



**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
LOS ANGELES DISTRICT (CORPS)**

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**APPLICATION FOR PERMIT**  
U.S. Navy Base Coronado/Pier Bravo  
Maintenance Dredging and Ocean Disposal

**Public Notice/Application No.:** SPL-2013-00119-RRS

**Project:** U.S. Navy Base Coronado/Bravo Pier Maintenance Dredging and Ocean Disposal

**Comment Period:** July 15, 2013 through August 16, 2013

**Project Manager:** Robert Smith P.E.; 760-602-4831; [Robert.R.Smith@usace.army.mil](mailto:Robert.R.Smith@usace.army.mil)

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**Applicant**

U.S. Navy (USN)  
Naval Base Coronado Commanding Officer  
Attn: CAPT Gary Mayes  
Naval Base Coronado  
Box 357033  
Coronado, CA 92135-7033

**Contact**

Kari Coler  
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NAVFAC Southwest Coastal IPT  
2730 McKean St. Bldg 291  
San Diego, California 92136

**Location**

Naval Base Coronado Pier Bravo – At Pier Bravo on the north side of Naval Base Coronado in San Diego Bay near the city of Coronado at the Naval Base Coronado, (NBC), San Diego, CA (at: N latitude 32.6645, W longitude -117.2267). The LA-5 offshore ocean disposal site is located 5.4 nautical miles from Point Loma just southwest of the mouth of San Diego Bay, CA. The LA-5 Offshore Dredge Material Ocean Disposal site (ODMDS) is located at 32 degrees 36.83 minutes North, -117 degrees 20.67 minutes West (NAD 1927), and is a circular ocean disposal site with a radius of 3,000 feet. Please see attached drawings.

**Activity**

The proposed activity is to conduct as needed maintenance dredging of the areas surrounding Pier Bravo (both offshore and near-shore of Pier Bravo) with ocean disposal of dredged material (see attached drawings). The first dredging episode and ocean disposal at the LA-5 ODMDS (LA-5) has been approved under the testing procedures of the Ocean Disposal Manual (ODM) by both the Corps and EPA. The Corps may reopen ODM reviews if new information is received during the permit process. The proposed project includes maintenance dredging to remove approximately 9,239 cubic yards (cy) to a design depth of -20 ft. near-shore and -40 ft. mean lower low water (MLLW) offshore with a 2 ft. allowable over dredge depth. The Corps permit action is for a five year Corps permit to allow as-needed maintenance dredging and ocean disposal as long as appropriate testing and review occurs in compliance with the ODM. The proposed activity will impact approximately 2.6 acres of sub-tidal areas near Pier Bravo below the high tide line with 1-2 acres of impact associated with ocean disposal via barge dumping at LA-5 located offshore of San Diego Bay, CA. For more information see page 3 of this notice.

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Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received for a Department of the Army permit for the activity described herein and shown on the attached drawing(s). We invite you to review today's public notice and provide views on the proposed work. By providing substantive, site-specific comments to the Corps Regulatory Division, you provide information that support the Corps' decision-making process. All comments received during the comment period shall become part of the record and will be considered in the decision. This permit will be issued, issued with special conditions, or denied under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbor Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Comments should be mailed to:

Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers  
Regulatory Division, Carlsbad Field Office  
Attn: Robert Smith, P.E., (760) 602-4831  
5900 La Place Ct., Suite 100  
Carlsbad, CA 92008

Alternatively, comments can be sent electronically to: [Robert.R.Smith@usace.army.mil](mailto:Robert.R.Smith@usace.army.mil)

The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Regulatory Program is to protect the Nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. The Corps evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the Nation's waters, including wetlands. The Regulatory Program in the Los Angeles District is executed to protect aquatic resources by developing and implementing short- and long-term initiatives to improve regulatory products, processes, program transparency, and to respond to customer feedback considering current staffing levels and historical funding trends.

Corps permits are necessary for any work, including construction and dredging, in the Nation's navigable water and their tributary waters. The Corps balances the reasonably foreseeable benefits and detriments of proposed projects, and makes permit decisions that recognize the essential values of the Nation's aquatic ecosystems to the general public, as well as the property rights of private citizens who want to use their land. The Corps strives to make its permit decisions in a timely manner that minimizes impacts to the regulated public.

During the permit process, the Corps considers the views of other Federal, state and local agencies, interest groups, and the general public. The results of this careful public interest review are fair and equitable decisions that allow reasonable use of private property, infrastructure development, and growth of the economy, while offsetting the authorized impacts to the waters of the United States. The permit review process serves to first avoid and then minimize adverse effects of projects on aquatic resources to the maximum practicable extent. Any remaining unavoidable adverse impacts to the aquatic environment are offset by compensatory mitigation requirements, which may include restoration, enhancement, establishment, and/or preservation of aquatic ecosystem system functions and services.

### **Evaluation Factors**

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect

the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. Factors that will be considered include conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people. In addition, if the proposal would discharge dredged or fill material, the evaluation of the activity will include application of the EPA Guidelines (40 CFR Part 230) as required by Section 404 (b)(1) of the Clean Water Act.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

### **Preliminary Review of Selected Factors**

**EIS Determination-** The Navy has processed a Categorical Exclusion for the proposed activities adjacent to Pier Bravo. The Corps was not a cooperating agency on the NEPA document and shall be preparing a Corps decision document that will be an Environmental Assessment.

