



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
CIVIL WORKS  
108 ARMY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0108

NOV 16 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE U.S. ARMY CORPS  
OF ENGINEERS

SUBJECT: Implementation Guidance for Section 1204 of the Water Resources  
Development Act of 2016 (WRDA 2016), South Atlantic Coastal Study

1. Section 1204 of WRDA 2016 authorizes the Secretary to conduct a comprehensive coastal study within the geographic boundaries of the South Atlantic Division (SAD) to (1) identify the risks and vulnerabilities of those areas to increased hurricane and storm damage as a result of sea level rise; (2) recommend measures to address the vulnerabilities; and (3) develop a long-term strategy addressing increased hurricane and storm damages that result from rising sea levels and identifying opportunities to enhance resiliency, increase sustainability, and lower risks in populated areas, areas of concentrated economic development, and areas with vulnerable environmental resources. The section also requires the Secretary to report to Congress within four years after enactment of WRDA 2016 with specific and detailed recommendations to address those risks and vulnerabilities. Section 1204 of WRDA 2016 is enclosed.
2. The comprehensive study will be conducted in accordance with ER 1105-2-100 and other planning guidance applicable to watershed assessments and will be cost shared 75% federal and 25% non-federal. The normal budget process will be followed when requesting funds to initiate the comprehensive study.
3. Subject to the availability of funds, the SAD Commander may enter into a cost-sharing agreement for the study with one or more qualified non-Federal sponsors. The agreement shall be based on the model agreement for watershed assessments with approval for all deviations necessary to reflect the study's specific authorization delegated to the SAD Commander.
4. The geographic extent of the study shall include the three distinct coastal regions within SAD's area of responsibility: The Atlantic Coast, Gulf Coast, and those areas in the Caribbean to include Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) under the SAD's Civil Works Area of Responsibility. The study shall model the study after the North Atlantic Coast Comprehensive Study (NACCS) conducted by the North Atlantic Division (NAD), leveraging tools and processes where practicable and with applicable lessons learned applied. Data shall be evaluated consistent with the NACCS to the maximum extent practicable so that consistent standards can be applied between NAD and SAD. The comprehensive study will be undertaken in accordance with existing

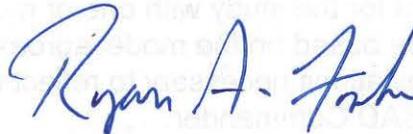
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Civil Works policies and guidance, and incorporate CW transformation planning principles to the maximum extent practicable. The study shall include a framework for identifying flood and coastal flood risk reduction measures and opportunities for multi-agency action, planning level cost estimates, a summary of how sea level rise and climate change might affect risk reduction strategies, identification of benefits and impacts that might be associated with different risk reduction measures, an inventory of interagency tools and resources, identification of activities and areas warranting further analysis, identification of further study and design efforts that might be warranted, and the identification of institutional and other barriers to providing comprehensive protection to affected coastal areas. The study will conclude with a report that describes the results of a long-term strategy and actions to address the risks and vulnerabilities due to increased hurricane and storm damage as a result of sea level rise. Additionally, the study shall include recommendations, as appropriate, on whether to revisit the scopes and purposes of previously authorized construction projects. The study shall be conducted in coordination with other federal agencies and applicable state, local and tribal officials to ensure that all information, observations and recommendations are consistent with other plans to be developed.

5. The district will establish a Project Delivery Team (PDT) and members of this team shall prepare a report, with integrated NEPA documents as appropriate, summarizing vulnerabilities and recommendations for the study area. SAD is responsible for quality assurance and overall performance management.

6. No later than four years after the date of enactment of this Act, subject to the availability of funds, the SAD shall submit the report to the Headquarters South Atlantic Division Regional Integration Team for Headquarters review and processing to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works (ASA(CW)) for transmittal to Congress

7. Questions regarding this study may be directed to Stacey Brown, Deputy Chief, South Atlantic Regional Integration Team, at (202) 761-4106 or [Stacey.E.Brown@usace.army.mil](mailto:Stacey.E.Brown@usace.army.mil)



Ryan A. Fisher  
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army  
(Civil Works)

Encl

SUBJECT: Implementation Guidance for Section 1204 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2016 (WRDA 2016), South Atlantic Coastal Study

**SEC. 1204. SOUTH ATLANTIC COASTAL STUDY.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall conduct a study of the coastal areas located within the geographical boundaries of the South Atlantic Division of the Corps of Engineers to identify the risks and vulnerabilities of those areas to increased hurricane and storm damage as a result of sea level rise.

(b) **REQUIREMENTS.**—In carrying out the study under subsection (a), the Secretary shall—

(1) conduct a comprehensive analysis of current hurricane and storm damage reduction measures with an emphasis on regional sediment management practices to sustainably maintain or enhance current levels of storm protection;

(2) identify risks and coastal vulnerabilities in the areas affected by sea level rise;

(3) recommend measures to address the vulnerabilities described in paragraph (2); and

(4) develop a long-term strategy for—

(A) addressing increased hurricane and storm damages that result from rising sea levels; and

(B) identifying opportunities to enhance resiliency, increase sustainability, and lower risks in—

(i) populated areas;

(ii) areas of concentrated economic development; and

(iii) areas with vulnerable environmental resources.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Environment and Public Works of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report recommending specific and detailed actions to address the risks and vulnerabilities of the areas described in subsection (a) due to increased hurricane and storm damage as a result of sea level rise.