US Army Corps of Engineers®

PUBLIC NOTICE

Applicant:
Lourdes Gomez
Miami-Dade County

Published: April 24, 2025
Expires: May 24, 2025

Jacksonville District
Permit Application No. SAJ-2003-04250

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The Jacksonville District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344) **and** Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. §403). The purpose of this public notice is to solicit comments from the public regarding the work described below:

If you are interested in receiving additional project drawings associated with this public notice, please send an e-mail to the project manager by electronic mail at Madison.J.Pollard@usace.army.mil.

APPLICANT: Lourdes Gomez
Miami-Dade County
111 NW 1st Street
Miami, FL 33128

AGENT: Sara Thanner
Miami-Dade Co. Dept. of Regulatory and Economic Resources
701 NW 1st Court
Miami, FL 33136

WATERWAY AND LOCATION: The project would affect aquatic resources associated with the Atlantic Ocean. The project site is located at approximately 3.5 nautical miles at 30° from Government Cut Marker R "12" and approximately 1.4 nautical miles due east of the City of Miami Beach. The site dimensions requested for reauthorization are a nonstandard shaped polygon that is 1,500 yards long north-south by 800 yards east-west at the widest part. Depths at this site range from 40 feet to 60 feet with a minimum vertical clearance of -25 feet; in Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Corner points (Latitude (N) and Longitude (W)) for the boundaries of Anchorage Artificial Reef Site in decimal minutes (DM) and decimal degrees (DD) are provided in the table below.

Point	Latitude N (DM)	Longitude W (DM)	Latitude N (DD)	Longitude W (DD)
Northwest	25 49.116	80 05.766	25.818600	80.096100
Northeast	25 49.116	80 05.454	25.818600	80.090900
Extension 1	25 48.808	80 05.454	25.813467	80.090900
Extension 2	25 48.808	80 05.330	25.813467	80.088833
Extension 3	25 48.580	80 05.330	25.809667	80.088833
Extension 4	25 48.580	80 05.425	25.809667	80.090417
Southeast	25 48.333	80 05.425	25.805550	80.090417
Southwest	25 48.333	80 05.712	25.805550	80.095200
West	25 48.628	80 05.766	25.810467	80.096100

EXISTING CONDITIONS: The project site is located at approximately 3.5 nautical miles at 30° from Government Cut Marker R "12" and approximately 1.4 nautical miles due east of the City of Miami Beach. The site dimensions requested for reauthorization are a nonstandard shaped polygon that is 1,500 yards long north-south by 800 yards east-west at the widest part. The total footprint of the Anchorage Artificial Reef site is 200.4 acres. Currently, artificial reefs have only been placed on approximately 0.16 acres. Over the course of a 10-year permit, new artificial reef construction is expected to occur on approximately 1.5 acres. Artificial reef deployments will occur a minimum of 200 feet from the emergent biota resources on sandy barren habitat.

The federal permitting history includes an ongoing permit authorization since May 02, 2003, for the proposed activities that includes construction for ten (10) years within the previously permitted 200.4 acres Anchorage artificial reef area; specifically, to strategically deploy and/or anchor approved artificial reef material (as acquired) into the existing artificial reef site.

PROJECT PURPOSE:

Basic: The basic project purpose is the nourishment/renourishment of an existing artificial reef for marine habitat enhancement.

Overall: The overall project purpose is the nourishment/renourishment of an existing artificial reef for marine habitat enhancement, offshore mainland Miami-Dade County, Florida through artificial reef habitat placement on barren sandy substrate.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant seeks reauthorization to create artificial reef by deploying approximately 300 cubic yards of calcium-carbonate based, such as limestone boulders, prefabricated artificial reef modules, or large concrete-based materials (i.e., connection/junction boxes, large sections of bridge decking or other construction demolition) material annually or 3,000 cubic yards (0.5 acres /21,780 square feet) over the life of a 10-year permit.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION: The applicant has provided the following information in support of efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the aquatic environment:

At the POM A Artificial Reef Site, only natural or calcium-carbonate based materials will be deployed such as limestone boulders, prefabricated artificial reef modules, or large concrete-based materials such as connection/junction boxes, large sections of bridge decking or other construction demolition. Vessels or barges will not be deployed at this site.

