



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS, ANTILLES OFFICE  
400 FERNANDEZ JUNCOS AVENUE  
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO 00901-3299

Antilles Regulatory Section

## PUBLIC NOTICE JUL 22 2004

Notice of Availability  
of the  
Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)  
for the  
Port of the Americas

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:** In accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Jacksonville District, announces the availability of a Regulatory Program Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the proposed Port of the Americas. On July 9, 2004, the Notice of Availability was published in the Federal Register (Volume 69, Number 131, Page 41476).

**LOCATION:** Municipality of Ponce, Puerto Rico

**SUMMARY:** The Port of the Americas Authority is proposing the development of a transshipment port (Port of the Americas) in Ponce, Puerto Rico. The applicant's proposal entails the construction of a deep draft port in the Ponce Harbor that would simultaneously harbor two Post-Panamax vessels (very large vessels that cannot go through the Panama Channel) to handle 1.3 million twenty equivalent units (TEU) of cargo transshipment per year. The project includes the proposal to construct an inland navigation channel of approximately 3,000 feet in length and 600 feet wide in average, with its entrance between existing piers 7 and 8. The inland channel, which would be mostly located within a 45-acre upland area, would require the excavation of 3.8 million of cubic meters of material. Also, an area of approximately 59 acres of mangroves and salt flats adjacent to the proposed inland channel would be filled for the construction of an area that would be used for the handling and storage of containers and cargo. The deepening of the existing navigation entrance channel and turning basin to a depth of 50 feet is also proposed. The deepening involves the removal of approximately 5.5 million cubic meters of dredged material that would be disposed at the EPA's approved Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site (ODMDS) located south of Ponce. The proposed project also includes the development of approximately 132 acres of upland areas adjacent to the north of the project site for value-added activities.

For this proposed project, the Corps prepared a Federal Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. During the scoping process and preparation of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), several alternatives, general and environmental issues of relevance associated with the development of the Port of the Americas were identified. The preferred applicant's project site alternative was selected after careful consideration of the project sites alternatives evaluated in the scoping process and public review for the preparation of the Draft EIS, and the Supplemental Draft EIS. The alternatives considered, including the no-action alternatives are; the San Juan Harbor, Boca Vieja Bay at Bayamón, Tortuguero, Manatí, Arecibo Bay, Aguadilla Bay, Mayagüez Bay, Guánica Bay, Matilde River at Ponce, Jobos Bay, Las Mareas Harbor, Yabucoa Harbor, Fajardo Bay, and Roosevelt Roads Naval facility at Ceiba. Each alternative was evaluated in terms of a list of several physical, infrastructure, and environmental factors that resulted in the selection of the preferred alternative. The following issues were evaluated in detail as part of this FEIS: Fish and Wildlife Resources; Marine Resources/ Special Aquatic Sites; Essential Fish Habitat; Threatened or Endangered Species; Ecologically Sensitive Areas; Wetlands, Coastal Zone; Flooding, Water and Sediment Quality; Air Quality; Cultural Resources; Socio-Economic Impacts; Hazardous, Toxic, and Radioactive Wastes; Dredging and Disposal of Dredged Material; Navigation; Infrastructure; Marine Currents; and Noise. The FEIS evaluates the potential direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental consequences.

**COMMENTS:** The Corps hereby solicits comments on the FEIS from the public, Federal agencies, State and local agencies and officials, and any other interested parties. Comments on the FEIS shall be as specific as possible, and may address either the adequacy of the statement or the merits of the alternatives discussed or both. The Corps will assess and consider the comments received in the Record of Decision.

**SUBMISSION OF COMMENTS:** Comments must be submitted in writing to the following address:

Chief, Antilles Regulatory Section  
ATTENTION: Port of the Americas FEIS  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
400 Fernández Juncos Avenue  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901

Comments must be received by August 9, 2004.

**AVAILABILITY OF THE FEIS:** Copies of the FEIS will be available for inspection at the locations identified below:

- a. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Antilles Regulatory Section  
Stop 7 ½, 400 Fernández Juncos Avenue  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901  
Point of Contact: Ms. Angela Muñoz or Mr. José Rosario  
Telephone 787-729-6905/6944
  
- b. Autoridad para el Financiamiento de la Infraestructura  
235 Arterial Hostos Avenue, Suite 1601  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-1454  
Point of contact: Mrs. Myriam Piazza  
Telephone 787-763-5757, Ext. 1606

Copies of the FEIS document may be obtained by contacting:

Autoridad para el Financiamiento de la Infraestructura  
235 Arterial Hostos Avenue, Suite 1601  
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-1454  
Point of contact: Mrs. Myriam Piazza  
Telephone 787-763-5757, Ext. 1606

The applicant has provided copies of the FEIS to the following institutions:

1. Library, Interamerican University, Metropolitan Campus,  
Mrs. Rosa Pimentel, Librarian
  
2. University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus  
Mr. Ramón A. Budet, Librarian
  
3. Metropolitan University  
Mrs. María de los Angeles Lugo, Librarian
  
3. Polytechnic University  
Mrs. Maritza Grajales, Librarian
  
4. Interamerican University, San Germán Campus  
Mrs. Doris Asencio, Librarian

5. Interamerican University, Industrial Park Turpó  
Mrs. Brunilda Figueroa, Librarian

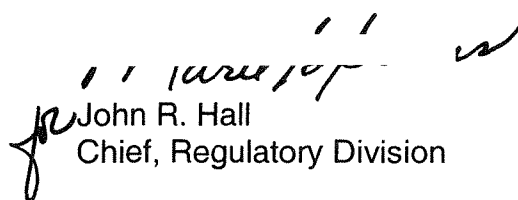
6. Catholic University  
Mrs. Esther Irizarry, Librarian

In the near future, the FEIS will be posted in the Corps' website at the following address:

[http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/permit/hot\\_topics/POAEIS/content.htm](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/permit/hot_topics/POAEIS/content.htm)

**REQUEST FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS:** As part of the public involvement process, any person may request a public hearing. The request must be made in writing within the established comment period and must state the specific reason(s) for requesting the public hearing.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. José E. Rosario, (787) 729-6905/6944, extension 3061, facsimile (787) 729-6906, or email at [jose.e.rosario-fabregas@saj02.usace.army.mil](mailto:jose.e.rosario-fabregas@saj02.usace.army.mil)

  
John R. Hall  
Chief, Regulatory Division