

1. Administrative Details

Proposal Name: Port San Luis Harbor Feasibility Study

by Agency: Port San Luis Harbor District

Locations: CA

Date Submitted: 09/22/2015

Confirmation Number: da167757-9ec2-4cde-8ca3-859074dcfa1b

Supporting Documents

File Name	Date Uploaded
WRDA 2013 Request - Capps.pdf	09/22/2015
Dredging 2015 USACE Drew B.pdf	09/22/2015
SLOCOG 2014RTP Harbors.pdf	09/22/2015

2. Provide the name of the primary sponsor and all non-Federal interests that have contributed or are expected to contribute toward the non-Federal share of the proposed feasibility study or modification.

Sponsor	Letter of Support
Port San Luis Harbor District (Primary)	Consistent with Title VII of WRRDA, Port San Luis Harbor District is requesting authorization for a study to determine the federal interest in operation and maintenance dredging to ensure adequate depth of the channel thus ensuring its navigability.

3. State if this proposal is for a feasibility study, a modification to an authorized USACE feasibility study or a modification to an authorized USACE project. If it is a proposal for a modification, provide the authorized water resources development feasibility study or project name.

Feasibility Study

4. Clearly articulate the specific project purpose(s) of the proposed study or modification. Demonstrate that the proposal is related to USACE mission and authorities and specifically address why additional or new authorization is needed.

The specific project is a feasibility study is to ensure a navigable channel, supported by the USACE navigation mission, to support significant requirements of Port San Luis as an integral part of the Southern California system of ports. Port San Luis also continues to offload economic, commercial fishing and recreational opportunities from larger Southern California ports to ensure they are able to focus on significant large scale economic activity to the benefit of the Nation. Specifically, Port San Luis has Homeland Security requirements to protect launch requirements for federal agencies executing emergency response; it supports the efficient operation of US Coast Guard Station Morro Bay requirements; ensures Port San Luis serves the needs of the local and regional fishing fleet based in Port San Luis and Morro Bay; impact the benefit of recreation boating; serves as an economic driver for the regional and local economy; and is adjacent to the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant wherein Port San Luis is required to maintain an emergency preparedness and response role. Lastly, the resurgent commercial fishing industry and related economic activity and job creation elements are essential to a thriving harbor and denote a clear federal interest in maintenance of navigation channels and launch facilities within the harbor at Port San Luis. Operation and maintenance at the Port also allows for beneficial reuse of materials, and supports certain economic justice issues faced by the Port in executing its mission and role in the economy.

5. To the extent practicable, provide an estimate of the total cost, and the Federal and non-Federal share of those costs, of the proposed study and, separately, an estimate of the cost of construction or modification.

	Federal	Non-Federal	Total
Study	\$3,000,000	\$0	\$3,000,000
Construction	\$0	\$0	\$0

Explanation (if necessary)

Port San Luis is an integral part of the Southern California system of ports, supporting resiliency plans, homeland security requirements, and smaller scale economic and recreational opportunities that allow larger Southern California ports to focus critical resources on significant large scale economic activity that benefits the nation, the state and the region. It is critical to study the feasibility of operation and maintenance dredging to ensure the ability of the Port to maintain its role in this critical California system that generates a majority of the funding source for the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund. Additionally, operation and maintenance dredging addresses significant resiliency requirements given its strategic location, supports homeland security requirements, and would allow for beneficial reuse of dredged materials.

6. To the extent practicable, describe the anticipated monetary and nonmonetary benefits of the proposal including benefits to the protection of human life and property; improvement to transportation; the national economy; the environment; or the national security interests of the United States.