All artificial reef material deployments will be prepared as necessary to meet permit conditions and follow guidelines set forth in the following best management practice (BMP) documents:

- Guidelines for Marine Artificial Reef Materials 2nd Edition (Association of the Gulf and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commissions 2004)
- National Artificial Reef Plan: Guidelines for Siting, Construction, Development, and Assessment of Artificial Reefs (NOAA 2007)
- Guidelines and Management Practices for Artificial Reef Siting, Usage, Construction, and Anchoring in Southeast Florida (Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative, Lindberg and Seaman (editors), 2010)

All artificial reef deployments will be evaluated based on specific characteristics of a 25-year storm event to provide the necessary safeguard against material movement consistent with current permit. The Lin Stability model distributed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWCC) and the Miami-Dade stability model developed by Coastal Systems International will be utilized to assess the stability of each individual artificial reef prior to deployment. If a proposed artificial reef is not indicated to be stable at the site depth, the material will not be deployed.

Artificial reef deployments will avoid areas with known benthic resources based on Laser Airborne Depth Sounder (LADS) data from 2003, NOAA side scan data from 2009, benthic habitat maps (Walker 20091), and the assessment by DERM Biologists in the fall of 2024. All deployments will maintain a 200 ft buffer to known natural resources consistent with previous permit conditions.

A biological survey will also be conducted immediately prior to the deployment of any materials. Biological surveys will be conducted by DERM marine biologists using SCUBA. Each survey will initially consist of the placement of a temporary marker buoy at the proposed target reef location. Divers will then conduct a survey for any resources within a 200 ft minimum radius of the marker buoy. If benthic resources such as hardbottom or seagrass are found during this survey, the target position will be altered to provide appropriate buffer distance from resources. If adequate buffer distances are not available, the initial target site will be abandoned, and another location evaluated.

Reef materials will be transported to the site via tugboat and/or barge. On site, the vessel transporting the materials will be positioned directly adjacent to the previously established buoy, and held in position either by anchoring/spudding, with dynamic positioning using tugboat(s), or combination of tugs and anchors. Once a stable configuration at the target buoy is achieved the material will be deployed. Concrete and boulder materials will be offloaded using heavy equipment such as cranes or loaders.

In water surveys will also be conducted immediately post deployment to verify that material was deployed where intended and does not exceed navigational clearance requirements. Adjustments to location or material height off the substrate are made if necessary. The dimensions and relief of the new artificial reef area are measured and, if the size of the reef allows, the perimeter is traced by divers towing a surface GPS unit. This information will be incorporated into a material placement report and submitted to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION: The applicant has provided the following explanation why compensatory mitigation should not be required:

A compensatory mitigation plan has not been submitted as unavoidable functional loss to the aquatic environment is not being proposed. All artificial reef deployments will occur on barren, sandy substrate a minimum of 200 feet from benthic resources based on the Benthic Resource Report and in accordance with the avoidance and minimization methodology plan. Should any unplanned impacts occur, Miami-Dade County will contact the Army Corps Engineers and other environmental permitting agencies to develop a specific mitigation plan.

CULTURAL RESOURCES:
The Corps is evaluating the undertaking for effects to historic properties as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This public notice serves to inform the public of the proposed undertaking and invites comments including those from local, State, and Federal government Agencies with respect to historic resources. Our final determination relative to historic resource impacts may be subject to additional coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer, federally recognized tribes and other interested parties.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The Corps has performed an initial review of the application, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Section 7 Mapper, and the NMFS Critical Habitat Mapper to determine if any threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species, as well as the proposed and final designated critical habitat may occur in the vicinity of the proposed project. Based on this initial review, the Corps has made a preliminary determination that the proposed project may affect species and critical habitat listed below. No other ESA-listed species or critical habitat will be affected by the proposed action.

Table 1: ESA-listed species and/or critical habitat potentially present in the action area.

