

CHAPTER 8 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAND USE PLANS, POLICIES, AND CONTROLS

8.1.1 Federal and State Plans, Policies, and Controls

A summary of the laws, implementing regulations, and executive orders applicable to the action alternatives is summarized herein. Table 8.1-1 lists the applicable federal and state environmental laws. In addition, a list of federal and state permits required for implementation of the Group 2 and 3 alternatives is provided in Table 8.1-2 or are otherwise discussed in Section 5.4. No permit requirements were identified in association with the Group 1 alternatives.

Table 8.1-1 Other Major Environmental Statutes, Regulations, and Executive Orders Applicable to Federal Projects

| Environmental Resources | Statute, Regulation, or Executive Order |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Geology, Topography, and Soils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPDES Construction Activity General Permit (40 CFR 122-124) |
| Wetlands and Floodplains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 401 and 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (PL 92-500) • USEPA, Subchapter D-Water Programs 40 CFR 100-149 (105 ref) • Floodplain Management-1977 (EO 11988) • Protection of Wetlands-1977 (EO 11990) • Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 (PL 99-645) • North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989 (PL 101-233) |
| Water Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (PL 92-500) and Amendments • CWA of 1977 (PL 95-217) • NPDES Construction Activity General Permit (40 CFR 122-124) • NPDES Industrial Permit and NPDES MS4 Permit • CWA 40 CFR 112 Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure • USEPA, Subchapter D-Water Programs (40 CFR 100-145) • Water Quality Act of 1987 (PL 100-4) • USEPA, Subchapter N-Effluent Guidelines and Standards (40 CFR 401-471) • Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 • Section 103 of MPRSA • The Florida Water Resources Act of 1972 (Florida Statute 373) • Florida Submerged Lands and Environmental Resource Program (FAC 18-21) • Outstanding Florida Waters (FAC 62-302.700) • Florida Generic NPDES Permits (FAC 62-621) • Florida Watershed Restoration Act of 1999 (Florida Statute 403.067) • Florida Surface Water Quality Standards (FAC 62-302 and 62-302.530) • Florida State Stormwater (FAC 62-25) • Warren S. Henderson Wetlands Protection Act of 1984 (Florida Statute 403.91-403.929) |

Table 8.1-1 Other Major Environmental Statutes, Regulations, and Executive Orders Applicable to Federal Projects

| Environmental Resources | Statute, Regulation, or Executive Order |
|--|---|
| Air Quality | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAA of 1970 (PL 95-95), as amended in 1977 and 1990 (PL 91-604) • USEPA, Subchapter C-Air Programs (40 CFR 52-99) • 40 CFR Part 63 Subpart P, National Emissions Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants • Florida Administrative Code Chapter 62-252, 62-210 and 62-296 |
| Noise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise Control Act of 1972 (PL 92-574) and Amendments of 1978 (PL 95-609) • USEPA, Subchapter G-Noise Abatement Programs (40 CFR 201-211) • City of Jacksonville Rule 4, Noise Pollution Control |
| Biological Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 • Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act of 1958 (PL 85-654) • Sikes Act of 1960 (PL 86-97) and Amendments of 1986 (PL 99-561) and 1997 (PL 105-85 Title XXIX); • ESA of 1973 (PL 93-205) and Amendments of 1988 (PL 100-478) • Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980 (PL 96-366) • Marine Mammal Protection Act and Amendments of 1994 (PL Public Law 103-238) • Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 (PL 97-79) • Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267) • Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds (EO 13186) • Florida Endangered and Threatened Species Act of 1977 (Florida Statute 372.072) • Wildlife Code of the State of Florida (FAC 39) • Florida Environmental Land and Water Management Act of 1972 (Florida Statute 380.12 - 380.10) • Florida Land Conservation Act of 1972 (Florida Statute 259) |
| Cultural Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHPA (16 USC 470 et seq.) (PL 89-865) and Amendments of 1980 (PL 96-515) and 1992 (PL 102-575) • Protection and Enhancement of the Cultural Environment-1971 (EO 11593) • Indian Sacred Sites-1966 (EO 13007) • American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 (PL 94-341) • Antiquities Act of 1906 • Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (PL 96-95) • Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (PL 101-601) • Protection of Historic Properties (36 CFR 800) • Abandoned Shipwreck Act (43 USC 2101) • Florida's Antiquities Law (Florida Statute Chapter 267 and FAC 1A-31 and 1A-32) |
| Hazardous and Toxic Substances and Waste | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RCRA of 1976 (PL 94-5800), as amended by PL 100-582; • USEPA, subchapter I-Solid Wastes (40 CFR 240-280) • CERCLA of 1980 (42 USC 9601) (PL 96-510) • Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) (PL 94-496) • USEPA, Subchapter R-Toxic Substances Control Act (40 CFR 702-799) • Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Control Act (40 CFR 162-180) • Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (40 CFR 300-399) • Federal Compliance with Pollution Control Standards-1978 (EO 12088), Superfund Implementation (EO 12580) • Strengthening Federal Environmental, Energy, and Transportation Management (EO 13423) • Florida Hazardous Waste Rule (FAC 62-730) • Florida Used Oil Management Rule (FAC 62-710); Mercury-Containing Lamps and Devices Management Rule (FAC 62-737) |

