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## Create New Application

*This electronic form is to be used for the submission of new projects only.* If you wish to submit additional information in support of an existing project, please contact the reviewer assigned to that project.

Before using this form, please understand that the information being requested is important to our review. Incomplete information may lead to delays in the review of your project. Please read all questions carefully and respond as completely as possible. For security purposes, *your ePIX session will timeout after 20 minutes of inactivity* and any unsaved changes will be discarded. To ensure that no information is lost, we recommend saving your application after the completion of each section. If you have questions concerning the completion of this application, please contact DHR staff at [ePIX@dhr.virginia.gov](mailto:ePIX@dhr.virginia.gov).

### SECTION I. CONTACT INFORMATION

Ms. Susan Miller  
803 Front Street  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
757-201-7008

Submitted By [susan.g.miller@usace.army.mil](mailto:susan.g.miller@usace.army.mil)

Please indicate what your role in this project is:

Applicant Role Employee of federal or state agency responsible for compliance

If Other, please specify

### SECTION II. GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/ Supplemental EA

Agency Project Number

Associated DHR File Number

Project Street Address

Independent Cities and/or Counties (multiple cities/counties are allowed):

City/County Name
Newport News (Ind. City)
Norfolk (Ind. City)
Virginia Beach (Ind. City)

Town/Locality, if applicable

## Agency Involvement

Please select one of the following options as they relate to the project you are submitting:

- My project involves a federal or state agency and requires review by DHR under the National Historic Preservation Act (Sections 106 or 110), Virginia Environmental Impact Reports Act or other provision of state or federal law.
- I am seeking Technical Assistance from DHR in the assessment of potential impacts of my project on historic resources (e.g. federal or state involvement anticipated, initial project scoping, local government proffer or ordinance).

It is important that you know the nature of the federal or state involvement in your project. Please note that there are a number of state-managed programs that are federally funded (e.g. Transportation Enhancement Grants, some recreational trail grant programs, and many DHCD programs). Understanding the involvement of the agency and the program is helpful for our review.

In some cases there are multiple agencies involved in a project. In these cases, there is generally a "lead" agency. In order to help clarify this, please list the agencies in the order of their involvement in the project. If, for example, there are two agencies providing funding, please provide the contact information for the primary source of federal funding first.

Please select the agency, relationship, contact and click the **Select** button:

Agency	Relationship
Virginia Port Authority	State Funded
Army Corps of Engineers	Federally Licensed

## SECTION III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION and CURRENT AND PAST LAND USE

We need to know as much as possible about the project that is being proposed as well as the current condition of the property. In the fields below, you will be required to provide descriptions that are no longer than 2000 characters. Additional and more detailed information can be uploaded and attached at the end of the application.

### Overview and existing conditions

Please provide a general description of the project.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. The Port of Virginia is the non-federal sponsor. An additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1) along the western portion of the Thimble Shoal Channel would be widened to accommodate two-way traffic of larger vessels. Dredge disposal would occur at existing facilities primarily offshore. If suitable, some dredge may be used for other betterments such as beach nourishment that would take into account potential effects to historic properties in separate Section 106 consultation. See attached project

Project Description description.

How many acres does the project encompass?

Number of Acres 871.31

Please describe the current condition and/or land use of the project area (e.g. paved parking lot, plowed field).

The existing Thimble Shoal Channel is a federal navigation channel located in the open waters of the Chesapeake Bay. Within the study area, the channel is approximately 1000 ft wide and -50 ft MLLW. 2018 It is currently being deepened to -56 ft MLLW, with a maximum -61 ft MLLW possible (see attached project description). This is per the Finding of No Significant Impact for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement (PA) that was executed to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA (DHR file 2016-0523). Proposed dredge disposal areas are existing facilities primarily

Current Condition offshore, as shown in the attached figures for the project description.

Please describe any previous modifications to the property, including ground disturbance.

The Thimble Shoal Channel in the study area has been previously dredged to 1000 ft wide plus associated slopes and -50 ft MLLW. It is currently being deepened to -56 ft MLLW with a maximum -61 ft MLLW possible. Dredge disposal will be primarily in existing offshore facilities that are

Previous Modifications previously disturbed, as shown in attached figures and discussed in attached project description.

### **Work involving buildings or structures**

Does the project involve the rehabilitation, addition to, alteration, or demolition of any building structure over 50 years of age?

Buildings Over 50 YearsNo

If yes, please describe the work that is proposed in detail. Current photographs of affected building or structure, architectural or engineering drawings, project specifications and maps may be uploaded at the end of the application.

Details

### **Work involving ground disturbance**

Is there any ground-disturbance that is part of this project?

Ground DisturbanceYes

If yes, describe the nature and horizontal extent of ground-disturbing activities, including construction, demolition, and other proposed disturbance. Plans, engineering drawings, and maps may be uploaded on the next page at the end of the application.

Dredging would widen a 5.1 statute mile section of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel 200 ft to either side of the channel, plus 3:1 slopes. It would taper moving east to rejoin the existing channel. The horizontal extent of the dredge disposal is not known, Extent of Activities but could occur in existing facilities that have been previously disturbed.

What is the depth of the ground disturbance? If there are several components to the project, such as new building, utility trenches, and parking facilities, provide the approximate depth of each component.

The maximum depth for the widening areas would be -61 ft MLLW. Depth of the disposed dredge is Depth not known, but would occur in existing disposal facilities that are previously disturbed.

How large is the area where ground-disturbing activities will take place? (in acres)

Area Size 871.31 (dredge areas)

### **SECTION IV. AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECT (APE)**

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) is defined as the geographic area or areas within which a project may directly or indirectly cause changes in the character or use of historic properties, if they exist. It is not necessary for an historic property to be present in order to define an APE.

An example of a direct effect is the demolition of an historic building while an indirect effect would be the alteration of an historic setting resulting from the construction of a communications tower or the introduction of noise as the result of the construction of factory. An area such as the footprint of a proposed building is obviously within the APE, but you must also consider visual effects on the property and the limits of all ground-disturbing activity. So, any project may have two APEs - one for direct effects and one for indirect effects.

Please see our guidance on [Defining Your APE](#) for more detailed information on defining direct and indirect APEs. If you are using [DHR's Data Sharing System](#), you should indicate the APE on the DSS map. For instructions on how to do this, consult the [DSS general use guidelines](#).

Please provide a brief summary of and justification for the APE and upload your APE map at the end of the application. The written boundary description must match the submitted APE map.

The archaeological APE is the 200 ft plus slopes widening along a 5.1 statute mile length of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The historic resources visual/noise APE is established as areas within 1 statute mile of the proposed Thimble Shoal Channel widening. The dredge disposal would occur in offshore existing facilities previously cleared for that APE purpose by the 2018 GRR/EA. See attached USGS figures with the archaeological APE shown.

## SECTION V. CONSULTING PARTIES AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The views of the public, Indian tribes and other consulting parties (e.g. local governments, local historical societies, affected property owners, etc.) that may have an interest in historic properties that may be affected by the project are essential to informed decision-making. In some cases, the public involvement necessary for other environmental reviews such as that under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) may be sufficient for the Section 106 process, but the manner in which the public is involved must reflect the nature and complexity of the proposed project and its effects on historic resources.

What consulting parties have you identified that have an interest in this project? Please describe your previous and future efforts to involve consulting parties.

