Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Breakwater Rehabilitation

Fort Sumter National Monument

Park Background

Fort Sumter National Monument is an island fort situated at the entrance of the Charleston Harbor. The fort is a five-sided, three-tiered masonry structure that was designed for an armament of 135 guns and garrison of 650 men. Fort Sumter National Monument's mission in the enabling legislation is to preserve the Civil War remnants of Fort Sumter and to commemorate and interpret the opening battle of the Civil War. Fort Sumter is where one of our Nation's most critical defining moments, the American Civil War, began. Fort Sumter is the most heavily bombarded site in the western hemisphere as a result of the Union forces' attempt to regain control of the Charleston Harbor. Fort Sumter was and is a powerful symbol to both the North and South, and it remains a memorial to all who fought to hold it.





Project Background

Currently, a riprap shoreline surrounds approximately 3/4 of the fort. Fort Sumter is currently subject to high wave energy striking the brick walls of the fort, causing erosion to the structure and mortar on the wall. Where the riprap touches the brick wall, erosion has resulted in a wavy wall and curving of bricks. On portions of the fort where there is no riprap, high wave action has resulted in areas of failing brickwork. In addition, there is also a forecasted sea level rise that will pose a threat to the fort in years to come. The purpose of this project is to further protect Fort Sumter from erosion and structural damage and to preserve the structure for future generations.

Proposed Action

The proposed project would consist of moving the existing 1,825 tons of armor stone riprap that are currently positioned against the exterior foundation walls of Fort Sumter approximately 60 feet out into the water and away from the brick walls to create a lower protective breakwater structure. Additional stone would be placed if needed to complete the breakwater. The breakwater would run along the left face, right face, and right flank of the fort to provide protection from wave action. A living shoreline would be established between the breakwater and the fort's walls. This area would be backfilled with sand and planted with native vegetation including Spartina patens and S. alterniflora. The living shoreline would create a natural habitat for both terrestrial and aquatic life. The construction of the breakwater and living shoreline would provide protection from wave action and allow for maintenance to be performed on the fort's exterior walls.



National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior



United States Department of the Interior National Park Service Fort Sumter National Monument 1214 Middle Street Sullivans Island, SC 29482

Fort Sumter National Monument South Carolina

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The NEPA Process

The National Park Service (NPS) must follow the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) to ensure consideration of important environmental issues. The Fort Sumter breakwater rehabilitation will be analyzed using the NEPA process. The environmental effects resulting from the proposed project will be evaluated in an Environmental Assessment (EA). The analysis will consider impacts to topics including aquatic resources, wetlands, wildlife, special status species, water quality, cultural resources, park visitor use and experience, and public health and safety.

The document will analyze both short-term and long-term, as well as cumulative effects of the proposed breakwater rehabilitation and the "no action alternative". By comparing the proposed action alternative with the no action alternative, and identifying mitigation measures that would minimize adverse effects, the EA will assist stakeholders in the decision-making process. National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior

Public Scoping Process

The NPS announces a 30-day public scoping period for the Fort Sumter Breakwater Rehabilitation. Public comments will be accepted through December 15, 2018. You may provide comments in any of the following ways:

- Comment online at <u>http://parkplanning.nps.gov/</u> fosubreakwater.
- Mail comments to: Superintendent Fort Sumter National Monument 1214 Middle Street, Sullivan's Island, SC 29482

Comments will not be accepted by fax, email, or in any other way than specified above. Your comment, including your address, email, or other personal identifying information, may be made publicly available in the Environmental Assessment or online, even if requested to be private.