

**TREMLEY POINT CONNECTOR ROAD PROJECT  
REEVALUATION  
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

**Borough of Carteret, Middlesex County, NJ  
City of Linden, Union County, NJ**

**Prepared by  
First Coast Guard District  
November 2013**

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RE-EVALUATION  
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**Prepared by: U.S. Coast Guard-Lead Federal Agency**

Since the publication of the Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for the New Jersey Turnpike Authority's (NJTA) Tremley Point Connector Road Project (TPCR) in April 2010, information and analysis regarding the options proposed to mitigate the impact on wetlands anticipated by the project have been prepared and discussed among federal, state and local interests. The FEA presents a mitigation plan that would enlarge the already existing Piles Creek Wetlands Mitigation Site (FEA, 6.2.2, 6.2.3). Purchase of wetlands credits from a wetland mitigation bank would also be considered as an alternative.

Upon review of the FEA, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Corps of Engineers (ACOE), Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) along with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), expressed concern that the Piles Creek Wetland Mitigation site may not adequately provide the mitigation necessary to compensate for the loss of wetland anticipated by the proposed TPCR project. They were also concerned that the option to purchase wetland credits from a mitigation bank, as described in the FEA, was not specific enough to provide appropriate alternative mitigation.

NJTA's preferred design alternative (Alternative 10) will impact approximately 4.3 acres of tidal wetlands through predominantly shading impacts. Much of the TPCR is planned to be constructed on concrete structures above grade, and the use of retaining walls is planned to limit any area where the TPCR will be constructed on fill material. The use of a "tight alignment" for the TPCR has eliminated the potential to construct a wetlands mitigation area within the alignment. In order to mitigate/compensate for unavoidable wetlands impacts, the NJTA had proposed the enlargement of the existing Piles Creek Wetlands Mitigation site as its primary alternative with the use of credits purchased from a mitigation bank as its secondary option. Based upon identification of a suitable wetland mitigation bank within the project vicinity and after consultation with federal agencies and NJDEP, purchasing of credits from the mitigation bank has become the primary mitigatory option. Additionally, a specific mitigation bank has been identified in the project vicinity.

A recent re-evaluation of the wetlands mitigation banking within Watershed Management Area 7 (WMA 7) has identified a suitable wetlands mitigation bank that could provide tidal wetland credits. This bank is known as the Port Reading Bank ("Bank") and is located on an 11.26-acre property in the Township of Woodbridge, Middlesex County, New Jersey (map attached). The Bank received a total of 8.47 credits for tidal wetland creation and enhancement activities on 11.13 acres of the 11.26 acre parcel. The service area for Bank includes WMA 7 and a portion of WMA 9.

Prologis Development Services is the sponsor of the Bank which is described in a Banking Instrument entered into by Prologis; the ACOE, New York District; USEPA, Region II; FWS; NMFS and NJDEP. In accordance with the Banking Instrument, the Bank credits provide one-

for-one compensation for impacts to tidal wetlands. The Bank is listed by the NJDEP on their current approved list of wetlands mitigation banks.

NJTA has contacted the Bank regarding the availability of credits. NJTA is advised by the Bank that 2.6 credits are currently available and that an additional 3.3 credits would be available in the fall of 2013. Based upon the 4.30 acres of anticipated wetlands impacts from the preferred TPCR alternative, NJTA would require the use of all currently available and most of the fall 2013 credits. As a follow-up to the communication with the Bank, NJTA has requested and received a draft agreement regarding the acquisition of the credits on June 18, 2013. Environmental mitigation for the TPCR project is funded through special appropriation, FY06 SAFETEA-LU, NRS-1301, Liberty Corridor and the NJTA's 2009-2018 capital improvement program. The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) includes the TPCR in its 2012-2015 Transportation Improvement Program.

Based upon this new information it appears that the use of mitigation bank credits can be a viable approach and be the primary mitigation option. In this revised approach, the acquisition of mitigation bank credits from the Prologis bank will now be the primary alternative for wetlands mitigation and NJTA will pursue the acquisition of the number of required credits for the TPCR preferred alternative. Although estimated to impact approximately 4.3 acres of wetlands the actual area impacted will be determined by the final design of the TPCR, hence the actual number of required credits. Should sufficient mitigation bank credits not be available, the use of an enlarged Piles Creek Mitigation Area and other suitable sites will be a secondary consideration. If that option is exercised it would build upon the existing successful mitigation performed at the Piles Creek site in 1993 for NJTA's Interchange 11 Project which had received construction permits from the ACOE and NJDEP. After meeting with the applicant and federal, state and local partners on 13 June 2013 to confirm acceptability of the mitigation options the Coast Guard is confident that the combination of mitigation options presented above will satisfactorily compensate for the wetland impacts anticipated and meets the expectations of our federal and state partners.

On 24 May 2013, the NJDEP permitted a new project, the Rahway Arches Properties –Site Remediation, located just east of the TPCR. Both the Corps of Engineers and EPA raised a question of possible conflict of the TPCR proposal with the approved Rahway Arches site remediation. The site remediation project was designed to correct leakage from the previously remediated impoundments (lagoons) which had accepted waste products between 1939 and 1973 from the American Cyanamid Warners Plant which was located across the Rahway River in Linden, NJ. The impoundments which have had road construction and vegetation plantings during the 1980's have been the subject of environmental monitoring throughout the 1980's and 1990's. In 1995 NJDEP established a Deed Notice for the remediation site. The Deed Notice requires that NJDEP approve any alteration, improvement or disturbance proposed on the site. In accordance with the restrictions of the Deed Notice, NJTA applied for and received a GP No. 12 permit from NJDEP for the geotechnical boring program. The geotechnical program included areas within the former impoundment areas.

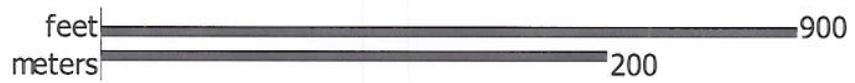
The TPCR is planned to be constructed as an elevated structure through the area near Rahway Arches Properties –Site Remediation area and no additional impacts or conflicts with the

Rahway Arches remediation are anticipated. NJTA has advised that they will coordinate its efforts on the TPCR with the Rahway Arches Properties remediation project. Notwithstanding any conditions to address this included in the eventual Corps of Engineers and NJDEP permits for the TPCR, if issued, the Coast Guard bridge permit, when and if issued, will name both the Corps of Engineers and NJDEP in its disclaimer condition.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq) and NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508) the Coast Guard has concluded that the proposed Tremley Point Connector Road project will have no significant impact on the environment and will prepare a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for this is the action.



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## PORT READING MITIGATION BANK SITE