The specific project is a proposed study to ensure a navigable channel, consistent with the USACE navigation mission, to support significant requirements of Port San Luis as an integral part of the Southern California system of ports. Port San Luis will be able to support economic growth if it is maintained, and continue to support the lesser economic and recreational opportunities that allow larger Southern California ports to focus on significant large scale economic activity. Specifically, Port San Luis has Homeland Security requirements to protect launch requirements for federal agencies executing emergency response, it supports the efficient operation of US Coast Guard Station Morro Bay requirements; ensures Port San Luis serves the needs of the local and regional fishing fleet based in Port San Luis and Morro Bay, addresses the needs of boaters, serves as an economic driver for the regional and local economy; and maintains access of vessels to launch facilities as pre-emergency preparation and post emergency response and rescue. Also an additional critical consideration is the Port's role in regional resiliency and emergency preparedness and response, particularly given its adjacency to the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and the Port's commitment to a resurgent commercial fishing industry bringing forward economic activity.

7. Does local support exist? If ‘Yes’, describe the local support for the proposal.

Yes

Local Support Description

The study has long-time support from the Congressional Delegation, to include House and Senate representatives as well as Port officials and local stakeholders. It was anticipated that in previous funding cycles a Reconnaissance study would be initiated by the Corps for this purpose, supported by Congress and the Corps, but regrettably funding issues to include sequestration precluded advancement. Given the contributions to the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund originating in Southern California, and increased funding for the Corps of Engineers from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund, Port San Luis and its stake holders are hopeful this Southern California project will finally advance.

8. Does the primary sponsor named in (2.) above have the financial ability to provide for the required cost share?

Yes

Primary Sponsor Letter of Support

(As uploaded)

Dredging 2015 USACE Drew B.pdf



DREDGING IN SAN LUIS OBISPO BAY
FOR
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE
AND FOR
COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY:

AUTHORIZATION FOR STUDY OF A
FEDERAL NAVIGATION CHANNEL

For more information:

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September 2015

Dredging in San Luis Obispo Bay

Consistent with Title VII of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014, Port San Luis Harbor District requests authorization for a study to determine the extent and depth of a navigable channel within Port San Luis.

San Luis Obispo Bay, when measured southerly from Point San Luis to Point Sal, a distance of about 18 miles, comprises approximately 67.5 sq. miles of ocean. Seven miles north-west of the point, PG&E operates the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant. At Point San Luis a federal breakwater protects Port San Luis from the prevailing northwesterly storm and wave action.



To the north of Point San Luis, inside the bay and in the lee of the breakwater, Port San Luis Harbor District operates two launch facilities.

Constant shoaling in of these launch facilities impacts the ability of public safety agencies' to prepare for and respond to emergencies; affects the efficiency of the adjacent U.S. Coast Guard Station Morro Bay's maintenance operations; limits the ability of the Port San Luis Boatyard to efficiently serve the needs of the local commercial fishing fleet, based both in Morro Bay and Port San Luis; and impacts regional recreational boating, a key economic driver of the area's economy.

It is essential to maintain access of vessels to launch facilities, both as pre-emergency preparation and post-emergency response and rescue.



Port San Luis Harbor has in place permits to remove up to 250,000 cubic yards (c.y.) of sand annually, but, utilizing limited internal resources, moves approximately 25,000 c.y. annually. This activity begins in March, after the majority of the southerly storms has passed and continues for several months, depending on weather, storm and swell activity. During the remainder of the year, the sand gradually returns, decreasing the viability of the harbor's launch facilities to the point, by February, of complete inoperability.

More importantly, the ability of Port San Luis to prepare for or respond after an emergency is compromised.



While commercial fishing and recreation are parts of the overall economic engine that drives this region, the Harbor Patrol is a significant component of regional public safety, security and emergency management functions and works closely with:

- Office of Emergency Services on FEMA monitored drills related to the adjacent Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, with
 - U.S. Coast Guard Station Morro Bay on off-shore search and rescue
 - U.S. Coast Guard Station Morro Bay on enforcement of the security perimeter in the waters adjacent to the power plant.