**Water Quality-** The applicant is required to obtain water quality certification, under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act, from the California Regional Water Quality Control Board. Section 401 requires that any applicant for an individual Section 404 permit provide proof of water quality certification to the Corps of Engineers prior to permit issuance. For any proposed activity on Tribal land that is subject to Section 404 jurisdiction, the applicant will be required to obtain water quality certification from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Both the Corps and EPA, on August 3, 2012, approved the project ocean disposal of the 7,064 cy (to 20 ft and 40 ft. depth) and the 9,239 cy (includes allowable 2 ft. over depth) at LA-5 insofar as being in compliance with the tiered testing requirements of the ODM. EPA must approve the disposal site and has furnished the Corps written approval of the LA-5 per the ODM and Corps and EPA regulations.

**Coastal Zone Management-** The applicant has certified that the proposed activity would comply with and would be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the approved State Coastal Zone Management Program. For those projects in or affecting the coastal zone, the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) requires that prior to issuing the Corps authorization for the project, the applicant must obtain concurrence from the California Coastal Commission (CCC) that the project is consistent with the State's Coastal Zone Management Plan. The Navy will submit a Consistency Determination to the California Coastal Commission (CCC) which the Navy will determine as lead agency that its proposed action is consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the California Coastal Management Program. The Corps shall review the Navy's CZMA Federal consistency determination per Corps lead agency guidance.

**Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)**- The Corps acknowledges that the Navy is the lead agency per Corps guidance and the Navy will certify that the proposed activity would comply with and would be conducted in a manner that is consistent with EFH regulations. The Navy has determined that the project could result in adverse effects to Essential Fish Habitat due to minimal disturbance of in-water sandy bottom habitat and increased turbidity from dredging and ocean disposal activities may be affected in the Pier Bravo project area. Therefore, the Navy will initiate consultation with NMFS by submitting an Essential Fish Habitat Assessment in the near future and then initiating EFH consultation. The Corps shall review the Navy's EFH determination per Corps lead agency guidance.

**Cultural Resources**- The Navy has determined that the subject activities meet the standard of a "no historic properties affected" determination under Stipulation 8.A of the Metropolitan San Diego Programmatic Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in compliance with 36 CFR 800.5(d)(1). The Corps has made a preliminary determination that the project will have a "no potential to cause an effect to cultural resources" determination based on the project site being previously dredged in 1995 under a Corps permit action. The latest version of the National Register of Historic Places has been consulted and the project site is not listed. This review constitutes the extent of cultural resources investigations by the District Engineer, and he is otherwise unaware of the presence of such resources.

**Endangered Species Act (ESA)**- The Corps acknowledges that the Navy is the lead agency per Corps guidance and the Navy has certified that the proposed activity would comply with and would be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the ESA and ESA regulations. Due to potential impacts from other Navy projects including this dredging project the Navy entered into formal ESA Section 7 consultation with the USFWS for the federally endangered California least tern (*Sterna antillarum*: CLT) and developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Per the MOU the Navy will perform the activities outside of the CLT nesting season, from April 1<sup>st</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup>, and therefore would not affect the CLT.

Additionally, the Navy determined that the project may affect but is not likely to adversely affect green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*: GST) in San Diego Bay based on the potential of noise associated with marine vessels and dredging activities and turbidity. The Navy will conduct informal consultation with NMFS for GST impacts. As a result of past ESA GST consultations, the Navy has agreed to collaborate with NMFS to analyze movements of turtles equipped with sonic tags, if any are known, in the immediate area during dredging. The Corps will review and may adopt the comments or ESA compliance conditions received from NMFS for GST as well as the Navy's final ESA determinations during the permit process per Corps lead agency guidance.

**Public Hearing**- Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearing shall state with particularity the reasons for holding a public hearing.

### **Proposed Activity for Which a Permit is Required**

**Basic Project Purpose**- The basic project purpose comprises the fundamental, essential, or irreducible purpose of the proposed project, and is used by the Corps to determine whether the applicant's project is water dependent (i.e., requires access or proximity to or siting within the special aquatic site to fulfill its basic purpose). Establishment of the basic project purpose is necessary only when the proposed activity would discharge dredged or fill material into a special aquatic site (e.g., wetlands, pool and riffle complex, mudflats, coral reefs). The basic project purpose for the proposed

project is to perform dredging for navigation and berthing for military activities. The dredging project must be done at Pier Bravo due to the need for onsite maintenance dredging to restore pier berthing and navigation capabilities and is water dependent.

Overall Project Purpose- The overall project purpose serves as the basis for the Corps' 404(b) (1) alternatives analysis and is determined by further defining the basic project purpose in a manner that more specifically describes the applicant's goals for the project, and which allows a reasonable range of alternatives to be analyzed. The overall project purpose for the proposed project is to conduct maintenance dredging near Pier Bravo with dredged material disposal for military activities in or near San Diego Bay, CA.

### **Additional Project Information**

Baseline information and Project description- Pier Bravo has been deemed by the Navy as a high priority action due to impacts from sediment buildup in the area and the need for berthing and safe navigation. The overall activity is to conduct dredging and ocean disposal near Pier Bravo in San Diego Bay, CA to a depth of -20 and -40 ft. MLLW with an allowable over depth of 2 ft. MLLW. All of these activities are cyclic in nature and do not require construction of permanent facilities. Booms and silt curtains would be deployed as needed to control turbidity. Dredging and sediment disposal activities are expected to last approximately three months.