Nine Native American governments, the Naval History and Heritage Command, and four cities closest to the undertaking were invited to participate as consulting parties. If any substantive historic preservation issues are raised in the consultation, the USACE will immediately notify the SHPO. See Consulting Parties the attached project description for details.

Please provide information on any previous or future efforts to involve the public, including public hearings, public notices, and other efforts.

A Supplemental Environmental Assessment is being prepared under NEPA that includes advertising the EA and its findings for public comment. The EA will be circulated to coordinating agencies for Public Involvement review and comment.

## SECTION VI. PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED HISTORIC RESOURCES

In order for this application to be considered complete, you must determine if there are any known historic resources in the APE and provide this information to us. This step is generally referred to as a DHR Archives Search. More information on how to acquire this information can be found in our guidance document [Obtaining an Archives Search](#).

Has any portion of the APE been previously surveyed for archaeological and/or architectural resources?

Surveys Yes

If yes, describe and provide the names of any reports that you are aware of.

A search of the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR) online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System and USACE records was completed on October 4, 2021 by persons meeting or exceeding the Secretary of the Interior Professional Qualifications per 36 CFR § 61. Phase I archaeological survey of the entire APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al., 2019). These reports are on file at DHR. Full references: Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221. Watts, Gordon. 2019. Submerged Cultural Resource Remote-Sensing Survey Thimble Shoal Channel Norfolk, Virginia. Volume 1: Interim Technical Report. Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc., Washington, NC. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801

Survey Reports Kensington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

Are there any previously recorded archaeological sites or architectural resources, including historic districts or battlefields within the APE?

Recorded Resources Yes

*You must upload in Section VIII of this application the Archives Search Map showing previously recorded resources in the APE and the DSS reports for all previously recorded resources.*

## SECTION VII. ADDITIONAL CONTACTS TO THE APPLICATION

Last Name	First Name	Organization
Miller	Susan	Army Corps of Engineers
Sinclair	Andrew	Virginia Port Authority

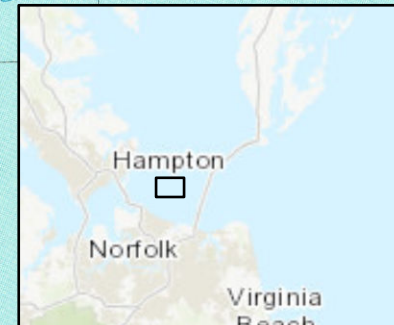
## SECTION VIII. UPLOAD FILES FOR THE APPLICATION

<b>Document Name</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>Note</b>
Other - site form	114-5471.pdf	
Other - site form	44NR0055.pdf	
Other - site form	44NR0054.pdf	
Other - site form	44NR0053.pdf	
Other - site form	44NR0051.pdf	
Map of APE	Norfolk Harbor Meeting Area 1 Figures.pdf	Project Area map, Map of APE (a and b), dredge disposal areas, previously completed Phase I Archaeological Survey, Known Sites, Potential Effects map.
Detailed project description	Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area 1 Descrip.pdf	Project Description



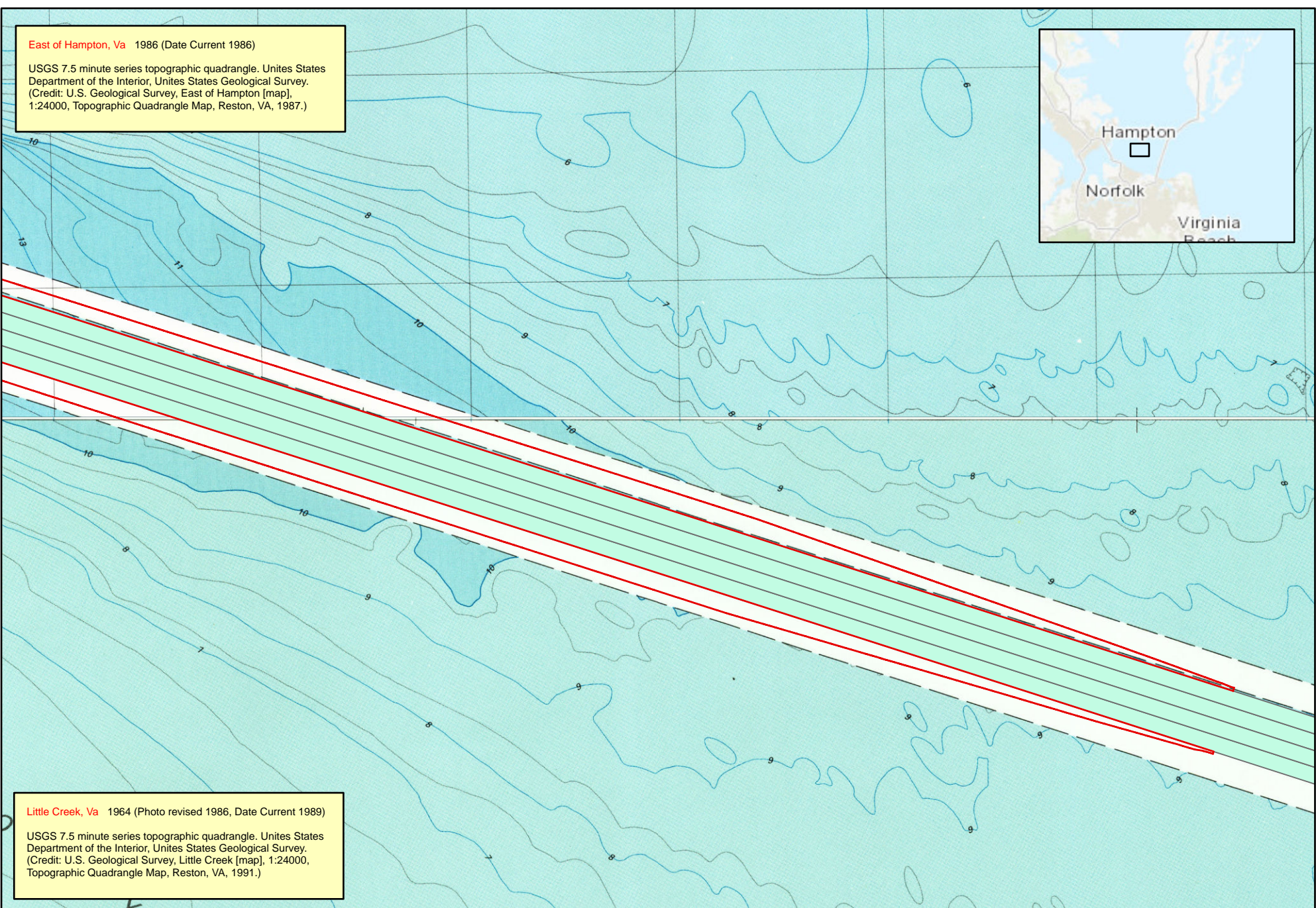
East of Hampton, Va 1986 (Date Current 1986)

USGS 7.5 minute series topographic quadrangle. Unites States Department of the Interior, Unites States Geological Survey. (Credit: U.S. Geological Survey, East of Hampton [map], 1:24000, Topographic Quadrangle Map, Reston, VA, 1987.)



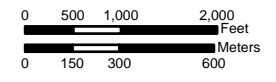
Little Creek, Va 1964 (Photo revised 1986, Date Current 1989)

USGS 7.5 minute series topographic quadrangle. Unites States Department of the Interior, Unites States Geological Survey. (Credit: U.S. Geological Survey, Little Creek [map], 1:24000, Topographic Quadrangle Map, Reston, VA, 1991.)



