA Compliance Officer, Office of Fissile Materials Disposition (MD-4), U.S. Department of Energy, PO Box 23786, Washington, DC 20026-3786, (202) 586-5368.

For further information regarding the DOE NEPA Process, contact: Ms. Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance, Office of Environment, Safety and Health, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW,

Washington, DC 20585, (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Purpose and Need

DOE needs to develop the capability to disassemble surplus plutonium pits which are sealed in metallic shells. (A pit is a nuclear weapons component.) In order to develop this capability in a timely manner, safety and operational design information must be obtained from the actual disassembly of up to 250 representative pits and the conversion of the recovered plutonium to plutonium metal ingots and plutonium dioxide. The resulting experience would be used to supplement information developed to support the design of a full-scale disassembly and conversion facility should DOE decide to construct such a facility in the *Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement* (SPD EIS) Record of Decision (ROD).

##### Background

DOE is implementing a long-term program to provide safe and secure storage of weapons-usable fissile materials, and to allow for the timely disposition of weapons-usable plutonium declared surplus to national security needs. The program's goal is to ensure that there is a high standard of security and accounting of these materials while in storage, and that the surplus plutonium is never used again in nuclear weapons.

In January 1997, DOE issued the ROD for the *Storage and Disposition of Weapons-Usable Fissile Materials Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Storage and Disposition Final PEIS)*. In the PEIS ROD, DOE announced a decision to pursue a strategy to dispose of surplus United States plutonium that allows for two separate approaches: (1) Immobilization of some (and potentially all) of the surplus plutonium; and (2) using some of the surplus plutonium as MOX fuel in existing commercial reactors. In that decision, DOE explained that the timing and extent to which either or both of the disposition approaches are ultimately deployed would depend in part on the follow-on SPD EIS, as well as technology development and research.

##### Proposed Action

In order to meet the purpose and need for this action, DOE proposes that an integrated Pit Disassembly and Conversion Demonstration take place at LANL's Plutonium Facility-4 in Technical Area-55. No new facilities are needed to support this demonstration; however, minor internal modifications