A barge mounted clamshell bucket dredge would be used during dredging activities. The proposed dredged material disposal site is at the EPA authorized LA-5 ocean disposal site offshore of the entrance to San Diego Bay, CA. The existing project area has been used for previous naval berthing and military activities and is previously disturbed by authorized naval dredging activities that occurred in 1995 under Corps permit SPL-1995-2003600. The material to be dredged is mostly sand with very little silt or clay. During the Corps permit process in 1995 the Corps and EPA made a dredged material suitability determination under procedures outlined in the Ocean Disposal Manual (ODM) for Pier Bravo dredging. Recently the Corps and EPA in 2013 completed another suitability determination of the proposed dredging area and ocean disposal at LA-5 which included the 9,239 cy to be dredged at a 20 ft. and 40 ft. MLLW depth with a 2 ft. over depth. The Corps and EPA both determined, in August, 2012, that the 9,239 cy of mostly sandy material is suitable for ocean disposal, pursuant to the *Final Dredged Material Characterization Study – Maintenance Dredging Bravo Pier Summary Report, Naval Base Coronado, San Diego, CA* (Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAPr) as prepared by AMEC and dated July 2012 with all amendments)..

The Pier Bravo area to be dredged is approximately 6.5 acres and the radius of the LA-5 ocean disposal site extends 5.4 nautical miles offshore from the mouth of San Diego bay and the Navy uses the Pier Bravo area for military berthing and related activities. The project area does not have any eelgrass or the invasive *Caulerpa* plant but eelgrass is present along the shoreline area. The Navy has agreed to preconstruction and if necessary post-construction surveys in accordance with the Southern California Eelgrass Mitigation Policy (SCEMP). If eelgrass mitigation is necessary the Navy will most likely be using credits from the Navy's approved Eelgrass Mitigation Bank in San Diego Bay to mitigate any eelgrass impacts. The Navy has identified four species of marine mammals potentially present within the project area and ocean disposal site (gray whales (*Eschrichtius robustus*), bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*), California sea lions (*Zalophus californianus*), and harbor seals (*Phoca vitulina*)) that may be exposed to sound and pressure from the dredging and ocean disposal. Also long-beaked common dolphins were observed at the offshore areas near LA-5. Long-beaked common dolphins as well as three other species, the short-beaked common dolphin (*Delphinus delphis*, Pacific white-sided dolphin (*Lagenorhynchus obliquidens*) and Risso's dolphin

(*Grampus griseus*) could be in the project area.

**Mitigation Measures:** The applicant is proposing to not dredge during the CLT nesting season from April 1<sup>st</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup> to avoid impacts CLT. The Navy would monitor the dredging area for turbidity during dredging and shall install and maintain silt curtains and booms to control turbidity, the Navy shall comply with SCEMP if eelgrass is impacted by dredging, and the Navy shall temporarily cease activity if GST is found in the project site.

**Avoidance:** Since this is a maintenance dredging project of a previously uncontaminated area and no eelgrass has been found in the project footprint the Corps has not required a strenuous Section 404(b)(1) alternatives analysis per Corps regulations that state that the level of Corps review is commensurate with the impact. Other offsite alternatives to relocate Pier Bravo to avoid impacts would not be practicable given its existing military functional capacity in that area and other sites would also require similar dredging impacts. Other onsite dredging alternatives would not be logistically practicable given the existing military support mission of Pier Bravo. Other disposal sites such as beach nourishment sites north of San Diego Bay, Mission bay sites, lagoon ecological restoration, or near shore disposal sites (North County areas) were either not available or practicable or other projects have already created an adequate beach given recent sand replenishment from the SANDAG RBSP II project, other lagoon nourishment projects and Corps outbound channel dredging project.

**Minimization:** The Navy will also ensure that biological monitors look for and document the location of any CLT bird nests, eggs, and chicks prior to and after all dredging. For minimization of effects on Marine Mammals and sea turtles, the Navy shall allow marine mammals or sea turtles to have a chance to leave the area. If turtles are known to be equipped with sonic tags in the area of and during any operations within San Diego Bay, the Navy will collaborate with NMFS to analyze movements of these turtles in the immediate area during dredging and disposal. Additionally, a Notice to Mariners will be issued requiring a 500-yd standoff as a safety buffer zone during certain hours of operation during activities. Finally, as part of the public involvement plan during the EIS process, notification letters were sent to the Captain of the Port of San Diego, the Director for Environmental Services for the Unified Port District, the Land Use planning division of the San Diego Unified Port District, and the San Diego Port Tenants. The Navy also coordinated with the US Coast Guard Port Operations. In these notification letters, the Navy solicited their input during the permit process, as well as their review and comment on the NEPA documents.

**Compensation:** Mitigation for impacts to eelgrass (none are foreseen) would be subtracted from the Navy's Eelgrass Mitigation Bank as approved by the Corps. The mitigation bank is to provide functional eelgrass habitat qualifying as special aquatic sties as defined at 40 CFR 230.40-45 within San Diego Bay. These 5 mitigation bank sites provide eelgrass mitigation for various past projects and provide an eelgrass mitigation bank for the Navy with the excess eelgrass habitat created. The sites are monitored annually to track the status of each site. Since there are no impacts to wetlands or vegetated waters of the U.S. proposed, the Navy is not proposing any mitigation for impacts from dredging or ocean disposal.