# Thimble Shoal Channel Meeting Area 1 Area of Potential Effects

— APE - Meeting Area 1



Map: Norfolk Harbor\_55'\_Project  
Developed By: Kevin White  
Date of Map: 10/6/2021

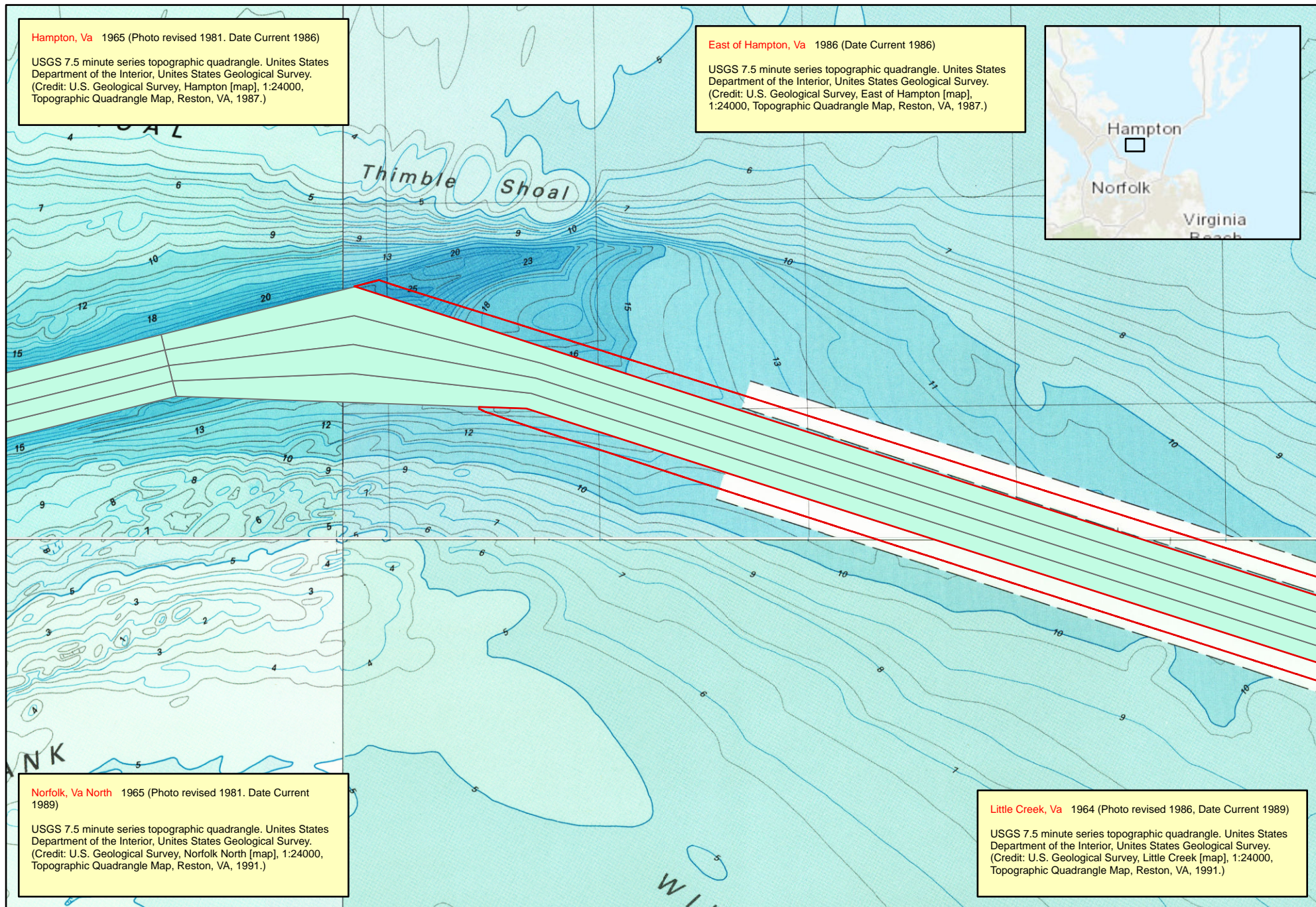
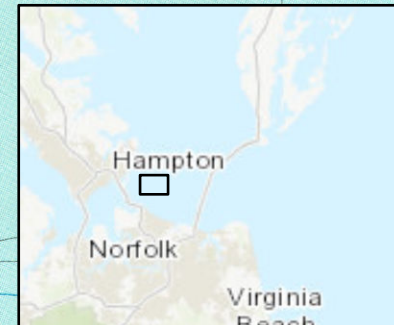


Hampton, Va 1965 (Photo revised 1981. Date Current 1986)

USGS 7.5 minute series topographic quadrangle. Unites States Department of the Interior, Unites States Geological Survey. (Credit: U.S. Geological Survey, Hampton [map], 1:24000, Topographic Quadrangle Map, Reston, VA, 1987.)

East of Hampton, Va 1986 (Date Current 1986)

USGS 7.5 minute series topographic quadrangle. Unites States Department of the Interior, Unites States Geological Survey. (Credit: U.S. Geological Survey, East of Hampton [map], 1:24000, Topographic Quadrangle Map, Reston, VA, 1987.)



Norfolk, Va North 1965 (Photo revised 1981. Date Current 1989)

USGS 7.5 minute series topographic quadrangle. Unites States Department of the Interior, Unites States Geological Survey. (Credit: U.S. Geological Survey, Norfolk North [map], 1:24000, Topographic Quadrangle Map, Reston, VA, 1991.)

Little Creek, Va 1964 (Photo revised 1986, Date Current 1989)

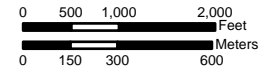
USGS 7.5 minute series topographic quadrangle. Unites States Department of the Interior, Unites States Geological Survey. (Credit: U.S. Geological Survey, Little Creek [map], 1:24000, Topographic Quadrangle Map, Reston, VA, 1991.)



