



Flamingo Developed Area Seawall Rehabilitation Environmental Assessment

Comments Sought on Proposed Seawall Repairs at Flamingo, Everglades National Park

The National Park Service (NPS) is beginning an environmental assessment (EA) to address options for repairing deteriorating seawalls at the Flamingo Developed Area within Everglades National Park, Monroe County, Florida. This notice begins the EA process by requesting your comments on the scope of the analysis that will be conducted. Please submit any comments by January 16, 2010.



Panoramic view of the Flamingo Visitor Center and seawall

BACKGROUND

Flamingo is the largest developed area within Everglades National Park and receives over 150,000 visitors annually. The Flamingo seawalls and associated facilities were built in 1954 and have deteriorated over the years due to spalling and corrosion, settling, boat impacts and hurricanes. Visible sections of existing seawall caps and pilings are cracking and spalling due to rusting and expanding reinforcing steel, in some cases causing potential tripping hazards for visitors and staff. Pavement cracking and settling along the perimeter of some seawalls also indicates possible failure of the tie rod systems. Failure of a single tie rod could have a rippling effect that leads to failure of a large portion of the seawall system.



Figure 1. Location Map

The entire Visitor Center seawall is so deteriorated that it requires abandonment, and a new seawall constructed water-side. Catastrophic failure could cause the seawalls to fall into the water exposing buildings and other facilities to storm damage. Failed seawalls could also result in partial or complete closure of the boat basins and boat ramps and prevent public access to Whitewater or Florida Bays.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this project is to rehabilitate the seawalls and associated facilities at the Flamingo Developed Area. This project is needed in order to avoid structural failure of the seawalls, to address public safety issues and potential effects on park operations, facilities, and visitor use.

PROJECT AREA

The seawall rehabilitation project will affect four areas of the Flamingo Developed Area. (See photographs on pages 4 - 5)

- **Flamingo Visitor Center:** Located at the southernmost end of the use area. It is protected by a seawall that runs the full length of a small cove that faces Florida Bay.
- **Florida Bay Marina:** This facility is located immediately to the north of the Flamingo Lodge and features boat docks, a seawall, canoe rental facilities, tour boat facility, fueling facility, and the main boat ramp.
- **Whitewater Bay Marina:** This facility is separated from the Florida Bay marine by a dam located at the out of service boat lift. Facilities include boat docks, fish cleaning station, tour boat facility, canoe and boat rental facility, store, and a fueling facility.
- **Maintenance Marina:** This facility is located to the northeast of the Whitewater Bay Marina and is used exclusively by the NPS staff and Park concessioner for various purposes, including boat storage, storage of research equipment, fueling, boat maintenance, and other uses.

Potential Impact Topics to be addressed include but are not limited to the following:

- ♦ Human health and safety
- ♦ Visitor use and experience
- ♦ Park operations
- ♦ Concession operations
- ♦ Water quality
- ♦ Wetlands
- ♦ Wildlife and Protected Species
- ♦ Cultural Resources

If public or agency concerns arise, additional resources may be evaluated.

PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES

The NPS is considering 2 preliminary alternatives for the seawalls project:

Alternative 1: No Action

No Action implies that current conditions would continue. These conditions include:

- Continue to use existing deteriorating tie rod and deadman/anchor systems
- Continue to use existing deteriorating seawall cap (3,800 linear ft of seawall)
- Continue to use existing deteriorating Visitor Center seawall

Alternative 2: Rehabilitate Facilities

- Abandon existing tie rod and deadman/anchor systems on four seawalls. Provide new bituminous-coated tie rods and concrete anchors above the tidal zone whenever possible
- Repair or replace existing concrete seawall caps (3,800 linear ft of seawall)
- Construct new Visitor Center seawall seaward of existing seawall

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

The NPS invites the participation of interested parties and individuals, local agencies, State and Federal agencies and Native American Tribes to identify the issues, impact topics and scope of the alternatives to be analyzed in the EA.

Written comments may be submitted through the NPS Planning, Environment and Public Comment (PEPC) website <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. Select “Everglades NP” from the drop down box, then “Flamingo Developed Area Seawall Rehabilitation EA”, and “Open for Public Comment” box.

If you are unable to submit comments electronically, please submit written comments to the following address:

**National Park Service
Flamingo Seawall Rehabilitation EA
Attention: Brien Culhane
Everglades National Park,
40001 State Road 9336,
Homestead FL 33034**

All public comments must be received or postmarked by midnight, January 16, 2010.

As soon as the environmental assessment is completed, it will be made available for a 30 – day public review period.

