



**US Army Corps
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Jacksonville District

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Corps dredging project not likely cause of red tide

Jacksonville, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has dredged the Kings Bay Entrance Channel annually for decades with no apparent issues in the past. Though working in the vicinity for several weeks, contractors are only in their fourth day of dredging the channel within the St. Marys River Inlet.

Corps officials believe it's very unlikely current dredging operations are causing red tide effects. The size of the affected area appears to be much larger than the area that a pipe discharge would affect, and the dredged sandy material is not likely to contain sufficient nutrients to cause a red-tide event, Corps Environmental Biologist Michael Hollingsworth said.

Weather conditions such as tropical storms that have occurred these past few weeks have been known to produce red tide or other harmful algae blooms in the past. Prevailing easterly winds this week could have assisted moving the bloom shoreward, concentrating the toxins along the coast. Red tides have been documented along Florida's gulf coast since the 1840s and probably occurred much earlier, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute website.

The Corps has notified its personnel to take appropriate safety measures and is following the situation closely. The Corps may shut down the project temporarily until conditions improve.

For more information, contact the Corporate Communication Office at 904-232-1953.

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