US Army Corps of Engineers  
Norfolk District

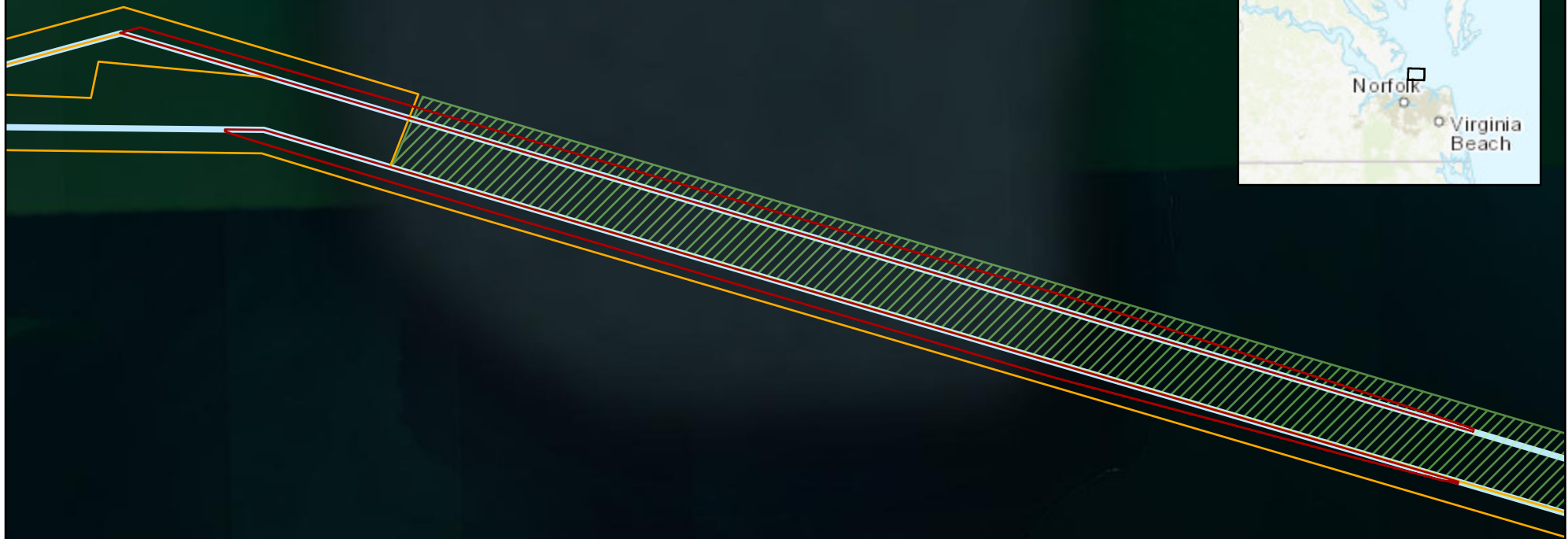
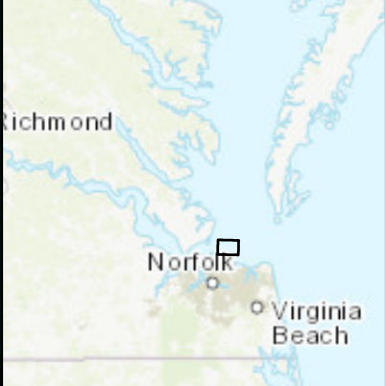
# Thimble Shoal Channel Meeting Area 1 Area of Potential Effects

— APE - Meeting Area 1



Map: Norfolk Harbor\_55'\_Project  
Developed By: Kevin White  
Date of Map: 10/6/2021





# Previous Archaeological Surveys

- Thimble Shoal Channel
- TAR 2018 Survey
- Archaeological Survey Area VB-092
- Meeting Area 1 (61ft Daylight)

0 1,000 2,000 4,000  
Feet

Map: NorfolkHarbor\_55'\_Project  
Developed By: Kevin White  
Date of Map: 10/5/2021





**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011**

October 19, 2021

**SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia**

Mr. Wayne Adkins, First Assistant Chief  
Chickahominy Indian Tribe  
8200 Lott Cary Road  
Providence Forge, VA 23140

Dear Mr. Adkins:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the

proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Chickahominy Indian Tribe regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is



also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

MILLER.SUSAN.GLE  
NETTE.1364984355

Digitally signed by  
MILLER.SUSAN.GLENETTE.136498  
4355  
Date: 2021.10.19 14:03:25 -04'00'

Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

Watts, Gordon. 2019. Submerged Cultural Resource Remote-Sensing Survey Thimble Shoal Channel Norfolk, Virginia. Volume 1: Interim Technical Report. Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc., Washington, NC. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

# **NORFOLK HARBOR NAVIGATION IMPROVEMENTS MEETING AREA VALIDATION STUDY/SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, AND NEED**

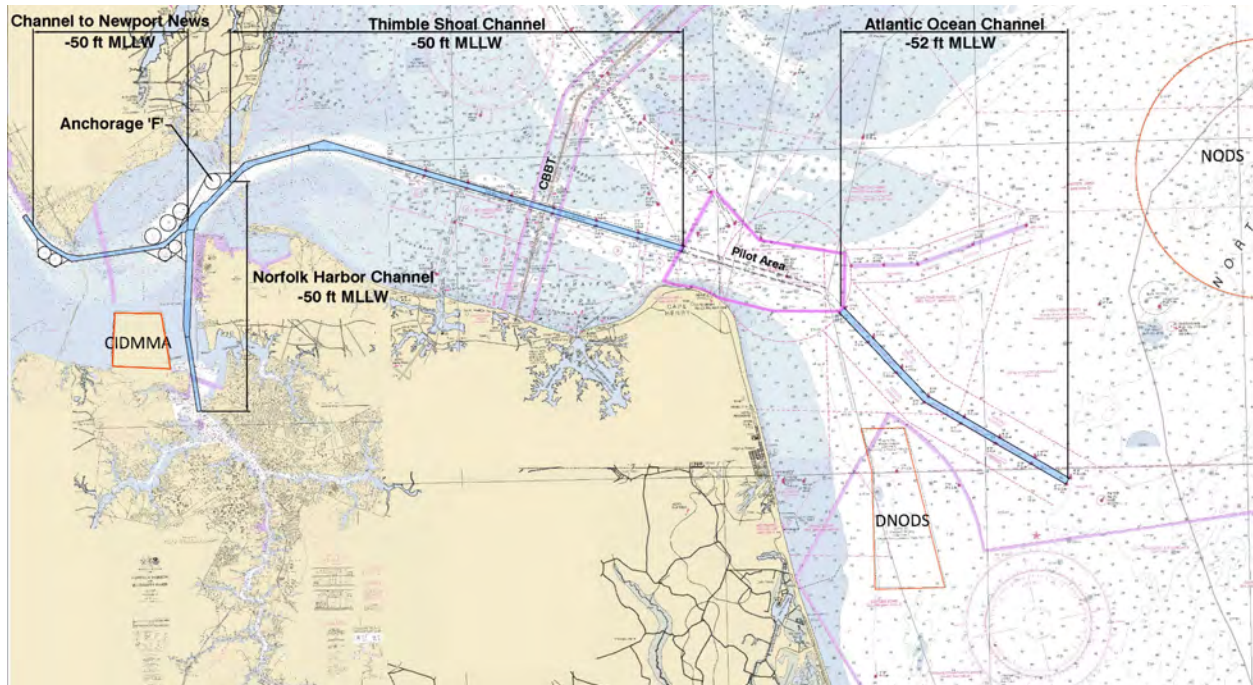
The Norfolk Harbor and Channels consists of a network of multiple channel and anchorage elements that provide deep draft access from the Atlantic Ocean into the Port of Virginia. The harbor in which the Port of Virginia is located covers a 25 square-mile area and serves a variety of private marine terminals, state-owned marine terminals, and federal maritime/military facilities located within the cities of Norfolk, Newport News, Portsmouth, Chesapeake, and Hampton in southeastern Virginia.

The purpose of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study is to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. The need for this project arises from inefficiencies currently experienced by commercial vessels within the existing Norfolk Harbor and Channels as industry adoption toward larger vessels has necessitated periodic establishment of one-way traffic within channels that normally support two-way traffic.

Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated. Compared to the forecast used during for the 2018 Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA), ocean carriers have more rapidly transitioned to the ultra large container vessels than the forecast predicted, warranting a reassessment of the of the Meeting Area 1. The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of a widened area of the Thimble Shoal Channels that is approximately located in a 5.1 mile (statute mile)-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel.