## **Proposed Special Conditions**

The mitigation measures mentioned above may become special conditions and are proposed at this time. For additional information please call Robert Smith of my staff at 760-602-4831 or via e-mail at [Robert.R.Smith@usace.army.mil](mailto:Robert.R.Smith@usace.army.mil) . This public notice is issued by the Chief, Regulatory Division.



### *Regulatory Program Goals:*

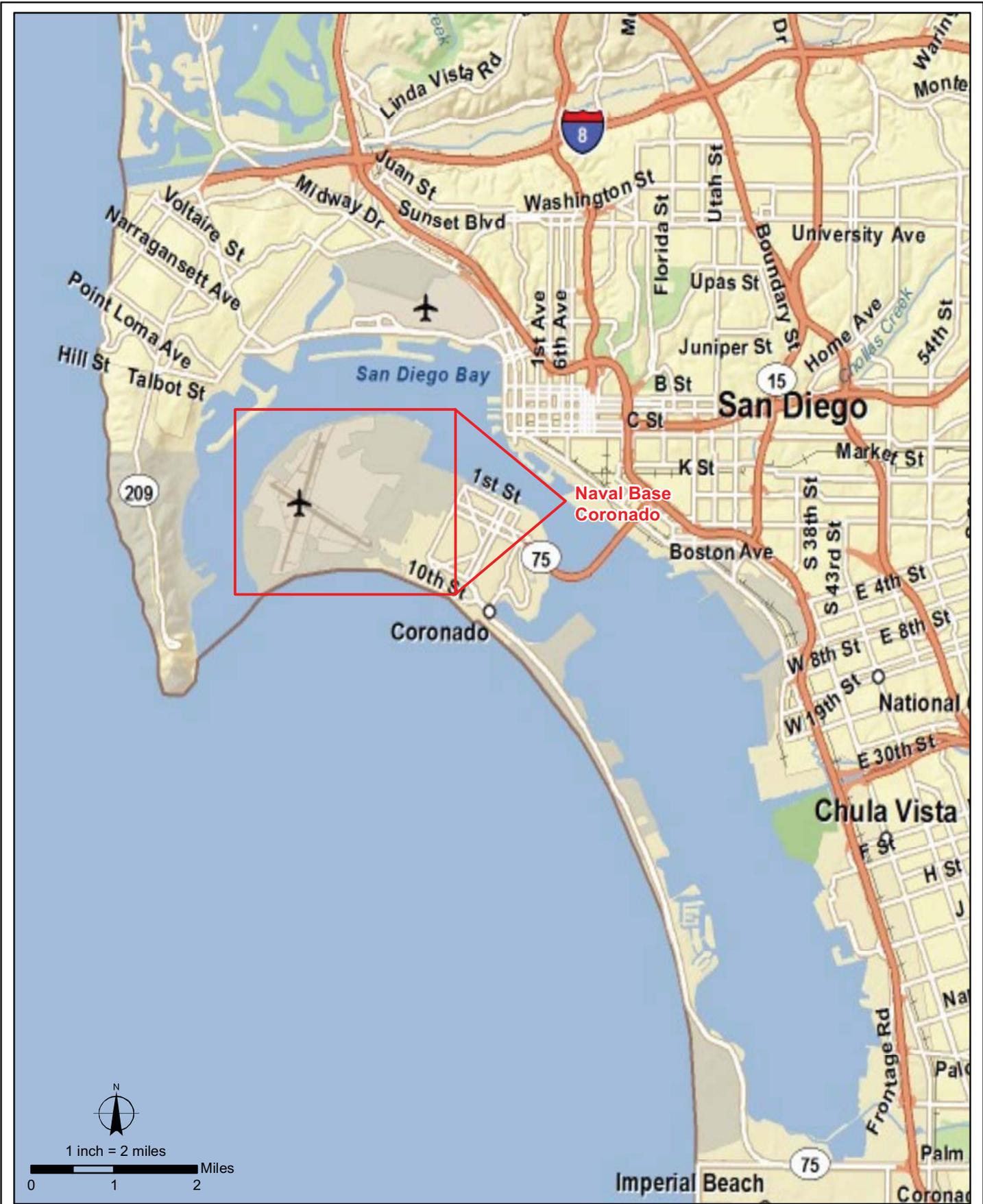
- To provide strong protection of the nation's aquatic environment, including wetlands.
- To ensure the Corps provides the regulated public with fair and reasonable decisions.
- To enhance the efficiency of the Corps' administration of its regulatory program.

