

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment
National Coast Guard Museum Project
New London, Connecticut
June 15, 2017

Background: In March 2014, the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) prepared an Environmental Assessment that analyzed the acquisition of a 0.34-acre parcel adjacent to Water Street in New London, Connecticut and construction of a new National Coast Guard Museum (NCGM). At that time, effects from construction and operation of a Museum were evaluated at a programmatic level, since critical details required for a full and complete analysis had not yet been developed. The 2014 Environmental Assessment concluded in a Finding of No Significant Impact. The land was subsequently acquired and is now owned by the USCG. The USCG intends to allow the National Coast Guard Museum Association (NCGMA) to construct the NCGM and accept the eventual donation of the Museum to the USCG for long-term operation. As part of preconstruction site analysis, the NCGMA has determined that additional land is necessary to accommodate the Museum and revisions to the initial concept plans are necessary.

At this time, the USCG with the significant assistance of the NCGMA, intends to prepare a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the purpose of evaluating the specific impacts related to construction and operation of the NCGM, including the acquisition of additional adjacent land; shoreline modifications; museum layout, design, and footprint; and ancillary utility and site improvements. Cumulative impacts of the proposed Museum in connection with other independent but related projects will also be evaluated. These include the proposed construction of a pedestrian bridge, Cross Sound Ferry terminal expansion, and the homeporting of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter (USCGC) EAGLE.

The SEA will be developed in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the President's Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508), and the Coast Guard's procedures for implementing NEPA (COMDTINST M16475.1D). The SEA will also fulfill the requirement for project review under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (36 CFR Part 800).

The SEA will assess the environmental impact of the proposed action and serve as a concise public document that provides sufficient evidence and analysis to determine if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) must be prepared, or if a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate.

Proposed Action: The Coast Guard proposes to allow the NCGMA to construct an approximately 70,000 to 80,000 square-foot museum with an at-grade entry level plus five to six stories to be located in downtown New London, Connecticut on land that is now or will be in the future owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. On completion of the museum, the Coast Guard intends to accept the donation of the museum and operate it in perpetuity. Specific proposed action elements that are the subject of the SEA include: (1) acquisition of approximately 2,000 square feet of land area to the south that is currently owned by the City of New London; (2) acquisition of approximately 12,200 square feet of land area that is currently owned by the State of Connecticut (8,900 square feet of which is currently covered by the City Pier platform); (3) minor property boundary adjustments; (4) construction of approximately 225 linear feet of bulkhead and fill along the shoreline of the Thames River; (5) demolition of approximately 3,300 square feet of the City Pier Plaza to provide compensatory open water; (6) completion of site and utility improvements on land and in the water to accommodate the Museum and water exhibits; and (7) construction and operation of the Museum.

Public Scoping Meeting and Comment Period: Through the NCGMA, the Coast Guard is seeking public input on the scope of environmental issues to be addressed in the SEA. The NCGMA has scheduled a public scoping meeting to discuss and solicit comments and suggestions regarding the proposal to construct and operate the Museum. The public scoping meeting will be held on June 22, 2017 at 7PM at the Lecture Room of the Science and Technology Magnet High School of Southeastern Connecticut, 490 Jefferson Avenue, New London, CT 06320. All are welcome to attend.

Alternatively, please submit your written comments by July 18, 2017 via USPS mail, fax, or electronic mail to:

NCGMA
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