
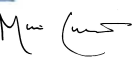


Date: October 24, 2023

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 
Mario Cordero, Port of Long Beach CEO 

Subject: **Pier Wind and the Restoration of East San Pedro Bay**

The City of Long Beach (City) began working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) in 2010 to advance a feasibility study to restore the East San Pedro Bay (ESPB), known officially as the East San Pedro Bay Ecosystem Restoration Study (Study). The purpose of the Study was to estimate the National Ecosystem Restoration benefits associated with the restoration of ecosystem habitats, as well as to evaluate the impacts of these restoration options on offshore and nearshore resources, including aquatic habitat and improvements to water circulation in the ESPB.

The findings from the Study were published by the Army Corps in January 2022 in the [Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report \(EIS/EIR\)](#). But due to significant—and growing—costs estimated for the City and Army Corps to implement the options outlined in the Study, the project effectively stalled. Capitalizing on the significant effort and work completed by the City and Army Corps, the Port of Long Beach (Port) may be interested in implementing similar restoration elements in the ESPB as compensatory mitigation for the Pier Wind Project, should it be approved. The Port seeks to advance the local goals of the Study, such as erosion and shoreline protection along the Belmont Peninsula, when selecting mitigation elements for Pier Wind.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, offshore wind (OSW) is a critical piece of the equitable transition to net-zero emissions in the United States. [California Assembly Bill 525](#) directs State agencies to develop a strategic plan and set statewide goals for OSW production by 2030 and 2045. Accordingly, the California Energy Commission established an OSW planning goal of 2 to 5 gigawatts (GW) by 2030 and 25 GW by 2045. These goals will enable the State and federal governments to mitigate the climate crisis through the decarbonization of energy resources.

Existing port infrastructure on the U.S. West Coast, including California, is not currently adequate to support the development of the OSW industry, and substantial port investment is required to develop purpose-built OSW port facilities. OSW components are very large and require port facilities with deep water, substantial laydown area, and infrastructure with heavy loading capacities to assemble the wind turbine systems. The Port proposes to construct Pier Wind, a 400-acre terminal purpose-built for the staging and integration, and/or foundation fabrication of floating OSW turbines in the Long Beach Outer Harbor. The Pier Wind Project would provide the crucial infrastructure necessary to support OSW in California and help to achieve environmental goals, economic growth, and energy independence.

The construction of Pier Wind will involve the creation of approximately 430 acres of new land in the Long Beach Outer Harbor. This fill project to create reclaimed land will result in the loss of soft bottom Outer Harbor habitat, and these impacts must be mitigated in accordance with State and federal regulations. Accordingly, the Port plans to implement project-specific compensatory mitigation for the Pier Wind Project, and the Port is specifically exploring the concept of constructing a mitigation project in the ESPB, due to its proximity to the Pier Wind Project and for the opportunity to capitalize on the work that has already been done to evaluate restoration efforts in the ESPB. The restoration features of the mitigation concept may mirror certain elements of the project contemplated in the Study completed by the Army Corps in January 2022. These restoration features will be evaluated through a robust stakeholder process.

Given the Port's interest in moving forward with these projects at the local level, the City has requested that Congress de-authorize the ESPB Restoration Feasibility Study with the Army Corps through the Water Resources Development Act of 2024. De-authorizing the project will help to pave the way for the Port's Pier Wind Compensatory Mitigation Project. The Harbor Department and the City look forward to continued cooperation and collaboration to advance this exciting opportunity, helping to realize a zero-emissions future for the Port, City, and State.

The Port is working closely with the Army Corps on the Conceptual Mitigation Plan on a very aggressive schedule. The draft Plan containing proposed restoration features will be shared with City by the first quarter of 2024 and with other stakeholders. Construction of Pier Wind is currently scheduled to begin in early 2027, immediately after the Project EIS/EIR is certified. Impacts of the restoration features will also be evaluated in that environmental document.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Tyler Bonanno-Curley, Acting Deputy City Manager, at tyler.curley@longbeach.gov.

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