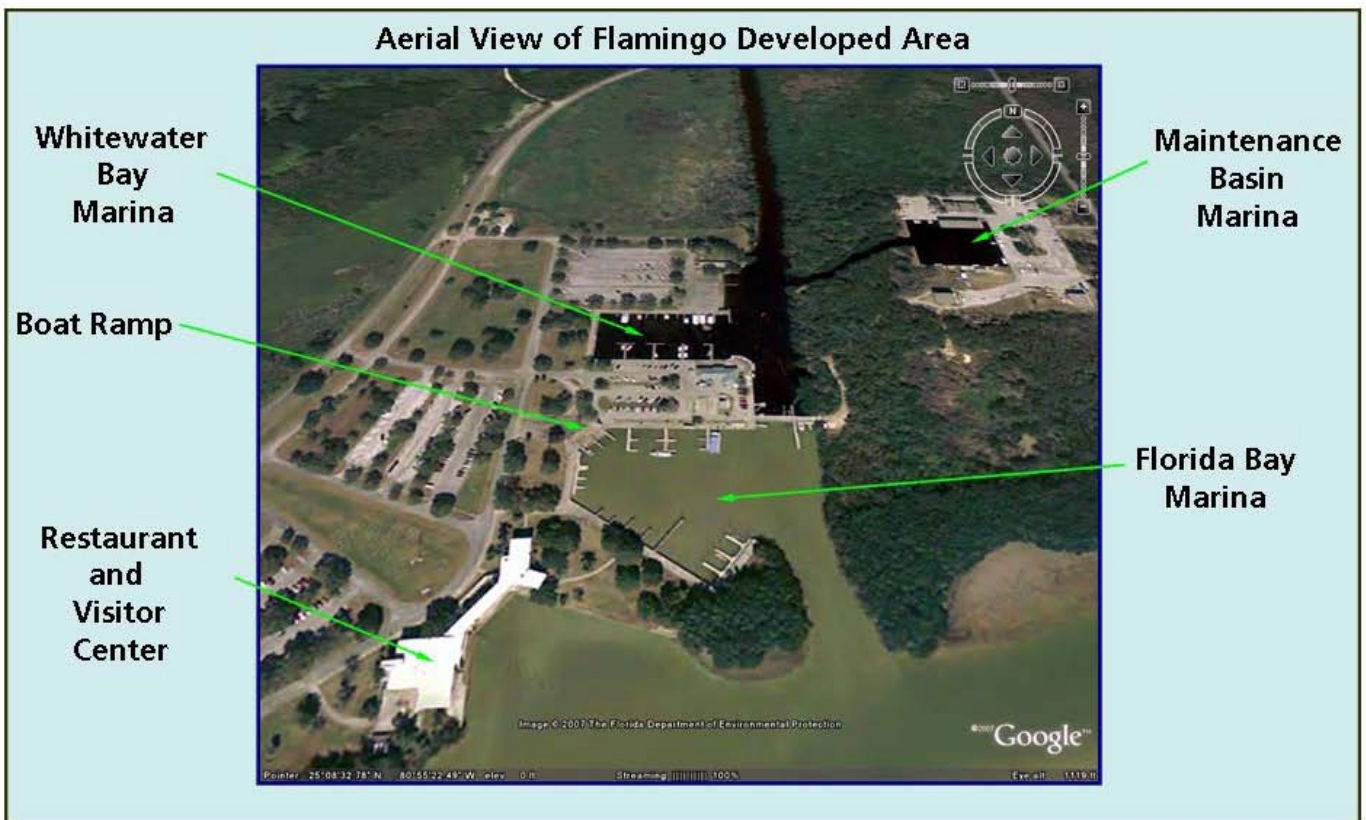
Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment — including your personal identifying information — may be made publicly available at any time. Although you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

Steps	Planning Activity	Dates	Public/Agency Involvement Opportunities
1	Scoping: Identify planning issues and opportunities	Public comment period Dec. 16, 2009 – Jan.16, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review Scoping NoticeSubmit written comments by Jan. 16, 2010
2	Prepare <i>Draft Environmental Assessment</i>	February – May 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Agency and tribal consultations
3	Publish and distribute <i>Draft Environmental Assessment</i>	June 2010 30-day public comment period	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review the <i>Draft Environmental Assessment</i> and provide comments to the National Park Service.
4	Federal decision anticipated	September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review NPS decision

Photograph 1: Aerial view of Flamingo Developed Area, Everglades National Park

(source – Google Earth)



Photograph 2: Panoramic view of the Florida Bay marina



Photograph 3: Panoramic view of the Whitewater Bay marina.



Photograph 4: Visitor Center seawall



Photograph 5: Seawall detail



Photograph 6: Spalling seawall cap



Photograph 7: Seawall cap