## **2.0 PROJECT SCOPE**

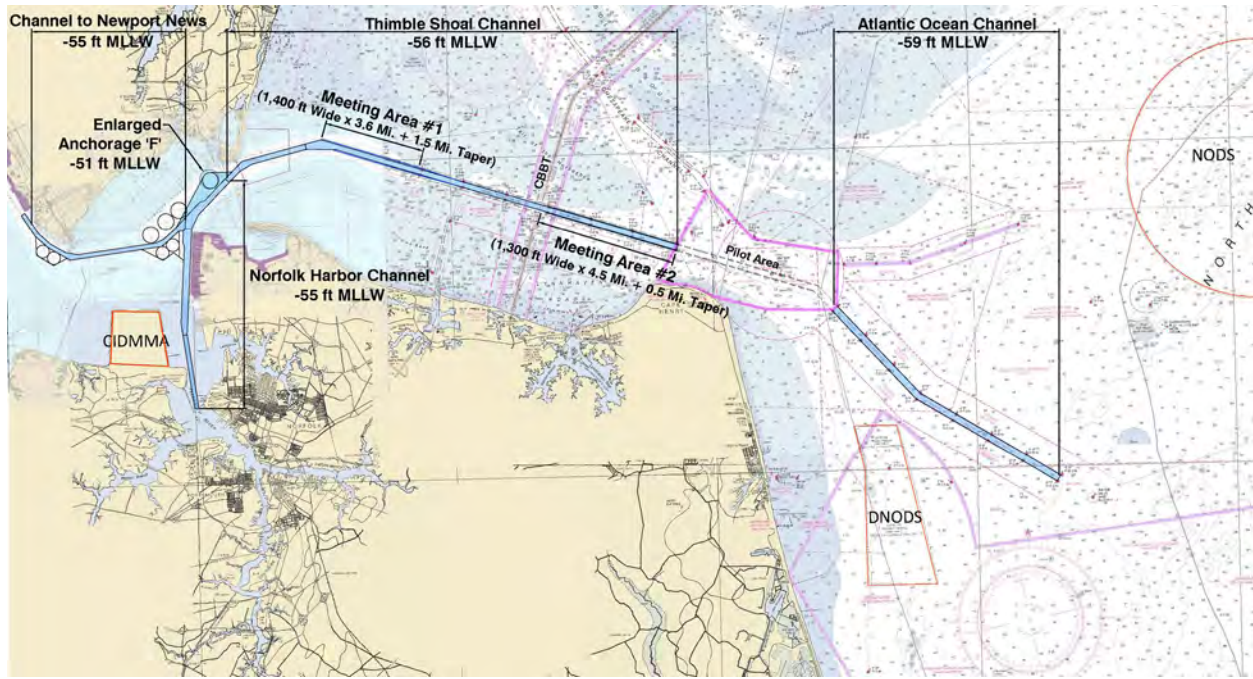
The Norfolk Harbor Project is a single purpose deep draft navigation project that consists of a network of federally improved channels extending from the Atlantic Ocean, through the Chesapeake Bay, and into the Port of Virginia (**Figure 1**).



**Figure 1.** The existing Norfolk Harbor and Channels from the Atlantic Ocean Channel to the Lamberts Bend. Dredged material placement/disposal sites are also depicted. CIDMMA = Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area; DNODS = Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site; NODS = Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site

Originally authorized in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986 and as further defined by the 2018 Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA, the authorized and approved project includes a system of two-way, full-width channels to a depth of 55 feet in the Norfolk Harbor, 56 feet in the Thimble Shoal Channels, 55 feet in the Newport News Channel and 59 feet in the Atlantic Ocean Channel (**Figure 2**)





**Figure 2.** Norfolk Harbor and Channels Project Segments with approved project depths. Miles provided in statute miles.

Since the original authorization by WRDA, the project has been constructed in separable elements based on the needs of the port community and the financial capability of the nonfederal sponsor, the Virginia Port Authority, agent of the Commonwealth of Virginia:

- The 50 Foot Outbound Element was completed in 1989
- The 50 Foot Anchorage was completed in 1999.
- The 50 Foot Inbound Element was completed in 2007.
- The deepening of the Thimble Shoal Channel to 56 feet as described in the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA is currently underway.

The approved project also includes Meeting Area 2, a widening of the Thimble Shoal Channel east of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel to 1,300 feet, widening of Anchorage F to 3,620 feet and the associated modification of the Approach Area, and deepening of Anchorage F to 51 feet. The approved project includes disposal of dredged material at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site (DNODS), the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site (NODS), and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area (CIDMMA).

The scope of this validation study is limited to a reevaluation of the construction and maintenance of Meeting Area 1 and disposal of material dredged from the Meeting Area 1. This meeting area was partially evaluated in the approved Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA but was not included in the Recommended Plan (Preferred Alternative); only Meeting Area 2 was included in the approved Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. However, Meeting Area 1 is being reevaluated due to ongoing concerns about the inefficiencies experienced by commercial vessels and due to changes in the fleet forecast and associated economic benefits of the project.

## **2.1 CURRENT NORFOLK HARBOR PROJECT DREDGING AND DREDGED MATERIAL PLACEMENT/DISPOSAL PRACTICES**

### **Atlantic Ocean Channel**

The Atlantic Ocean Channel, off the eastern coast of Virginia (**Figure 2**), was authorized by the WRDA of 1986. The WRDA authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to construct the Atlantic Ocean Channel which consists of a channel 11.1 miles long, 1,300 feet wide, and 57 feet deep<sup>1</sup>. As part of the 50-foot inbound construction effort in 2006, the channel was deepened to provide for a required depth and width of 52 feet and 1,300 feet, respectively.

The Atlantic Ocean Channel is part of the Port of Virginia and Baltimore system of channels, and is the segment providing access for all ships calling on port facilities, naval bases, and shipyards in the Hampton Roads, York River and Baltimore areas. All commercial tonnage entering and leaving the Ports of Virginia and Baltimore pass through this channel. The channel is currently maintained to a full width and a required depth of 52 feet to enable loaded colliers, container ships and military vessels to transit the channel with ship drafts as great as 47 feet (45 ft with no tide restrictions).

Material is typically dredged via hopper dredge from this channel. Dredged material is placed at DNODS. Dredged material is largely fine sand that has also been beneficially used for the Virginia Beach Hurricane Protection project and the Craney Island Eastern Expansion (CIEE) Project. Due to periodic use as a sand source, maintenance dredging has not been required.

Per the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA, deepening of the Atlantic Ocean Channel to a required depth of approximately 59 feet was approved.

### **Thimble Shoal Channel**

The Thimble Shoal Channel is located in the southern part of the Chesapeake Bay, just off the shoreline of Norfolk and Virginia Beach, east of the CIDMMA (**Figure 2**). This project was originally authorized by the River and Harbor Act of 1917. The original authorized channel dimensions were 13.4 miles long, 1,000 feet wide, between the 55 foot contours, to a depth of 55 feet. The channel has been maintained to a required depth of 50 feet. Thimble Shoal Channel extends from the deep water to the east of Hampton Roads to the deep water at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay.

Material dredging is typically via hopper dredging. Dredged material is placed at the DNODS. The sediments of Thimble Shoal Channel to the west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel are predominantly clays and silts, for which beneficial use projects have not been identified. In contrast, sediments in the eastern portion of channel are largely fine to medium-grained sand and the segment is a common source of material for beach nourishment projects.

Per the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA, deepening of the Thimble Shoal Channel to a required depth of approximately 56 feet was approved. This also included approval of Meeting Area 2 which consists of a widening of the Thimble Shoal Channel east of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel to approximately 1,300 feet. Construction of the Thimble Shoal Channel to a depth of 56 feet is currently underway but not yet completed.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that depths described in this document are provided in Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW).