Species Common Name and/or Critical Habitat Name	**Scientific Name**	**Federal Status**
Queen Conch	*Alger gigas*	Threatened
Boulder Star Coral and its critical habitat	*Orbicella franksi*	Threatened
Elkhorn Coral and its critical habitat	*Acropora palmata*	Threatened
Lobed Star Coral	*Orbicella annularis*	Threatened
Mountainous Star Coral and its critical habitat	*Orbicella faveolata*	Threatened
Pillar Coral and its critical habitat	*Dendrogyra cylindrus*	Threatened (Proposed Endangered)
Staghorn Coral and its critical habitat	*Acropora cervicornis*	Threatened
Rough Cactus Coral and its critical habitat	*Mycetophyllia ferox*	Threatened
Loggerhead Sea Turtle and its critical habitat	*Caretta caretta*	Threatened
Green Sea Turtle and its critical habitat	*Chelonia mydas*	Threatened
Leatherback Sea Turtle	*Dermochelys mydas*	Endangered
Hawksbill Sea Turtle	*Eretmochelys imbricata*	Endangered
Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle	*Lepidochelys kempii*	Endangered
Giant Manta Ray	*Mobula birostris*	Threatened
Smalltooth Sawfish	*Pristis pectinata*	Endangered

Pursuant to Section 7 ESA, any required consultation with the Service(s) will be conducted in accordance with 50 CFR part 402.

This notice serves as request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service for any additional information on whether any listed or proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or critical habitat may be present in the area which would be affected by the proposed activity.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: Pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act 1996, the Corps reviewed the project area, examined information provided by the applicant, and consulted available species information.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Our initial determination is that the proposed action may adversely affect EFH and/or fisheries managed by Fishery Management Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Implementation of the proposed project would directly impact approximately 0.5 acres of barren sandy habitat. The effects of the project are determined to be minimal and permanent. These habitat(s) are utilized by the following species and their various life stages:

Species	***Life Stage***
Bluefish	Adult
Spiny Lobster	ALL
Bluefish	Larvae
Corals	ALL
Nurse Shark	Juvenile/Adult
Bluefish	Juvenile
Great Hammerhead Shark	ALL
Tiger Shark	Juvenile/Adult
Snapper Grouper	ALL
Whale Shark	ALL
Skipjack Tuna	Adult
Spinner Shark	Neonate
Bluefish	Eggs
Scalloped Hammerhead Shark	Juvenile/Adult
Bull Shark	Juvenile/Adult
Sandbar Shark	Adult
Blacktip Shark (Atlantic Stock)	Juvenile/Adult
Sailfish	Adult
Caribbean Reef Shark	ALL
Tiger Shark	Neonate
Sailfish	Juvenile
Dolphin Wahoo	ALL

Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

NAVIGATION: The proposed structure or activity is not located in the vicinity of a federal navigation channel.

SECTION 408: The applicant will not require permission under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 408) because the activity, in whole or in part, would not alter, occupy, or use a Corps Civil Works project.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Water Quality Certification is required from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The project has a permit (13-0180248-005-EI) that expires August 23, 2026.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT CONSISTENCY: Coastal Zone Consistency Concurrence is required from FDEP. In Florida, the State approval constitutes compliance with the approved Coastal Zone Management Plan.

NOTE: This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified or evaluated to ensure compliance with laws and regulation governing the regulatory program. The geographic extent of aquatic resources within the proposed project area that either are, or are presumed to be, within the Corps jurisdiction has not been verified by Corps personnel.

EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including cumulative impacts thereof; among these are conservation, economics, esthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historical properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food, and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. A permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest.

COMMENTS: The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other Interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this determination, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

The Jacksonville District will receive written comments on the proposed work, as outlined above, until May 24, 2025. Comments should be submitted electronically via the Regulatory Request System (RRS) at https://rrs.usace.army.mil/rrs or to Madison Pollard at Madison.J.Pollard@usace.army.mil. Alternatively, you may submit comments in writing to the Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, Attention: Madison Pollard, 9900 SW 107th Ave #203 Miami, FL 33176. Please refer to the permit application number in your comments.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for public hearings

shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. Requests for a public hearing will be granted, unless the District Engineer determines that the issues raised are insubstantial or there is otherwise no valid interest to be served by a hearing.