Adjacency to the nuclear power plant and the District's role in emergency preparedness and response, the resurgent commercial fishing industry, and the economic activity and jobs associated with a thriving harbor all denote a clear federal interest in maintenance of navigable channels and launch facilities within the harbor at Port San Luis.

Additional Proposal Information

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SLOCOG 2014RTP Harbors.pdf

Harbors

There are three harbors in the region: Port San Luis, Morro Bay, and San Simeon. They support a moderate but important amount of commercial fishing and recreational boating. There are no major changes anticipated as it relates to the harbor infrastructure. This plan update will continue to place emphasis on maintaining multi-modal access to ports and port facilities by advocating sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian amenities.

The biggest change is expected to occur at Port San Luis if the Harbor Terrace development project advances. The Harbor Terrace site could accommodate a mix of activities, with emphasis on coastal-related and visitor-serving uses. Anticipated uses include a range of overnight accommodations such as camping, RV camping, small-scale hotel, and motel units, complementary retail service areas, trails, parks and open space. In addition, coastal-dependent uses are anticipated including: the maintenance, improvement of fishing and boating storage space, improvement of harbor offices, plus landscaping, and drainage improvements. The development of the Regional Coastal Sedimentation Management Plan (RCSMP) may lead to improved harbor operations at both Port San Luis and Morro Bay, especially if the anticipated implementation component is available in future years.

Likewise, the Morro Bay Harbor is likewise not expecting any major changes and this plan update will continue its emphasis on maintaining and improving multi-modal access by advocating transit services, sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian amenities in Morro Bay. A key improvement is the extension of the Harborwalk north across Morro Creek, and enhanced connection of the Embarcadero to downtown. Other harbor improvements being considered over the next five to seven years may be marine repair facilities (boatyard), maritime museum, and a modernized marine aquarium. With the recent closing of the Morro Bay Power Plant to power generation (in 2014), the future of this large waterfront property will become an important issue in the future of the Morro Bay.

The three harbors in the region are used to support a moderate amount of commercial fishing and primarily serve recreational boating. Harbor plans have been adopted for all three harbors. While each of the three harbors affords various levels of support for the commercial fishing industry; the Port San Luis and Morro Bay harbors provide docking, mooring, and processing facilities, while the San Simeon harbor functions as a marginal shelter during adverse weather conditions.

There are no general cargo or passenger ship terminals in the region. Commercial fishing activity is centered at Morro Bay and Port San Luis; however, this activity has been severely constrained in recent years due primarily to limitations brought about by the general decline in the fisheries along the West Coast. From a low point in 2006-2007, fisheries in both Morro Bay and Port San Luis have experienced a significant recovery, with Morro Bay increasing both total volume and catch value or "ex-vessel value" (EVV) and Port San Luis increasing in EVV.

Morro Bay Harbor is a natural bay in which an artificial harbor was built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during World War II to serve as a Navy training base. After the war, the property and improvements were turned over to the County of San Luis Obispo, which were subsequently turned over to the City of Morro Bay upon incorporation in 1964.

The entire Morro Bay waterfront remains state-owned property managed in trust by the City of Morro Bay as an enterprise fund to the benefit of its owners – the people. Morro Bay Harbor is the only all-weather harbor for small commercial and recreational boats between Monterey and Santa Barbara. Morro Bay Harbor's major landmark, Morro Rock, was surrounded by water before the Corps of Engineers built a breakwater and road across the harbor. Morro Bay Harbor was home to an abalone fishing industry that peaked in 1957 before over-fishing began to decrease the catch. Morro Bay Harbor was a relatively busy fishing port where both commercial and sport fishers brought in sole, halibut, rockfish, and albacore.

Sport fishing is now an important part of the local economy. There are also oyster farms in the shallow areas of the back bay. Some portions of Morro Bay are a national and state bird sanctuary and a state wildlife refuge. In addition, Morro Bay is declared as a California Marine Reserve by the State and is one of 28 federally-designated national estuaries. While the commercial fishing industry has not returned to its peaks of the 1990s, total commercial fishing revenue in Morro Bay has increased from below \$2 million in 2007, to \$7.4 million in 2011¹, and commercial fishing remains one of the backbones of the local economy.