Per the WRDA 2018, additional widening of the Thimble Shoal Channel was authorized as long as the modifications do not exceed the maximum 902 cost limitations of the previously approved project. Therefore, we are reassessing the need for an additional meeting area, Meeting Area 1 in the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental EA.

### **Channel to Newport News and Anchorages**

The Channel to Newport News and associated Newport News anchorages segment of the Norfolk Harbor Project (**Figure 2**) is authorized to 55 feet deep by 800 feet wide from Norfolk Harbor Channel in Hampton Roads to Newport News and the Newport News Anchorages. However, the channel has been maintained to a required depth of 50 feet. Material dredging is via hydraulic and/or mechanical dredging methods. Material dredged from this area is typically placed at the CIDMMA.

Per the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA, deepening of the Newport News Channel was approved to a required depth of approximately 55 feet.

### **Norfolk Harbor Channel - Sewells Point to Lamberts Bend and Norfolk Harbor Anchorages**

The Sewells Point to Lamberts Bend reach of the Norfolk Harbor Project is located in Norfolk between Sewells Point and Lamberts Bend (**Figure 2**). This segment of the project is approximately eight miles long and varies in width between 800 feet to 1,200 feet. This reach also consists of: Anchorage F, Sewells Point East Anchorage (includes the Naval Maneuvering Area and Approach Areas), Sewells Point West Anchorage and (Approach Area), Anchorage G, and all approach areas.

The authorized project dimensions for this reach include a channel 55 feet deep and 1,200 feet wide from that depth in Hampton Roads to a point approximately 6.0 miles upstream from the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel; thence 55 feet deep and 800 feet wide to Lambert Point. The Sewells Point to Lamberts Bend Channel is currently maintained to a required depth of 50 feet from the 55-foot contour in Hampton Roads (near the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel) to Lamberts Point.

Material is dredged from this area via hydraulic cutterhead pipeline dredge and/or a clamshell dredge. Material dredged from this area is then placed at the CIDMMA. The consistency of the dredged material in the Sewells Point to Lamberts Bend Channel is primarily silt and clay for which beneficial use projects have not been identified.

Per the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA, deepening of the Norfolk Harbor and Channel as well as the Norfolk Harbor and Channels Entrance Area was approved to a required depth of approximately 55 feet. Per the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA, the following was also approved:

- Widening Anchorage F to approximately 3,620 feet and associated modifications of the Approach Area; and
- Deepening Anchorage F to a required depth of approximately 51 feet.

### **Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site**

The DNODS is located three nautical miles east of Virginia Beach (Figure 1). The DNODS area was first utilized as an ocean placement site in 1967. This ocean placement site was designated by the administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in March of 1988. The DNODS runs parallel to Virginia Beach, covering about eight square nautical miles. Water depths at DNODS vary between 31 to 49 feet deep. The remaining DNODS capacity is estimated to be about 63 million cubic yards. The site is the primary dredged material disposal site for the Thimble Shoal Channel, Cape Henry Channel, and Atlantic Ocean Channel. Only material that meets ocean dumping criteria will be disposed at this site.

### **Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site**

The NODS (Figure 1) was officially designated as an ocean placement site in 1993, pursuant to Section 102 (c) of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (as amended, 33 U.S.C. 1401 *et seq*). This ocean placement site was designated by the administrator of the USEPA in December of 1986. The site is authorized to receive new work and maintenance dredged material from the lower Chesapeake Bay. This site is also authorized to receive appropriate dredged material from the Thimble Shoal, Cape Henry, Atlantic Ocean Channel, Hampton Roads, and York Spit channels. An Environmental Impact Statement, titled: "Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Designation of an Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site Located Offshore Norfolk Virginia" was finalized in November of 1992.

The center of the NODS is located 17 nautical miles from Virginia Beach. Water depths near the center of the site vary between 65 to 80 feet. Up to approximately 250 million cubic yard of dredged material from dredging projects (public and private) may be disposed at the site over the next 49 years. The quantity of material to be placed at the site depends on the quality of the dredged material. As with DNODS, only material that meets ocean dumping criteria will be disposed at this site.

### **Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area**

The CIDMMA is located in the City of Portsmouth in the eastern portion of the Atlantic Coastal Plain and adjacent to the confluence of the James River, Elizabeth River, and Nansemond River, and is in close proximity to the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. The CIDMMA is a 2,500 acre confined disposal facility in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. The CIDMMA was authorized by the River and Harbor Act of 1946 and constructed from 1956-1958. The federally owned facility is operated by USACE and is used by private interests, local municipalities, federal and Commonwealth of Virginia government agencies for the disposal of dredged material from Norfolk Harbor and its adjacent waterways.

Dredged material is received in two different ways at the CIDMMA. It is either pumped directly into one of three upland containment cells or it is deposited in the rehandling basin and then pumped into the facility. The Craney Island Rehandling Basin is a large deeper area off the southeast shoreline of the island that can be filled with material and then dredged once filled. Since it began operation, the CIDMMA has received, on average, 3.5 million cubic yards of dredged material per year. However, there have been several years when it has received more than 10 million cubic yards.

At present, the USACE estimates that the facility has a realistic timeline lasting until 2030. However, this may change as newer technologies and/or new management techniques are employed at the facility.



## **2.2 DREDGING AND DREDGED MATERIAL PLACEMENT PRACTICES FOR THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE, MEETING AREA 1**

The Preferred Alternative for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental EA consists of constructing and maintaining the Meeting Area 1 including disposal of the dredged material. The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of a widened area of the Thimble Shoal Channels that is approximately located in a 5.1 mile (statute mile)-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel (**Figure 2**). The channel widening would consist of dredging 200 additional feet along the north and south channel edges of the existing 1,000 ft wide Thimble Shoal Channel to create a 1,400 ft wide meeting area with a required depth of 56 feet to accommodate two way traffic for larger vessels. Existing conditions and geotechnical analyses of the area indicate side slopes of approximately 3H:1V are typical. As final design of the Preferred Alternative is ongoing, features may vary slightly prior to construction.

Dredged material placement/disposal could occur at the CIDMMA, DNODS, the NODS, and/or upland disposal sites for this project (if needed). It is anticipated that the DNODS placement would likely be the preferred dredged material placement option. While dredged material will be evaluated for beneficial use opportunities, the characteristics of the dredged material in vicinity of the Meeting Area 1 segment historically have not been suitable for typical projects in the region (which are generally seeking more sandier material). Portions of the dredged areas may be suitable for beneficial use projects and beneficial use projects would be coordinated separately from this project. General operation and maintenance of the CIDMMA will continue with or without implementation of the Preferred Alternative.

One important consideration in the impact analysis is that the actual dredged depths can be deeper than the required channel depths. Required depths do not necessarily indicate the maximum, potential dredging depths which may also include Advanced Maintenance Dredging (1 foot), Paid Allowable Overdepth Dredging (2 feet), and Non-Pay Allowable Overdepth dredging (2 feet) for the Norfolk Harbor Project. We refer to required depths throughout the text but in terms of the environmental impact analysis (affect determination), the estimated maximum, potential impact depths and dredging volumes will be used. For Meeting Area 1, a maximum depth of 61 feet was used to reflect these factors.