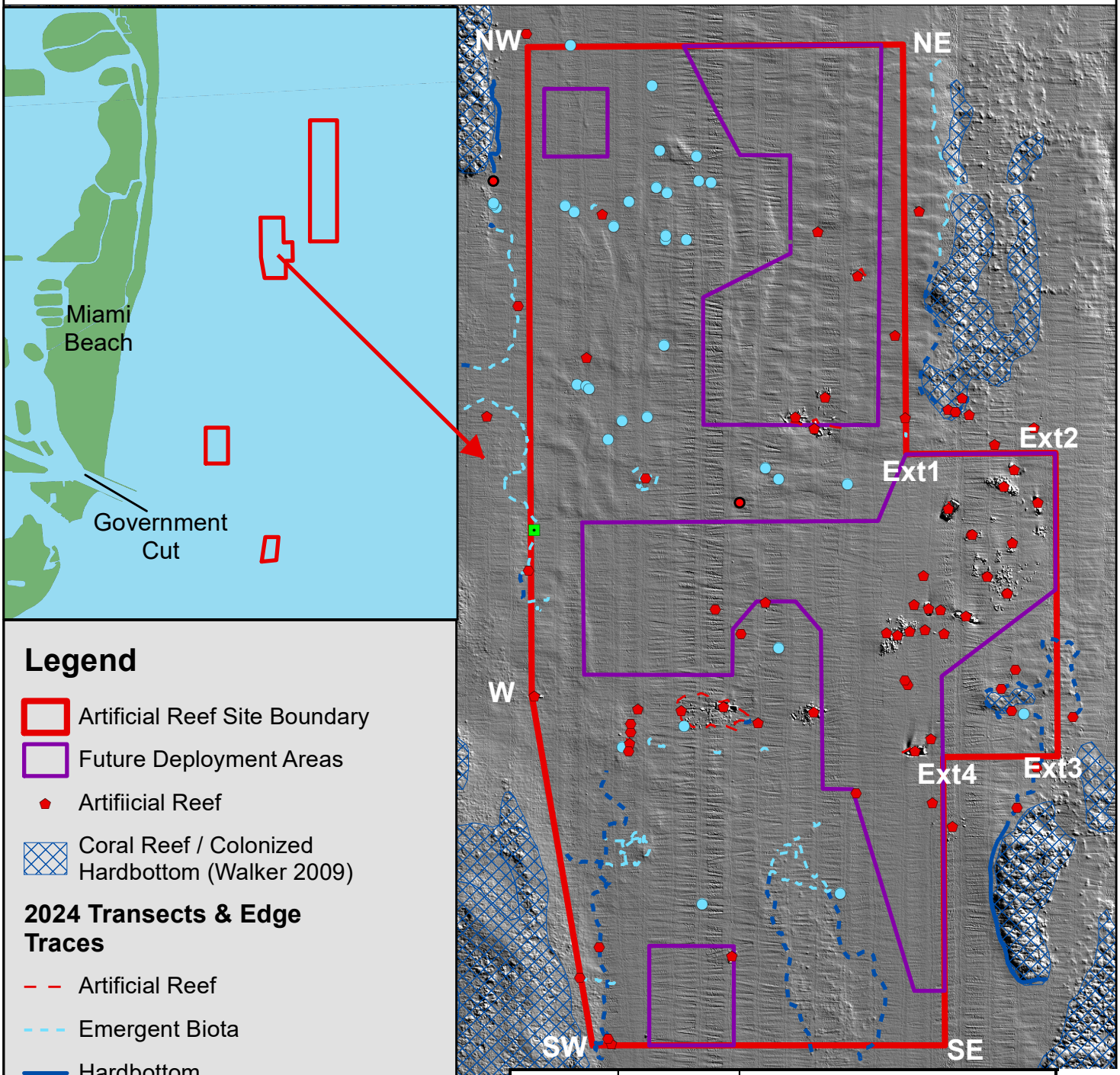
Attachment 1

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Anchorage Artificial Reef Site

(2009 NOAA Side Scan Bathymetry)

N



Legend

- Artificial Reef Site Boundary
- Future Deployment Areas
- Artifiicial Reef
- Coral Reef / Colonized Hardbottom (Walker 2009)

2024 Transects & Edge Traces

- Artificial Reef
- Emergent Biota
- Hardbottom
- Hardbottom - Patchy

2024 Resource Points

- Emergent Biota
- Seagrass

0 400 800 1,600 Feet

Corner	Abbreviation	Latitude N (DM)	Longitude W (DM)
Northwest	NW	25 49.116	80 05.766
Northeast	NE	25 49.116	80 05.454
Extension 1	Ext1	25 48.808	80 05.454
Extension 2	Ext2	25 48.808	80 05.330
Extension 3	Ext3	25 48.580	80 05.330
Extension 4	Ext4	25 48.580	80 05.425
Southeast	SE	25 48.333	80 05.425
Southwest	SW	25 48.333	80 05.712
West	W	25 48.628	80 05.766