The Port San Luis Harbor District was formed in 1954 to improve, develop, operate, and maintain the harbor located in San Luis Obispo Bay. The district boundaries were established at the time of formation and incorporate the two southerly supervisorial districts that existed at that time. The harbor area, including the Point San Luis Lighthouse, is about 70 acres of land with 600 acres of submerged land.

The California Coastal Act declared that the ports of the State of California constitute one of the state's primary economic and coastal resources and are an essential element of the national maritime industries (including recreational). As a result, the Harbor District has been required to provide non-enterprise coastal-dependent visitor-serving and recreation uses.

Although Port San Luis once performed pure harbor enterprise functions, it now has expanded to provide many public-serving (non-enterprise) activities including: public fishing, public beaches, camping and recreation, two public/commercial piers, boat launch facilities and boat moorings, land storage of boats and gear, charter boat service, boat yard repair facilities, services and facilities in support of the commercial fishing industry (fuel, ice, storage, etc.), harbor patrol and lifeguards.

In 1975, the Harbor District purchased the 26 acres known now as Harbor Terrace. Recent land acquisitions have increased this to a total of 32 acres. This site is the location of a planned visitor serving development that will provide camping; an innovative agreement with the State Coastal Conservancy is responsible for the current application for a coastal development permit and associated EIR for this project. As the popularity of Avila Beach increases, the ability of the public to enjoy the facilities and the coast is impacted by a shortage of parking. This will be alleviated by the inclusion, in the Harbor Terrace development, of 48,000 square feet of general public parking

In 1984, the State and County gave the Avila State Beach and Pier properties to the Harbor District. Avila Beach is a very popular beach in the region and it contains many amenities and services that the Harbor District provides to the public. These amenities or services include: public restrooms, maintenance of the beach and buildings, maintenance of the 1,630-foot Avila Pier, utility costs, lifeguard and security services and general public parking. Parking in Avila Beach is at a premium especially during the summer months. This can be alleviated by enhanced public transit, coordination of parking management efforts between the Harbor District and the County, and paid street parking.

The Harford Pier, which is a commercial and public access pier, has been designated a national historic structure by the California State Historic Preservation Office and the Harbor District is working to preserve and restore the pier. The pier is the terminus of Avila Beach Drive and the (planned) multi-use bike and pedestrian path between the community of Avila Beach and Port San Luis.

As in Morro Bay, commercial fishing has rebounded in Port San Luis. According to the recently completed Port San Luis Commercial Fisheries Economic Impact Report, August 2013 (Lisa Wise Consulting), this port exceeded all other ports in California for landings of certain high value rockfish, and total EVV has increased approximately 75 percent since 2005, although still only 33 percent of total EVV in 1995.

The Port San Luis Harbor District faces a number of challenges in order to fully participate in its role as a part of California's system of interconnected ports and harbors that make up the 'maritime highway':

1. The federal breakwater that protects the harbor is in need of repair; preliminary estimates suggest this may cost upward of \$3.5 million for the most deteriorated central section of the breakwater.
2. The ability of security and public safety vessels (Harbor Patrol and US Coast Guard), commercial fishing boats and transiting and resident recreational vessels to haul out or launch is severely impacted by the accumulation of sand in the harbor in quantities beyond the limited capability of the Harbor District to dredge effectively.

As Avila's popularity increases, demands on the Harbor Patrol as a supplemental resource to the SLO County Sheriff's Office, the California Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Coast Guard Morro Bay increases.

In addition to its regular duties, the Harbor Patrol assists the US Coast Guard in offshore search and rescue and enforcement of the one mile marine exclusion zone around Diablo Canyon Power Plant, the SLO County Sheriff's Office and CHP in law enforcement, the California Department of Fish and Game in enforcement of fishing regulations and Cal FIRE in fire protection and shore-based search and rescue.

