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RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Comment No	Response
1	Additional information about beneficial use of dredge material from construction has been added to the dredged material maintenance plan attached to the GRR-EA in Appendix K, as included below. In accordance with existing federal policy and guidance, the potential for beneficial use (BU) of the limited quantity of new work material that would be generated by construction of the recommended plan was given additional consideration beyond the previous USACE (2012c) study. The BU analysis is focused on the new work material because the additional maintenance material associated with the GRR features that would be available at one time would be very small. The increase in maintenance material associated with these three areas is estimated to be 2.7 million cubic yards over 50 years. Based on 16 dredging cycles, only about 16.9 thousand cubic yards of maintenance material would be available every 3 years. This would restore only about 1/10th of an acre every three years and make the cost for this restoration action very high. The new work material from the recommended plan is estimated to be 1.7 MCY consisting primarily soft sandy clay. This total quantity would be available for restoration activities at one time. Based on a review of aerial photography, the nearest potential marsh restoration area is a small degraded marsh area in the southern Oyster Creek watershed, adjacent to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) and just east of the project area (Figure 2 in Appendix K). The pumping distance to this area from the Bend Easing feature (Figure ES-5) is about 3.1 miles. The Bend Easing is the project feature closest to the BU area and contains the largest amount of new work material. It is possible that approximately 8 acres of marsh could be constructed with the available material. The pumping distance from the Bend Easing feature to PA 1 is about 2.3 miles. The PAs or BU areas selected in the Dredged Material Management Plan are those which provide the needed capacity at the lowest cost per cubic yard. Based solely on pumping distance, the least-cost disposal option would be PA 1, since the closest potential BU site is about 30 percent farther than PA 1. The proposed project placement area selection is based on the lowest cost, environmentally acceptable alternative. However, the BU plan could be recommended if the non-federal sponsor or other interested entity were willing to fund the difference in placement and construction costs over the least-cost placement plan. At this time, no cost-share sponsor has been identified for this BU feature.