Dredges used for construction and maintenance of the Preferred Alternative would include hopper dredges, hydraulic cutterhead dredges, as well as mechanical dredges. Channel bed leveling equipment may also be used to flatten the channel bottom following dredging.

In the future, with or without implementation of the Preferred Alternative, vessel calls are anticipated to increase as compared to current conditions. However, when comparing the future with or without the project, there would be less vessel calls in the future with project as compared to the future without project because the existing, larger ships in the fleet would carry more goods, thus requiring fewer vessel calls to transport the same amount of goods.



**Figure 3.** Meeting Areas at the Thimble Shoal. The previous Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA Recommended Plan (Preferred Alternative) only included the Meeting Area 2. With the Norfolk Harbor Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Meeting Area 1 is being proposed as an additional meeting area.

Table 1 summarizes the approximate maximum dredging volumes, and durations with implementation of the Preferred Alternative, Meeting Area 1 based on a maximum depth of 61 feet.

Table 1 – Summary of Meeting Area 1 dredging volumes and durations

Segment	Required Depth (feet, MLLW)	Estimated Construction					Estimated Maintenance (50 Years)		Estimated Construction and Maintenance (50 Years)	
		Estimated Maximum Depth (feet, MLLW)	Estimated Maximum Dredging Volume- all allowable and nonpay (cubic yards)	Estimated Maximum Dredging Duration (months)	Estimated Total Land Disturbance - Maximum (square feet)	Change/Delta (increase) in Land Disturbance - Maximum (square feet)	Estimated 50 Year Total of Maintenance Volume (cubic yards)	Estimated 50 Year Total - Maintenance Dredging Duration (months)	Estimated Maximum Volume-Total Allowable and Non-pay + Maintenance Volume (cubic yards)	Estimated Maximum Construction + 50-year Maintenance Dredging Duration (months)
Thimble Shoal Channel Meeting Area 1 (5.1 miles that are 200 feet north and south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel)	-56	-61	6,170,000	18 <sup>A</sup>	11,863,428	11,863,428	2,607,750	36	8,777,750	54

<sup>A</sup>18 months is active dredging duration based on one large hopper dredge being assigned to the project. Duration of work will extend across at least one 2.5 month-long voluntary seasonal dredging restriction that could extend the total duration to approximately 21 months.

### 2.3 PROJECT SCHEDULE AND DREDGING FREQUENCIES

Construction is anticipated to begin in approximately 2023 but is contingent on funding availability. Construction of the Meeting Area 1 will take approximately two years to complete. Maintenance dredging is anticipated to occur approximately every three to four years; after the deepening, this may accelerate to every two to three years.

Maintenance dredging may occur on an accelerated schedule based on shoaling conditions in the channel resulting from storm events or a delayed schedule depending on funding availability. Maintenance dredging will take approximately three months to complete and will be contingent on the type and size of the dredge used. Maintenance dredging may occur at any time of the year, however, to the maximum practical extent possible, dredging using a hopper dredge will not occur during September 1 - November 15 to reduce potential impacts to sea turtles. Dredging operations may be active 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, though two to three times per day, a hopper dredge will suspend dredging to transit to the disposal area, which represents a round trip transit time of 4 to 5 hours per trip.

## **2.4 FUTURE CONDITIONS**

The number of future vessel calls to Norfolk Harbor is projected to increase over time due to the projected increase in future cargo tonnage under both without and with-project conditions. The projected amount of future cargo would not be affected by implementation of the project, but the number of projected future vessel calls would be fewer under the with-project condition. Under the with-project condition, the deeper channel would allow some vessels to load more cargo (increasing vessel draft deeper than the existing 47-foot restriction) and would allow for the use of larger vessels.

Currently and under without-project conditions, the largest vessels using Norfolk Harbor require a one-way traffic restriction when transiting. This restriction causes some vessels to be delayed (either waiting at the dock or waiting out at sea) while the large vessel is transiting the channel. After the large vessel has finished its transit, the other vessels can enter the channel. Under with project conditions with a wider channel provided by Meeting Area 1, the one-way restriction would be reduced, resulting in fewer vessel delays.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Dr. Wenona Haire, THPO  
Catawba Indian Nation  
1536 Tom Steven Road  
Rock Hill, South Carolina 29730

Dear Dr. Haire:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the

proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Catawba Indian Nation regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is



also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

Encl  
Project Description

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

Watts, Gordon. 2019. Submerged Cultural Resource Remote-Sensing Survey Thimble Shoal Channel Norfolk, Virginia. Volume 1: Interim Technical Report. Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc., Washington, NC. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Ms. Erin Paden, Director  
Historic Preservation  
Delaware Nation  
P.O. Box 825  
Anadarko, OK 73005

Dear Ms. Paden:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the

proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Delaware Nation regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is

also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

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Encl  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Ms. Susan Bachor, Archaeologist  
Delaware Tribe of Indians  
126 University Circle  
Stroud Hall Room 437  
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301

Dear Ms. Bachor:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the

proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Delaware Tribe of Indians regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is

also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

MILLER.SUSAN.GL  
ENETTE.13649843  
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Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

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Project Description

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

Watts, Gordon. 2019. Submerged Cultural Resource Remote-Sensing Survey Thimble Shoal Channel Norfolk, Virginia. Volume 1: Interim Technical Report. Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc., Washington, NC. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.





DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Mr. Adrian Compton  
Tribal Administrator  
Monacan Indian Nation  
P.O. Box 960  
Amherst, Virginia 24521

Dear Mr. Compton:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the

proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Monacan Indian Nation regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is

also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Ms. Shaleigh Howells  
Cultural Resource Director  
& Museum Director  
Pamunkey Indian Tribe  
1054 Pocahontas Trail  
King William, Virginia 23086-2114

Dear Ms. Howells:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106



consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Pamunkey Indian Tribe regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the

Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at [Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil](mailto:Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil). We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
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NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Mr. Keith Anderson  
Environmental Project  
Director  
Nansemond Indian Nation  
1001 Pembroke Lane  
Suffolk, Virginia 23434

Dear Mr. Anderson:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106

consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Nansemond Indian Nation regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the



Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011**

October 19, 2021

**SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia**

Mr. Woodie Walker, Director  
Environmental Services  
Rappahannock Tribe, Inc.  
5036 Indian Neck Road  
Indian Neck, Virginia 23148

Dear Mr. Walker:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the

proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Rappahannock Tribe, Inc. regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is

also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist



**References**

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803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Mr. Reggie Tupponce, Tribal Administrator  
Upper Mattaponi Tribe  
13476 King William Road  
King William, VA 23086

Dear Mr. Tupponce:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

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proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Upper Mattaponi Tribe regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

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Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is

also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

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Encl  
Project Description



**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 27, 2021

SUBJECT: Tribal Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Ms. Jessica Phillips, Environmental Officer  
Chickahominy Indian Tribe  
– Eastern Division  
2895 Mt Pleasant Road  
Providence Forge, VA 23140

Dear Ms. Phillips:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated.