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### **U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – LOS ANGELES DISTRICT**

Los Angeles District, Corps of Engineers  
Regulatory Division, Carlsbad Field Office  
6010 Hidden Valley Rd., Suite 105  
Carlsbad, CA 92011

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Source: ESRI - 2011

**Project Location  
Naval Base Coronado**



Maintenance Dredging Project Site NBC

**Legend**

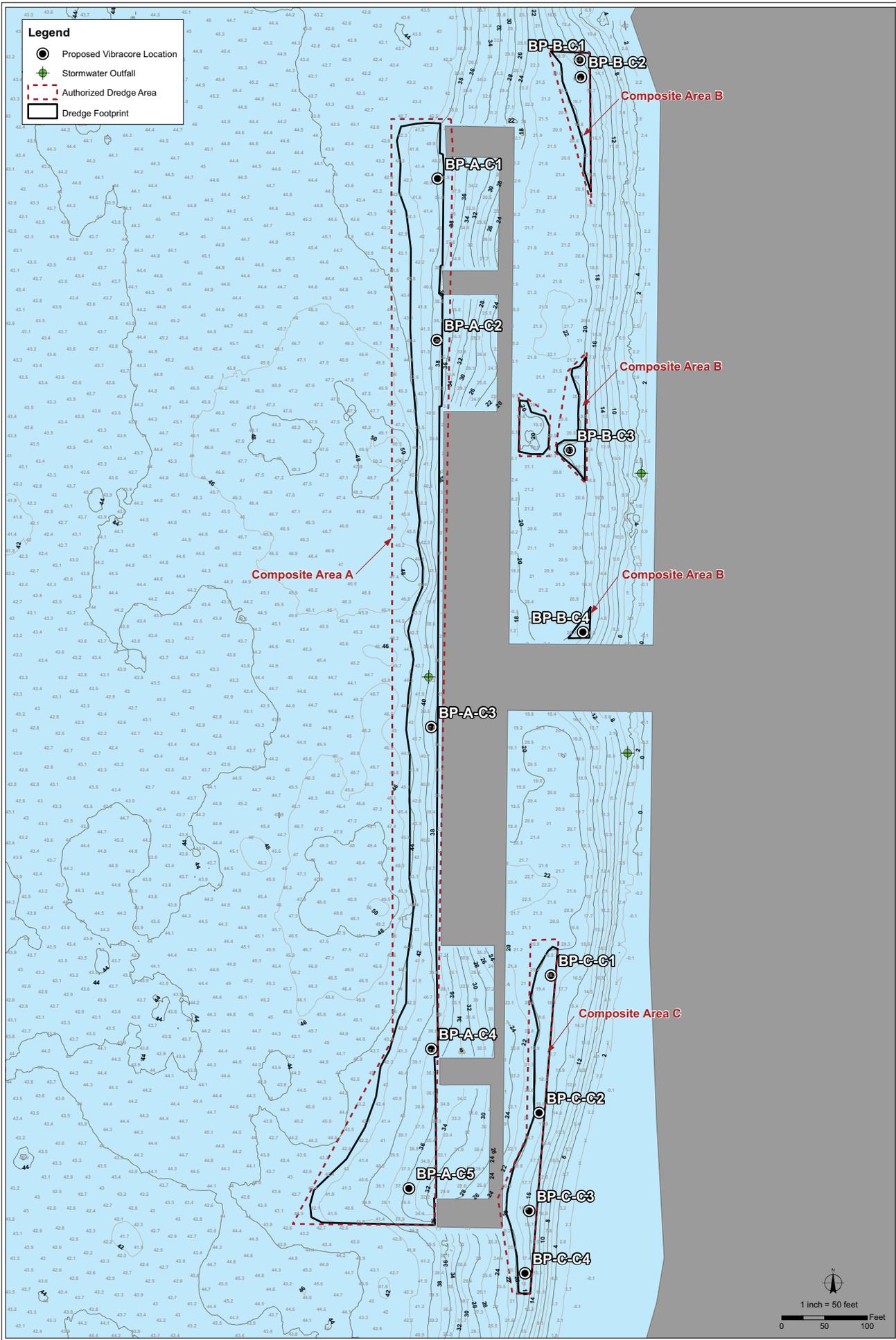
 Dredge Footprint



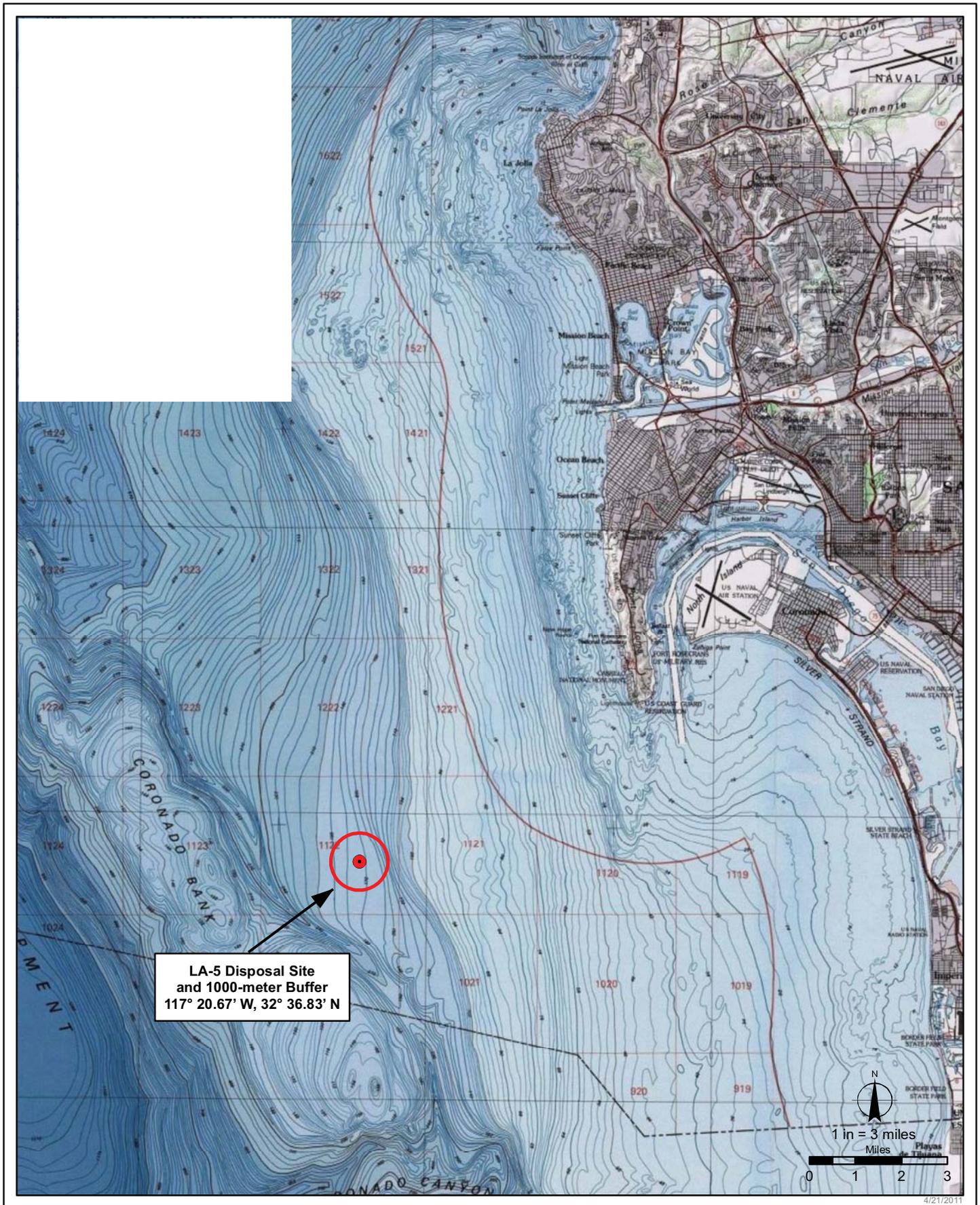
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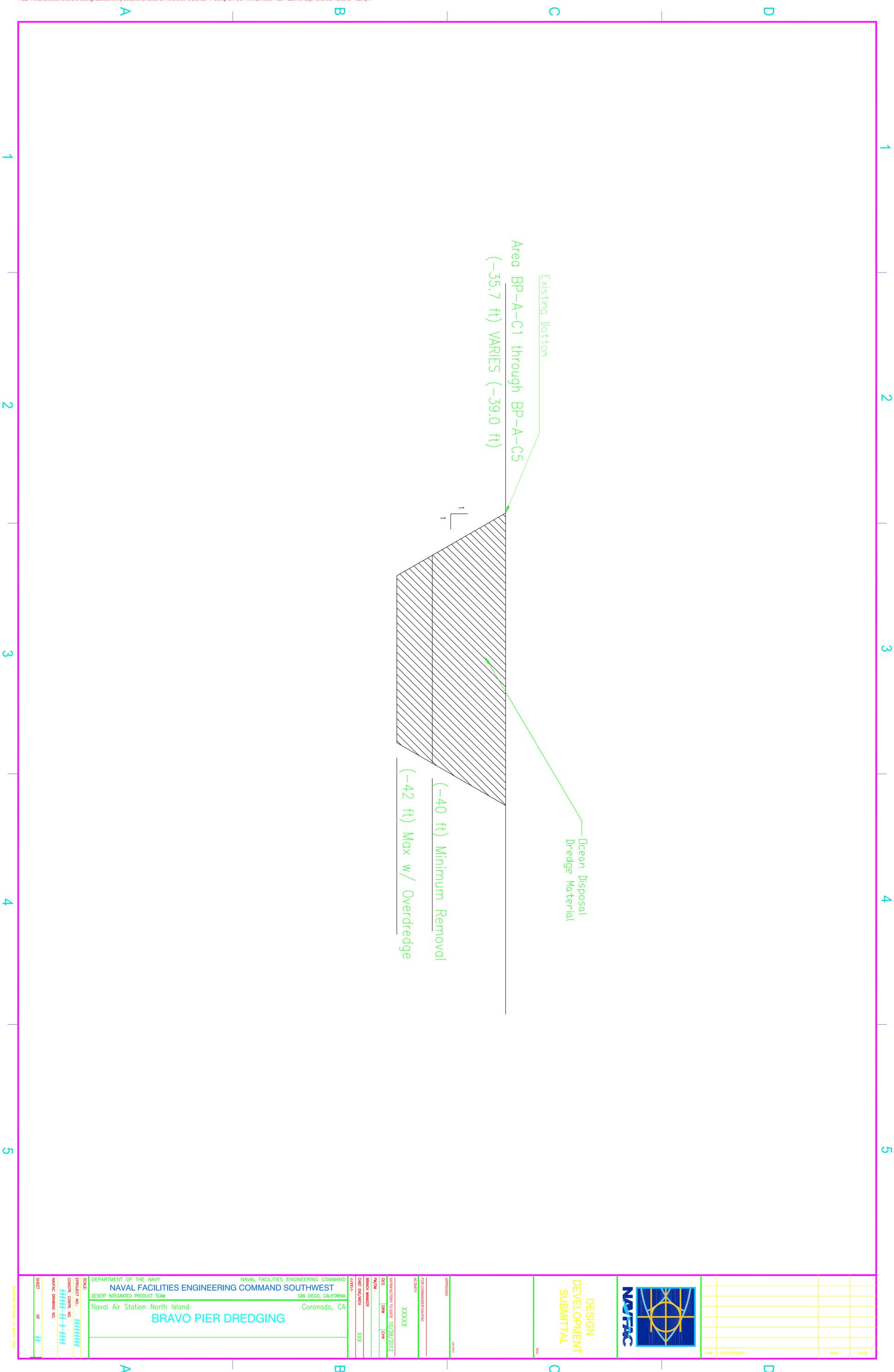
**Bravo Pier Dredge Footprint  
Naval Base Coronado**