**Table 8.1-1 Other Major Environmental Statutes, Regulations,
and Executive Orders Applicable to Federal Projects**

| Environmental Resources | Statute, Regulation, or Executive Order |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Utilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safe Drinking Water Act of 1972 (PL 95-923) and Amendments of 1986 (PL 99-339)• USEPA, National Drinking Water Regulations and Underground Injection Control Program (40 CFR 141-149) |
| Environmental Health and Safety | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations (29 CFR)• Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations (EO 12898)• Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks (EO 13045) |

Table 8.1-2 Required Permits for Group 2 and 3 Alternatives

| Regulatory Requirement | | Permitting Agency | Permit Specifications | Additional Information |
|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| CWA | Section 404 | USACE | Regulates discharge of dredged or fill material into navigable waters | Permits for dredging activities often issued in conjunction with Section 401 of CWA and Section 10 of Rivers & Harbors Act |
| | Section 401 | FDEP (Delegated authority from USEPA) | Regulates impacts of dredged material on water quality | Permits for dredging activities issued by FDEP in conjunction with above and Coastal Zone Consistency Determination |
| | NPDES Program | FDEP (delegated from USEPA) | CGP for Stormwater Discharge from Large and Small Construction Activities. Requirements include a Notice of Intent, a Notice of Termination and a construction site SWPPP. | Required for projects that disturb greater than one acre of soil, including lay-down, ingress and egress area. Phase I regulates construction activity disturbing 5 or more acres of total land area and Phase II regulates "small" construction activity disturbing between 1 and 5 acres of total land area. |
| Rivers and Harbors Act | Section 10 | USACE | Regulates construction and/or dredging in navigable waters | Permits for dredging activities often issued in conjunction with Section 404 of CWA |
| Coastal Zone Management Act | Federal Consistency Provisions | FDEP (Delegated from federal CZMA) | Determination of consistency of federal actions with FCMP | Consistency determination is prepared and submitted by Navy seeking concurrence from FDEP |
| MPRSA | Section 103 | USEPA in association with USACE | Regulates the dumping of dredged material in ocean waters | Permit requires full suite of physical, chemical and biological testing of sediment to determine suitability for ocean disposal at designated sites |
| Florida Submerged Lands and Environmental Resources Program | | FDEP | Regulates activities that affect submerged lands and water quality resources | State issues an Environmental Resources Permit |
| Florida Surface Water Management Systems Program | | St. Johns Water Management District | Regulates and controls the management of surface water | State issues an Environmental Resources Permit |

NEPA and Navy Procedures for Implementing NEPA. This EIS has been prepared in compliance with NEPA and the Navy procedures for implementing NEPA. NEPA directs that “to the fullest extent possible...all agencies of the federal government shall...insure that presently unquantified environmental amenities and values may be given appropriate consideration in decision-making along with the economic and technical considerations...” This document provides analysis of the impacts associated with 13 alternatives for homeporting ships at NAVSTA Mayport. The DEIS was distributed to appropriate federal, state, and local agencies, organizations, and interested persons. Comments from these agencies and the public have been incorporated into a FEIS. No action will take place until the FEIS has been filed with the USEPA and a Record of Decision has been signed by the Navy.

