

be used on noncohesive beds but are unsuitable for rock, organic materials, or wet clays and silts. The units can be installed in a variety of configurations at the site (Figure I-3-16) (Department of the Army 1990).

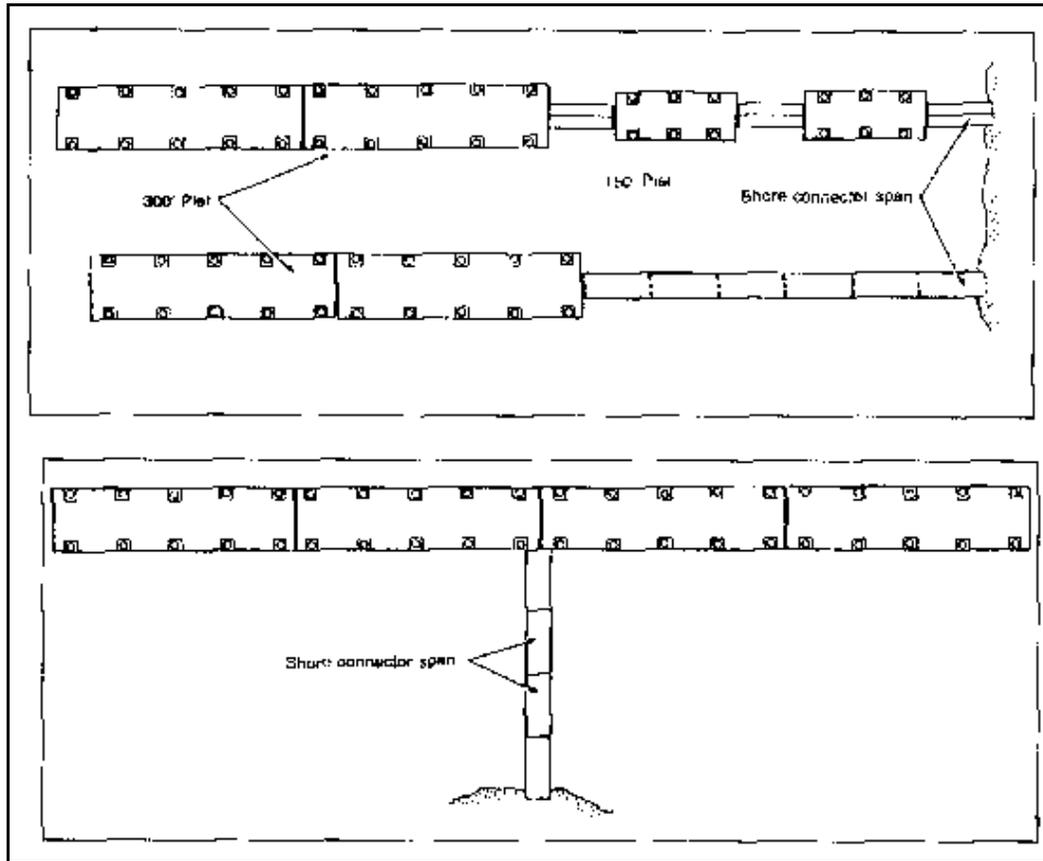


Figure I-3-16. DeLong self-elevating barge piers. Upper figure shows finger piers, lower a T-type marginal wharf (from Department of the Army 1990)

g. Rapidly Installed Breakwater System. Engineers and scientists at CHL are developing a Rapidly Installed Breakwater (RIB) system to address problems encountered by the U.S. armed forces while offloading ships during Logistics Over The Shore operations. When seas become sufficiently energetic during offloading, the capabilities of ship-based crane operators and stevedore crews are severely restricted. The RIB system, consisting of a series of floating breakwater units that are assembled in a “V” orientation, is designed to create a “pool” of calmer water where the crews will be able to continue to unload vessels even during storms. For many years, CHL had been involved with the design and deployment of floating breakwaters, primarily for application within bays or estuaries which are semi-protected from large waves. But, these structures were intended to attenuate waves with heights not exceeding 4 ft and periods not exceeding 4 sec, while in an oceanic environment, waves with heights up to 10 ft are common during storms, with associated periods up to 10 sec. To date, research efforts have concentrated on military applications for the RIB system. Potential civil applications include rescue and recovery operations, temporary small vessel shelter from energetic seas, and to protect exposed dredging and marine operations (e.g., bridge repair, rubble-mound breakwater construction).

I-3-9. Summary

For most of the nation's history, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has played an active role in the coastal zone. To the mid-1800s, this role was largely confined to coastal defense and some harbor protection. But, in the mid-1800s, the USACE's mission expanded to include developing civil works projects in support of a growing nation. These responsibilities included harbor construction, dredging and clearing waterways, building canals and channels, and protecting coastal areas threatened by erosion (*e.g.*, Presque Isle). During the second half of the 20th century, the USACE's role further expanded to include environmental restoration and preservation of threatened coastal areas. Since the 1930s, coastal-related research and development have been conducted to advance the technical foundations and basis for conducting coastal civil works.

The 20th century was witness to a large-scale evolution in the development of, use of, and interest in the coastal zone. National defense, agriculture, navigation, economic development, recreation, and environmental worth all contribute to the definition of coastal policy and action. During the early years of the 21st century there will be continuing development pressure in the coastal zone. Coastal engineers and scientists will undoubtedly be asked to play an increasing role in planning, designing, and maintaining infrastructure projects, in coastal management and environmental mitigation, and will continue their more traditional missions of navigation and flood protection.

In fiscal year 1998, the USACE and contractor-owned dredges removed 182 million cubic meters of material from Federally-constructed and maintained channels at a cost of \$713 million. Dredged material is a valuable resource with numerous potential benefits, including construction of protective dunes and beaches, maintenance of beaches through bypassing to reestablish natural sediment-transport paths, and restoration and creation of wetlands and coastal habitat. Demand for dredged material usage is increasing, but environmental concerns and constraints present new engineering challenges that must be addressed.

Erosion and flooding threaten an estimated \$3 trillion of development along the coast, with 80 to 90 percent of the nation's sandy beaches eroding (Hillyer 1996). Shore protection and restoration throughout the developed areas of the coast will increase, especially if the growing value of coastal property and recreation benefits are factored into the cost benefit calculations.

Because of the age of many harbor structures, improving and rebuilding jetties and breakwaters will be a major mission area. Wetlands restoration should also be growth areas, and already the USACE is involved in major restoration projects in the Everglades, in south Louisiana, and along many stretches of the intracoastal waterway.

Emergency coastal response work is also likely to be a growth area for the USACE. Many of the recent arrivals to the coastal zone have not personally experienced a major disaster like the Galveston hurricane of 1900, the 1962 Ash Wednesday storm, or the Great New England Hurricane of 1938. Much of the population is ignorant of the hazards that exist and is not prepared to respond to the aftermath of a catastrophic storm. The USACE has actively participated in disaster emergency and recovery efforts in Puerto Rico and other Caribbean islands, and many of these skills are applicable to mainland disasters.

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