**Bravo Pier Proposed Sediment Collection Locations  
Naval Base Coronado**



**Location of LA-5 Ocean Dredged Material Disposal Site and Reference Sediment Collection Location**



SYM	DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPR

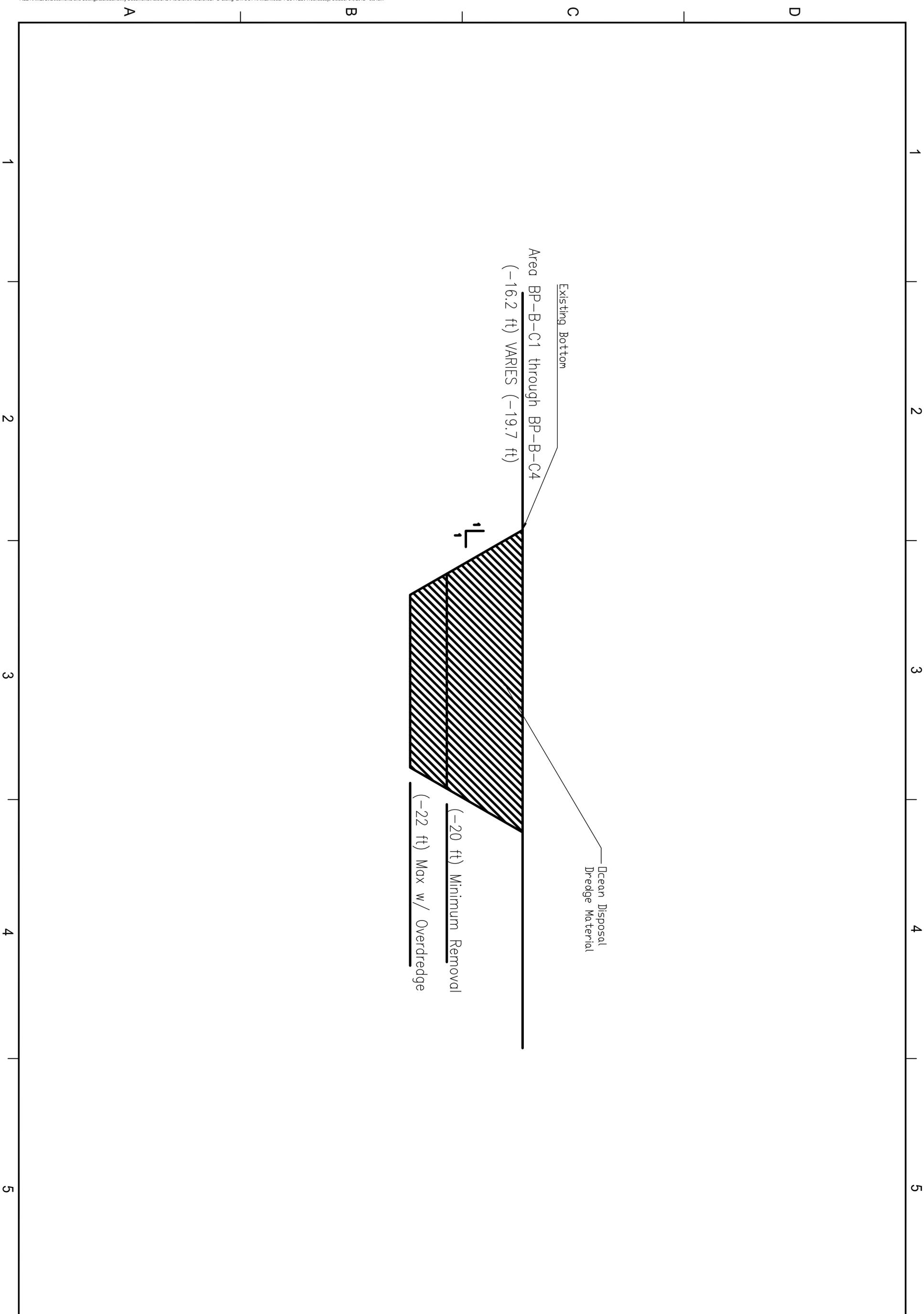


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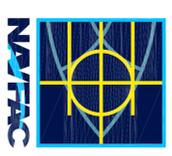
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FOR COMMANDER NAVFAC	
ACTIVITY	XXXXXX
SUBTRACTIVE TO DATE	10/28/2012
DES	DBW
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BRANCH MANAGER	XXX
CHIEF ENGINEER	XXX
DATE	10/28/2012

