

NEWS RELEASE

CORPS OF ENGINEERS DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED MASTER PLAN MODIFICATIONS - LEASING OF GOVERNMENT LAND FOR RECREATIONAL AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

MARY ALICE PARK, LAKE SIDNEY LANIER CITY OF CUMMING, FORSYTH COUNTY, GEORGIA

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is conducting an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the update of the Master Plan for Mary Alice Park. The proposed action includes approval of an updated Master Development Plan showing removal and relocation of the existing public boat ramp and parking area from the eastern portion of the Project Site to the southern portion of the Project Site, and construction of a hotel/conference center, water park, parking areas, and associated amenities. A public beach will also be constructed at an alternate location to mitigate for the loss of public beach area at the Project Site prior to the open (summer) season, after construction at the Project Site is initiated. The hotel will consist of a five or six story building with 600 rooms and 960 parking spaces. Approximately 300,000 cubic yards of excess fill would be hauled off from the Project Site as part of initial grading activities associated with the proposed developments. This action is addressed in a Draft EA, prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Council on Environmental Quality regulatory guidance in 40 CFR 1500-1508, and the USACE regulatory guidance in 33 CFR 230. The Draft EA document is available for public review and comments and has been posted on the Mobile District public access website at the following location:

<http://www.sam.usace.army.mil/pd/Pd1.htm>

EVALUATION: Upon completion of the 15-day public coordination period set forth in this notice, the EA will be finalized and the final determination of the NEPA documentation requirements made. If the determination is to finalize the EA and prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact, these documents will be placed on the file in the Mobile District Office for further reference.

The decision whether to proceed with the proposed action will be based on the evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. The decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits that may be reasonably expected to accrue for 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: conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, floodplain values, land use, navigation, recreation, energy needs, safety, consideration of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

COORDINATION: The USACE, Mobile District is soliciting comments from the general public, federal, state and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interest parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of the proposed activity. The USACE, Mobile District will use any comments received to determine whether or not to proceed with the proposed action. You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to other parties who may have an interest in the proposed action.

CORRESPONDENCE: Comments on the Draft EA should be directed to Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, ATTN: PD-EI, PO Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001 or via email talmedge.k.burge@usace.army.mil . Comments should be received no later than **15 October 2007**.