The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, tribal coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared for the

proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1 mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is requesting to initiate government-to-government consultation with the Chickahominy Indian Tribe – Eastern Division regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR') online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is

also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact Ms. Susan Miller with any questions or concerns by email at Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil. We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 24, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 20, 2021

SUBJECT: Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Mr. Terry O'Neill, Director  
City of Hampton  
Community Development  
22 Lincoln Street  
3<sup>Rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Floors  
Hampton, Virginia 23669

Dear Mr. O'Neill:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated. The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, consulting party coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared

for the proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1-mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is inviting you to be a consulting party in the Section 106 process regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR) online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact me with any questions or concerns by email at [Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil](mailto:Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil). We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

## **References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 20, 2021

SUBJECT: Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Ms. Sheila McCallister, Director  
City of Newport News  
Planning Division  
City Hall  
2400 Washington Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Flr  
Newport News, Virginia 23607

Dear Ms. McCallister:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated. The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, consulting party coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared

for the proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1-mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is inviting you to be a consulting party in the Section 106 process regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

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Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

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The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact me with any questions or concerns by email at [Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil](mailto:Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil). We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 20, 2021

SUBJECT: Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Ms. Susan McBride, Principal Planner  
City of Norfolk  
Historic Preservation  
City Hall Building  
810 Union Street, Suite 508  
Norfolk, Virginia 23510

Dear Ms. McBride:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated. The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

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for the proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

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The USACE is inviting you to be a consulting party in the Section 106 process regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

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The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact me with any questions or concerns by email at [Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil](mailto:Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil). We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

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Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 20, 2021

SUBJECT: Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Mr. Mark Reed, Historic Preservation Planner  
City of Virginia Beach  
Planning & Community Development  
2875 Sabre Street, Suite 500  
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23452

Dear Mr. Reed:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated. The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

Previously, consulting party coordination was conducted for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements General Reevaluation Report/Environmental Assessment (GRR/EA) and a Programmatic Agreement was prepared to ensure compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA. A Finding of No Significant Impact was previously signed for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA. Additional, individual NHPA, Section 106 consultation and an integrated report/Supplemental EA is being prepared

for the proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1-mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

The USACE is inviting you to be a consulting party in the Section 106 process regarding the proposed Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement. As part of the project consultation, the USACE has identified the area of potential effects (APE) for the undertaking to encompass the channel widening and associated slopes for Meeting Area 1, as well as dredged material placement at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site, the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site, and the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. Potential visual and noise impacts to historic properties could occur within a 1-mile radius of the proposed Meeting Area 1 dredging designated the visual/noise APE.

Cultural resource surveys of the APE have been completed as well as assessments of NRHP eligibility and finding of effects to historic properties. The dredged material placement sites were previously evaluated in the past project as part of the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements GRR/EA.

Based on the Department of Historic Resources' (DHR) online Virginia Cultural Resources Information System searched on October 4, 2021, and USACE records, a Phase I archaeological survey of the entire Meeting Area 1 APE was completed in 2001 by Panamerican Maritime, LLC (Tuttle, 2001) and in 2018 by Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc. (Watts et al. 2019). These underwater remote sensing surveys identified four areas as potential shipwrecks: 44NR0051, 44NR0053, 44NR0054 and 44NR0055. The NRHP eligibility of the four sites is unevaluated; all four sites and their buffers are assumed to require avoidance, negating the need for further diver investigation to establish their NRHP eligibility. In addition, the eastern extent of the previously recorded DHR Site No. 114-5471 Civil War Battle of Hampton Roads (Battle of the Ironclads) that is potentially NRHP-eligible under Criterion A is in the APE. This area is also noted by the American Battlefield Protection Program as potentially eligible for the NRHP.

Sites 44NR0051 and NR0053 are well outside the proposed dredging area and slopes for Meeting Area 1 and would not be affected. Site 44NR0054 is situated within the existing navigation channel but is deeper than the proposed dredging at -64.2 to -65.4 ft MLLW. Also, the proposed dredging would occur in the 200 ft widening area to either side of the Thimble Shoal Channel for Meeting Area 1, and thus 44NR0054 would be avoided. Site 44NR0055 would be avoided as its buffer is over 40 ft south of the proposed dredge and slope area of Meeting Area 1. A standard specification requiring avoidance at the 44NR0054 and 44NR0055 locations (including buffers) would be included in the advertised construction plans to assist meeting the avoidance commitment. Although dredging for Meeting Area 1 could have a visual impact to site 114-5471 with the dredge and equipment, it would be temporary and short-term, and result in no adverse effects.

Based on the above, the proposed Meeting Area 1 undertaking would be anticipated to result in no adverse effect to historic properties per 36 CFR 800.5(b).

Should any cultural resources be discovered during construction or maintenance, all work within the immediate area will stop until the resources can be ascertained, and appropriate parties including tribal governments notified.

The USACE requests any comments on this proposed undertaking and the proposed no adverse effect determination. Please contact me with any questions or concerns by email at [Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil](mailto:Susan.G.Miller@usace.army.mil). We would request any comments to this undertaking by November 19, 2021. Thank you.

Sincerely,

MILLER.SUSAN.GLE  
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Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

**References**

Tuttle, Michael. 2001. Archaeological Remote Sensing of Select Channels, Chesapeake Bay and Norfolk Harbor, Virginia. Panamerican Consultants, Inc., Memphis, TN. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.

Watts, Gordon. 2019. Submerged Cultural Resource Remote-Sensing Survey Thimble Shoal Channel Norfolk, Virginia. Volume 1: Interim Technical Report. Tidewater Atlantic Research, Inc., Washington, NC. On file at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, 2801 Kennington Avenue, Richmond, Virginia 23221.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
NORFOLK DISTRICT  
FORT NORFOLK  
803 FRONT STREET  
NORFOLK VA 23510-1011

October 20, 2021

SUBJECT: Consultation Request for Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Meeting Area Validation Study/Supplemental Environmental Assessment, Hampton Roads, Virginia

Dr. Robert Neyland, Branch Head  
Naval History & Heritage Command  
Underwater Archaeology Branch  
Washington Navy Yard  
805 Kidder Breese St., SE  
Washington DC, 20374-5060

Dear Dr. Neyland:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District (USACE), is proposing an additional meeting area for the Norfolk Harbor Navigation Improvements Project to improve the operational efficiency of commercial vessels currently using and projected to use the Norfolk Harbor and Channels. Updated forecasted fleet inventory and economic data is now available which warrants the reevaluation of expanding the existing, approved meeting area (Meeting Area 2) with an additional meeting area (Meeting Area 1), where two-way traffic of larger vessels can be accommodated. The USACE is the lead federal agency for purposes of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (54 U.S. Code 306108) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S. Code 55) compliance; the Virginia Port Authority is the nonfederal sponsor for the project. The USACE has determined that the proposed project (Meeting Area 1 and associated dredged material placement sites) constitutes an undertaking as defined in 36 CFR 800.16(y). The proposed action is also subject to the NEPA and its implementing regulations, 40 CFR 1500-1508. An integrated validation report/Supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) is being prepared for the validation study.

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for the proposed new meeting area (Meeting Area 1) and dredged material placement to address the expanded project scope.

The proposed Meeting Area 1 would consist of widening the existing Thimble Shoal Channel along an approximately 5.1-mile-long area west of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel. The widening would consist of approximately 200 additional feet located north of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel and an additional 200 feet south of the existing Thimble Shoal Channel. The dredged material would be anticipated to be disposed of at the Dam Neck Ocean Disposal Site but could also potentially be disposed at the Norfolk Ocean Disposal Site or the Craney Island Dredged Material Management Area. The undertaking would consist of initial construction as well as future maintenance activities. A project description of the proposed Meeting Area 1 Preferred Alternative is provided in Enclosure 1.

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Encl  
Project Description

Susan G. Miller, M.A., RPA  
Norfolk District Archaeologist

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