CWA and EO 11990, Protection of Wetlands, and EO 11988, Floodplain Management. The CWA, as amended, regulates discharges to the waters of the United States. Section 404 of the Act regulates the discharge of dredged or fill material. Permits for dredging activities are often issued in conjunction with Section 401 of CWA and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. In compliance with the CWA and EO 11990, development in wetland areas have been avoided. No impacts to wetlands would occur with implementation of any of the alternatives. EO 11988 requires that federal agencies avoid activities that directly or indirectly result in development of floodplain areas. According to FEMA maps, portions of the potential construction associated with the Group 3 alternatives would lie within the 100-year floodplain; however, facilities would be constructed above the 100-year floodplain level.

Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 prohibits the unauthorized obstruction or alteration of any navigable water of the United States, unless the work has been authorized by the Secretary of the Army by a permit. Under the Group 2 and 3 alternatives, the Navy would apply for such a permit (see Table 8.1-2).

CAA. The CAA, as amended, provides for the protection and enhancement of the nation’s air resources. The CAA requires USEPA review of this EIS. The document was provided to USEPA and FDEP to review for consistency with Section 309 of the CAA. The Group 2 and 3 alternatives would be in excess of *de minimis* thresholds for the ozone precursors VOCs and NO_x but would be well below the 10 percent of regional emissions significance threshold.

Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. Section 10 of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act directs federal agencies to consult with USFWS, NMFS, and state agencies before authorizing alteration of water bodies. The purpose of this Act is to ensure that wildlife conservation receives equal consideration and coordination with other features of water resource programs. The Navy has coordinated this EIS with

USFWS, NMFS, USEPA, FDEP, USACE, and other state and federal agencies. These agencies were invited to comment and submit recommendations to the Navy on this document. The comments of these agencies were considered during preparation of the FEIS.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996, requires federal agencies to consult with NMFS on activities that may adversely affect EFH. EFH is defined as “those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, or growth to maturity.” HAPCs are a subset of EFH; Fishery Management Councils are encouraged to designate HAPCs under the Magnuson Act. The alternatives were evaluated for potential impact to EFH and were found to have no significant impact to these resources.

ESA. The ESA of 1973, as amended, requires that any action authorized by a federal agency shall not jeopardize the continued existence of an endangered or threatened species or result in the destruction or adverse modification of designated critical habitat of such species. Section 7 of the Act requires that the responsible federal agency consult with USFWS and NMFS concerning endangered and threatened species under their jurisdiction. In accordance with section 7 of the ESA, the Navy is in consultation with USFWS and NMFS regarding potential impacts to federally listed species and designated critical habitat. To support ESA consultation, the Navy and USACE, as co-consulter, have prepared BAs to assess the potential impacts of Group 2 and 3 alternatives on ESA-listed species and designated critical habitat. The BAs are provided in Appendix B.3. The Navy and USACE anticipate similar terms and conditions to those identified in existing and relevant BOs for similar dredging activities to be identified in the NMFS BO for the proposed action. Navy and USACE dredging activities currently comply with such terms and conditions. The Letter of Concurrence will be obtained from the USFWS and the BO from NMFS prior to issuance of the Record of Decision for this FEIS. The conditions of the USFWS Letter of Concurrence and terms and conditions of the NMFS BO will be identified in the Record of Decision.

Marine Mammal Protection Act. The Marine Mammal Protection Act establishes a national policy designated to protect and conserve marine mammals and their habitats. This policy is established so as not to diminish such species or population stocks beyond the point at which they cease to be a significant functioning element in the ecosystem, nor to diminish such species below their optimum sustainable population. Potential impacts to marine mammals (e.g., coastal bottlenose dolphin) resulting from dredge activities would be similar to those for species protected under the ESA. No injury or mortality of any marine mammal species is reasonably foreseeable and no adverse effects on the annual rates of

recruitment or survival of any of the species and stocks assessed is expected. The USFWS and NMFS reviewed the DEIS and provided comments regarding marine mammal protection.

