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BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

DEPUTIES

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RECEIVED

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DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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OFC. OF ENVIRONMENTAL
QUALITY CONTROL

REF: BOR: AP/LA

June 3, 1994

BOR-EM 2110.94

To: Dr. Bruce S. Anderson, Acting Director
Office of Environmental Quality Control

From: David E. Parsons, Administrator *David E. Parsons*
Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation

Subject: NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR MAINTENANCE DREDGING AT
ENTRANCE TO WAILOA RIVER, HILO, HAWAII, JOB BOR 6161

In accordance with Chapter 343, HRS, we have completed the formal Draft Environmental Assessment 30-day review period for the subject project. We have incorporated comments received during the review period into the Negative Declaration. We have enclosed four (4) copies of the Negative Declaration and an OEQC bulletin publication form for the subject project.

If you have any question, please call me at 587-1966.

Encs.

1994-06-23-HI-FEA - Wailoa River Maintenance
Dredging

JUN 23 1994
DRAFT

NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR
MAINTENANCE DREDGING AT ENTRANCE TO WAILOA RIVER
HILO, HAWAII
JOB BOR 6161

A. APPLICANT

Division of Boating and Ocean Recreation
Department of Land and Natural Resources

B. APPROVING AGENCY

Environmental Quality Commission
Department of Land and Natural Resources

C. AGENCIES CONSULTED

Agencies informed of the project but were not consulted in the preparation of this Negative Declaration are:

Federal Government - Army Corps of Engineers

State of Hawaii - Department of Land & Natural Resources
- Office of Environmental Quality Control

D. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION'S CHARACTERISTICS

1. Technical

The proposed project will include maintenance dredging of about 2,500 cubic yards of sand and silt. Recent soundings have confirmed that silting has occurred. This project will restore the channel to its original depth of minus 8 feet Mean Lower Low Water. The area was originally dredged in the 1960's. Maintenance Dredging has occurred periodically since then with the last project taking place in 1986.

Disposal of the dredged material will be accomplished through dewatering and transporting the material to the Hawaii County Hilo Landfill where the dredged material will be used as cover material. Dewatering will occur on land immediately adjacent to the dredge site. Berms will be provided to prevent sediment from reentering the ocean. The material will be tested for total metals prior to being transported to the disposal site.

2. Economic

The proposed project will allow normal safe ingress and egress for fishing and recreational boats entering the Wailoa Basin and launching ramp areas. The channel is now narrow and must be used with caution. The channel is

heavily used by fishing vessels and is important to the economy of the fishing industry. The contractors dredging schedule will be developed to minimize interference with vessels using the channel.

3. Environmental

Dredging of the channel area will cause a temporary increase in noise and dust at the drying site, and turbidity in the water at the dredging site. However, these increases are expected to be of short duration and not expected to lower the quality of water in the area. Silt curtains will be provided to reduce turbidity at the dredge site.

The dredged material will be used to cover and bury disposed trash at a County landfill site.

The proposed project will not alter conditions which may result in the increased possibility of damage from flooding, storm waves, subsidence, or erosion. No change in salinity, currents or tidal action is expected to occur as a result of this project.

E. SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

1. Location

The dredging site is located at the entrance to the Wailoa River at Hilo, Hawaii.

The dewatering site will be adjacent to the facility. The disposal site will be at the Hawaii County Hilo Landfill near the Hilo Airport.

2. Project Area Description

The adjacent properties are owned by the State of Hawaii.

3. Land Use Designation of Proposed Site

The State of Hawaii, Land Use Commission designates the project site as conservation.

4. Site Description

The project site is located on the east side of Hawaii at the Wailoa River, Hilo, Hawaii. The proposed area of dredging is approximately 50,000 square feet.

5. Infrastructure

- a. Access: Street access to the facility from Bayfront Highway leads directly to the site.
- b. Utilities: There are adequate water and electrical facilities within the area. The project will not affect these utilities.

F. DISCUSSION OF THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Evaluation of the effects of the proposed project on the environment indicates that there will be no significant adverse effects on the environment. The proposed project will not:

1. Cause the permanent displacement of any persons;
2. Affect any rare, threatened, or endangered plants, animals, or habitats;
3. Involve an irrevocable commitment to loss or destruction of any natural or cultural resources, except for the labor and materials related to the construction of this project;
4. Permanently curtail the beneficial uses of the environment;
5. Conflict with the State's long-term environmental policies, goals, or guidelines;
6. Permanently degrade the environmental quality; and,
7. Alter the existing character of the land or its use.

Rather, the implementation of this project will have a beneficial effect on the general public and its environment.

G. IMPACTS AND ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The proposed project will not cause any significant adverse effects on the environment. The primary negative effects include short-term noise, dust, and turbidity of the area of dredging, and at the dewatering and landfill site.

Positive effect of the project is the restoring of the facility for safer egress and ingress of vessels to the Wailoa River Basin. At present access and egress is poor due to shoaling in the channel and the reduced width and depth of the channel. This silting increases the possibility of vessels going aground while using the channel.

Alternatives considered for this project:

1. No Action No action will result in the continuance of silting of the channel area making it more difficult to safely use the channel.

H. MITIGATION MEASURES

The quantity of material to be dredged on this project will be small. Consequently, the work should be accomplished quickly.

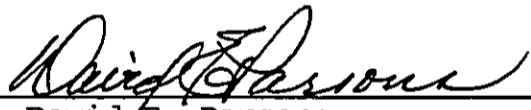
The contract specifications will require that silt curtains be used at the dredge site to minimize turbidity in the adjacent waters. The specifications will also require that the dredged material be dried in a confined area adjacent to the facility prior to the material being hauled to the disposal site. The dredged material will be tested for total metals at the drying site to assure that the material is not contaminated prior to being hauled to the disposal site.

I. DETERMINATION

Since no major or significant adverse impacts are anticipated, costly detailed studies were considered inappropriate. Consequently, a determination has been made that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

J. REASONS

The reasons supporting the "no EIS" determination are outlined in sections F and G of this Negative Declaration. Any adverse environmental impact resulting from this project has been determined temporary and insignificant. Experience has shown that this type of construction within an established small boat harbor boundary has an insignificant effect on the environment, both short- and long-term.



David E. Parsons
Administrator - Division of Boating
and Ocean Recreation

6/8/94
Date