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY	NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND
<b>NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND SOUTHWEST</b>	
DESERT INTEGRATED PRODUCT TEAM	SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
Naval Air Station North Island	Coronado, CA
<b>BRAVO PIER DREDGING</b>	

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SYM	DESCRIPTION	DATE	APPR



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FOR COMMANDER/NAVFAC ACTIVITY

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SUBMITTANT TO DATE: 10/28/2012

DESIGNER: \_\_\_\_\_

CHECKER: \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCH MANAGER: \_\_\_\_\_

CHIEF ENGINEER: XXX

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND  
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND SOUTHWEST  
DESERT INTEGRATED PRODUCT TEAM  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Naval Air Station North Island  
BRAVO PIER DREDGING  
Coronado, CA

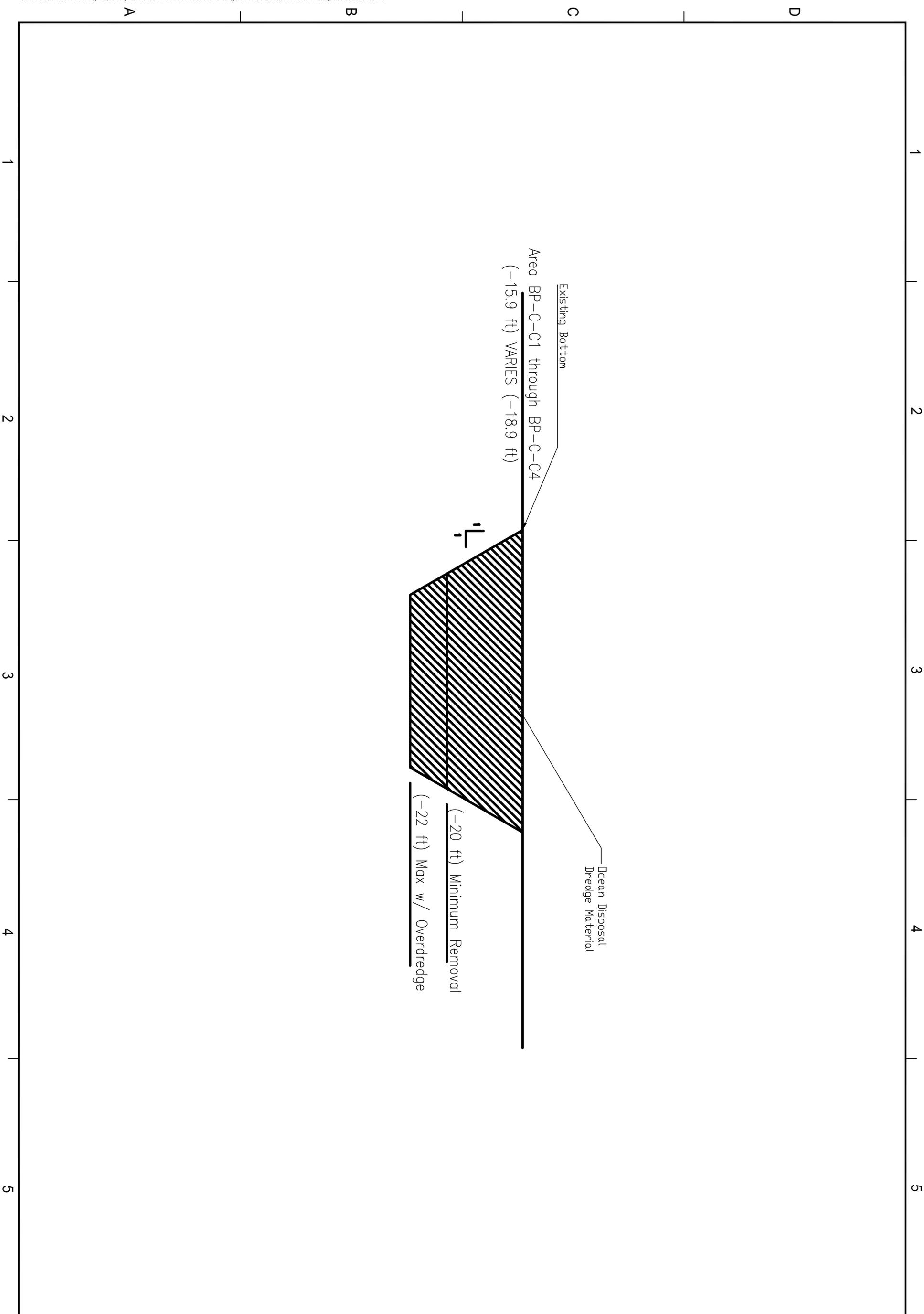
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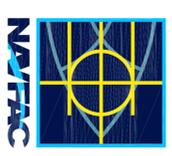
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FOR COMMANDER/NAVFAC	
ACTIVITY	XXXXX
SUBMITTANT TO DATE	10/28/2012
DESIGNER	
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BRANCH MANAGER	
CHIEF ENGINEER	XXX

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY	NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND
NAVAL FACILITIES ENGINEERING COMMAND SOUTHWEST	
DESERT INTEGRATED PRODUCT TEAM	SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
Naval Air Station North Island	Coronado, CA
<b>BRAVO PIER DREDGING</b>	

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