NHPA. The Navy has determined that no historic properties have been identified inside the project areas of potential effects. All proposed terrestrial development would occur on previously disturbed land. A remote sensing survey for potential underwater resources was conducted and found that no survey targets suggestive of cultural resources are located within the proposed dredging prism. Two underwater survey targets suggestive of cultural resources were identified within 100 feet of the existing federal navigation channel. While outside the proposed dredging area, the Navy consulted with the SHPO and conducted an underwater intensive-level survey of these targets designed to evaluate whether they qualify for inclusion in the NRHP. The Navy has consulted with the Florida SHPO under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act to confirm that appropriate actions would be taken under each of the alternatives to ensure that historic properties will not be adversely affected in the course of this project undertaking (Appendix E.1).

MPRSA. The MPRSA establishes a framework for the control of dumping material in the territorial sea and seaward, and includes specific criteria and conditions for permissible dumping. Section 102 of the Act authorizes the USEPA to promulgate environmental criteria for evaluation of all dumping permit actions, to retain review authority over USACE Section 103 permit, and to designate ocean disposal sites for dredge material disposal. Section 103 of the Act specifies that all proposed operations involving the transportation and dumping of dredged material into ocean waters must be evaluated to determine potential environmental impacts of such activities. Under the authority of Section 103, the USACE may issue ocean dumping permits for dredged material if USEPA concurs with the decision. If USEPA does not agree with a USACE decision, a waiver process under Section 103 allows further action to be taken. The USEPA and USACE also may determine that ocean disposal is inappropriate because of ODMDS management restrictions or if options for beneficial use exist. Under the Group 2 and 3 alternatives, the Navy and USACE conducted appropriate chemical and biological testing as part of the Section 103 Evaluation. Additional testing of sediments was completed by USACE after publication of the DEIS that concluded that more than 4.8 million cy of the material to be dredged meets the USEPA Section 103 suitability criteria for ocean disposal. One sediment segment, representing approximately 315,000 cy, failed slightly the bioassay portion of the testing and is being re-tested. In the event this failed bioassay is confirmed with another failing test, this volume of dredged material would be placed at an existing permitted upland disposal site in the vicinity of NAVSTA Mayport. The Section 103 Evaluation will be finalized as part of the project permitting process. The remainder of the 5.2 million cy of material

is suitable for ocean disposal. The Navy would obtain the Section 103 permit prior to initiating ocean disposal of dredged materials.

CZMA. The CZMA, as amended, provides for the effective management, beneficial use, protection, and development of the resources of the U.S. coastal zone. The FCMP identifies coastal zone boundaries, areas of critical state concern, spill prevention and control requirements, dredging and filling regulations, and a variety of other regulations. The Navy would ensure that the Naval activities directly affecting the coastal zone or resources of the coastal zone would be carried out in a manner that is, to the maximum extent practicable, consistent with the approved FCMP. FDEP reviewed the DEIS and determined it to be consistent with the FCMP and noted that continued concurrence would be based on adequate resolution of issues identified during subsequent regulatory review with final concurrence to occur during the environmental permitting stage.

8.1.2 Local Plans, Policies, and Controls

As noted in Section 4.2, the alternatives considered in this EIS would be consistent with the objectives of local land use plans, policies, and controls. Any of the alternatives would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the 15 elements of the City of Jacksonville's 2010 Plan. Historic Preservation, Housing, Transportation, Recreation and Open Space, Conservation/Coastal Management, Capital Improvements, Future Land Use, Infrastructure, and Intergovernmental Coordination are among the elements addressed in the plan (City of Jacksonville 2004/2005). The cumulative impact of induced growth that would occur under Alternatives 10 and Alternative 12 (in particular) could exacerbate the affordable housing goals and objectives of the housing element.