Policies: Harbors

- Harbors 1. Protect, maintain and improve safe multimodal access to Morro Bay and Port San Luis Harbors.
- Harbors 2. Support efforts to secure funding for breakwater and pier rehabilitation and maintenance and other access improvements in both Morro Bay and Port San Luis.
- Harbors 3. Support efforts of the City of Morro Bay, the County of San Luis Obispo, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and all affected agencies to ensure that the channel between the Midway Marina and the main channel of Morro Bay remains open, and is maintained in a condition allowing free passage of commercial and recreational boats.
- Harbors 4. Support efforts of Port San Luis Harbor District, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and all affected agencies to ensure that a federal navigation channel is authorized and maintained in a condition allowing full use of the harbor's support facilities by safety, security, commercial and recreational vessels.

Strategies: Harbors

- Harbors 1. Monitor the need for major harbor facilities in the region.
- Harbors 2. Support legislation and local efforts to eliminate restrictions on cruise ship travel by foreign flag vessels between American ports.
- Harbors 3. Work with local and regional jurisdictions to protect and provide adequate onshore and offshore harbor improvements and access to recreational and coastal dependent commercial activities.
- Harbors 4. Encourage applicable jurisdictions to protect and provide additional support facilities for the commercial fishing industry at Morro Bay and Port San Luis.

Additional Proposal Information

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WRDA 2013 Request - Capps.pdf

LOIS CAPPS
23RD DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

2231 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0522
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www.capps.house.gov

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

June 25, 2013

DISTRICT OFFICES:

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The Honorable Bill Shuster
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Shuster and Ranking Member Rahall:

I am writing to you regarding the upcoming reauthorization of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and would like to request your support for language requiring the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to maintain in the maximum feasible operational capacity at all ports and harbors adjacent to nuclear facilities.

These ports and harbors, while key contributors to their local economies, also play a significant role in regional public safety, security, and emergency management, especially those in close proximity to nuclear facilities. Access to this crucial infrastructure, however, is often limited due to inadequate resources and dredging.

For example, Port San Luis in my Congressional district works closely with the Office of Emergency Services on FEMA monitored drills related to the adjacent Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and with the U.S. Coast Guard on off-shore search and rescue and enforcement of the security perimeter in the waters adjacent to the power plant. Our situation is not unique. Nuclear power stations along the Gulf of Mexico coastline in Texas and Louisiana, as well as along the Atlantic coastline in Florida, North Carolina, and Massachusetts are in similar situations.

Port San Luis currently uses its own fees for dredging, but these funds are woefully insufficient to adequately dredge and maintain the harbor. Dredging begins in March and continues for several months, but the sand gradually returns and renders the harbor's launch facilities inoperable by February. As a result, if land based evacuation from the community or the nuclear power plant were infeasible or if the delivery of essential supplies and equipment to the nuclear plant by land were impossible, water based response would be both simultaneously essential and impossible during certain parts of the year.

For these, and other reasons, I ask that you include the following language in the 2013 reauthorization of WRDA:

“Require the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to maintain in the maximum feasible operational capacity at all nuclear facility adjacent ports and harbors. Require that nuclear adjacent ports and harbors are maintained as integral and essential components of emergency preparedness and response to enable effective pre- or post-disaster evacuation, and pre- or post-disaster personnel, equipment and materials management.”

There is a clear federal interest in maintaining navigable channels and launch facilities within these nuclear adjacent ports and harbors to ensure public health and safety. According to staff analysis, there are 12 communities across the country, in Congressional districts represented by both Republicans and Democrats, that could benefit from this language. For these critical harbors around the country, a regular dredge cycle would improve safety and marine access, which is critical in the event of an emergency at the nearby nuclear facility.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. Your support is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Aaron Shapiro at 5-3601.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lois Capps". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress