



News Release

**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Norfolk District

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Army military construction project focuses on flood damage reduction

Fort Monroe Seawall repair resumes

NORFOLK, VA – Norfolk District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a \$20 million contract Feb. 27 to Waterfront Marine Construction Inc., to complete work initiated in 2003 on the Fort Monroe Seawall Repair and Improvement Project. The construction project is expected to begin over the next several weeks, with completion of the seawall and related work in early summer of 2009.

The new seawall will be built in front of the existing structure to a uniform 9.5 foot elevation from its current average 7.5 foot elevation. The project repairs deficiencies and improves flood protection for Fort Monroe from a 5-year level – a storm that has a 20 percent chance of occurring in any given year – to a 25-year level, a storm that has a four percent chance of occurring in any given year. Hurricane Isabel in 2003 was estimated to be approximately a 40- to 50-year event. Its peak storm surge elevation at nearby Sewells Point was measured at 6.25 feet.

The Seawall project includes a new coated steel sheet-pile seawall with a reinforced concrete cap immediately on the water side of the existing seawall. Additional stone protection will be provided at the toe of the new seawall to protect it from wave erosion. New sidewalks, drainage improvements, an operable flood gate at the Engineer Pier, and other related site work are included. The seawall will extend from the existing concrete pier west of the Chamberlin Hotel to just beyond the Fishing Pier, located behind Battery Parrott on Fenwick Drive. This project will also include a terminal groin, a coastal engineering structure designed to prevent beach erosion; three breakwaters, and sand beach nourishment from the Fishing Pier northward for about 1,850 feet.

“During Hurricane Isabel, the storm surge caused significant damage to the seawall and there was major flooding across the post, including the area inside the moat,” said Project Manager Greg Hegge. “Initial work under this project began in the winter of 2003, immediately after authorization in the form of a supplemental appropriation bill passed by the Congress and signed into law by the President.”

After Hurricane Isabel passed, Norfolk District assisted the Fort Monroe Directorate of Public Works (DPW) with initial response activities and repairs. The rapid response for critical repairs as well as planning the long-term solutions were carefully orchestrated and executed by the Norfolk District, the Monroe DPW, and the 509th Dive Detachment (stationed at Fort Eustis), said Hegge.

MONROE SEAWALL

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Initial on-site work began in 2003. Concurrently, Norfolk District began a comprehensive Flood Evaluation and Protection Study, which was completed in May 2005 and formed the technical basis for this Seawall Repair project.

Unlike a traditional civil works flood damage reduction project, this military construction project provides the best attainable balance between function, environmental impact and cost based on funding approved by Congress. “While the Seawall Repair and Improvement project and related works will provide significant improvements over the existing flood protection system at Fort Monroe,” said Hegge, “there remains a flood hazard to the post, particularly from storms like Hurricane Isabel.”

The Seawall Repair and Improvement project was suspended by the U.S. Army in July 2005, when Fort Monroe was included in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) legislation. The project was reauthorized by the Office of the Secretary of Defense in November 2006.