The Housing Element contains a set of policies aimed at developing "stable and definable neighborhoods which offer safe, sound, sanitary housing that is affordable to all its present and future residents." The purpose of the Housing Element is to quantify housing needs and develop policies to ensure that a varied supply of housing types exists in Jacksonville to meet the needs of residents in order to maintain a heterogeneous population capable of supporting a well-functioning community. As housing costs have risen (even with the recent downturn in housing), the single-family home has increasingly become out of reach of a larger proportion of the population. The cumulative effect of the influx of personnel and dependents in the NAVSTA Mayport area along with the decline in housing in that area (see Section 6.2.4) may affect the City's ability to meet these affordable housing goals and objectives (City of Jacksonville 2007h).

Additionally, policies relating to school siting in Duval County in the Intergovernmental Coordination Element would provide a means for consideration of overcrowding of schools in the NAVSTA Mayport area under Alternatives 10 and 12. These policies include the city coordinating with the Duval County Public School Board to ensure that population projections and proposed educational facility site plans and off-site impacts are consistent with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulation and periodically reviewing the existing interlocal agreements for County Services to Atlantic Beach, Neptune Beach, and Jacksonville Beach, and amending those agreements when it is mutually agreeable where such provision would be more efficient and economical than local provision (City of Jacksonville 2007h).

The Navy and City of Jacksonville have a long history of working together recently demonstrated by Ordinance 2006-1176, enacted in March 2007, which incorporated language into the Future Land Use Element and the Transportation Element by adding Objectives and Policies for recognizing, protecting and promoting the safe and productive function of military airports located in Jacksonville including NAVSTA Mayport. The text amendments acknowledge the City's commitment to long term viability of its military installations by outlining the features of its land development regulations in regard to land use, density, height limitations, lighting, disclosure, and noise attenuation as they may relate to installations. It designates a Military Influence Zone and identifies mitigation strategies to limit incompatible uses. A representative designated by the military serves as an ex officio member of the Local Planning Agency/Planning Commission, for comments or recommendations for lands that fall within the Military Influence Zones. The military designee is responsible for reviewing development plans for compatibility with the military mission in relation to all aspects of the proposed development. All proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments, Planned Unit Developments, and Rezonings which, if approved, would affect the density, intensity or use of land, that lie within Military Influence Zones are referred to the Navy for review prior to final action by the City (City of Jacksonville 2007h).

The alternatives would have less influence on the implementation of the goals and objectives of the City of Atlantic Beach's 2015 Plan. This plan similarly addresses land use, transportation, infrastructure, conservation and coastal management, recreation and open space, housing, intergovernmental coordination, and capital improvements elements. The alternatives would be consistent with this plan. Among other policies, affordable housing policies of this plan refer to supporting the efforts of the City of Jacksonville Housing Commission and pursuing interlocal agreements with the City of Jacksonville (City of Atlantic Beach 2004).

Finally, the alternatives would be consistent with the Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council's Strategic Regional Policy Plan for Northeast Florida. Although there would be similar impacts with regard to cumulative effects and affordable housing under Alternatives 10 and 12, all alternatives would be consistent with the economic development, emergency preparedness, natural resources of regional significance, and regional transportation elements of this plan (Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council 1997).

8.2 IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVABLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

NEPA Section 101 (2.c(v)) requires a detailed statement on any irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented. Irreversible and irretrievable resource commitments are related to the use of nonrenewable resources and the effects that the use of those resources have on future generations. Irreversible commitments of resources are those that cannot be reversed except over an extremely long period of time. These irreversible effects primarily result from destruction of a specific resource (e.g. energy and minerals) that cannot be replaced within a reasonable time frame. Irretrievable resource commitments involve the loss in value of an affected resource that cannot be restored as a result of the action (e.g., extinction of a threatened or endangered species or the disturbance of a cultural site).

Under all alternatives except for Alternatives 2, 3, and 9 and the No Action Alternative, there would be irreversible and irretrievable commitment for construction activities in the consumption of construction materials for project facilities and using fossil fuels for operations as well as the ongoing upkeep of the existing facilities. This would include the construction of the proposed DESRON headquarters building (Alternatives 1, 6, 7, 11, 8 and 10); PHIBRON headquarters (Alternative 5); and for Group 3 alternatives (Alternatives 4, 8, 10, and 12) construction of nuclear propulsion plant maintenance facilities, transportation improvements, and parking structures. Particular irreversible and/or irretrievable impacts that would result are noted below:

- Consumption of fossil fuels and energy would occur during construction and operation activities. Fossil fuels (gasoline and diesel oil) would be used to power construction equipment and vehicles. Electrical power would be used for lighting and operations. The energy consumed for project construction and operation represents a permanent and nonrenewable commitment of these resources.
- Permanent commitment of construction materials (concrete and steel, in particular) for construction of new facilities. These materials would be irretrievably committed for the

life of the project. Use of these materials represents a further depletion of natural resources. Construction and maintenance activities are considered a long-term nonrenewable investment of these resources.

- Land that would be physically altered by construction would be committed to the new use for the foreseeable future and would represent a permanent commitment of the land to a developed use and decrease the amount of open land available for other uses.
- The capital and labor required for construction would be an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of these resources.
- Existing requirement of public services and utilities associated with operation of NAVSTA Mayport would continue to be a long-term commitment of these resources. Most alternatives would decrease personnel loading and, therefore, reduce public service and utility demand, but personnel loading would increase with Alternatives 10 and 12.

In addition to the resources expended during the construction and operation of support facilities (described above) under the Group 2 and 3 alternatives, there would be consumptive use of certain nonrenewable energy resources required to operate dredge support systems, barges, tugs, trucks, pumps, and equipment. There would also be commitment of time and money to accomplish the disposal of dredged material. Time and money would be expended in the planning, testing, permitting, and implementation of dredge disposal. Dredged material disposed of offshore would be irreversibly and irretrievably committed to the disposal process. Disposal of sediment not suitable for ocean disposal at upland sites would not necessarily be irretrievably and irreversibly committed to such use, as the material could be reused for various purposes.

8.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USE OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

NEPA Section 101 (2.c(iv)) requires a detailed statement on the relationship between local short-term uses of man's environment and the maintenance and enhancement of long-term productivity. Short-term uses of the environment associated with the alternatives include changes to the physical environment and energy and utility use during the construction of facilities associated with all alternatives except for Alternatives 2, 3, and 9 and the No Action Alternative and construction dredging under the Group 2 and Group 3 alternatives. Construction would involve short-term increases in fugitive emissions and construction-generated noise and would increase the use of fossil fuels to power equipment. In addition, expenditures of public funds and the use of labor would be required. Long-term changes would include

the alterations to land use that would exist for the life of the new facilities and the alteration to the dredged depth of the NAVSTA Mayport turning basin and entrance channel and federal navigation channel that would remain as such subject to subsequent siltation and maintenance dredging. The act of offshore disposal of dredged material in USEPA-approved ODMDs under Group 2 and 3 alternatives would be a short-term use of the environment that would affect the benthic environment of the area. Studies of benthic communities within and just outside the disposal sites (USEPA 1999a and USEPA 2006b) have shown that the composition of benthic species differs slightly with the changes in surficial substrata caused by disposal of dredging projects at the sites. The sandy bottom sites of the previously used Jacksonville and Fernandina ODMDs have low productivity as compared to hard bottom or artificial reef ocean bottoms.

The homeporting of ships at NAVSTA Mayport would result in long-term productivity improvements in efficient utilization of existing assets at NAVSTA Mayport in support of the Navy mission. As noted in Section 1.2, the purpose of the proposed action is to ensure effective support of fleet operational requirements through efficient use of waterfront and shore side facilities at NAVSTA Mayport. Use of NAVSTA Mayport helps preserve distribution of homeport locations and ports to reduce the risks to fleet resources in the event of natural disaster, manmade calamity, or attack by foreign nations or terrorists. Full use of NAVSTA Mayport preserves the capabilities of the Jacksonville Fleet Concentration Area, which supports U.S. based naval surge capability. Finally, utilization of NAVSTA Mayport helps optimize fleet access to naval training ranges and operating areas by retaining ship homeport locations within six hours transit time of local operating areas.