



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG.

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Corps submits St. George report to Congress for authorization

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – Today, Lt. Gen. Todd T. Semonite, commanding general of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and 54th U.S. Army Chief of Engineers, signed the St. George Harbor Improvement Chief's Report during a special event in Washington, D.C. The signing progresses the proposed project to Congress for authorization.

Located on the northeast shore of St. George Island, the proposed project aims to increase the safe accessibility of marine navigation to the community of St. George, Alaska. It is designed to reduce hazards and to provide safer navigation for subsistence vessels, fuel barges, cargo vessels, and a limited commercial fleet. These marine activities are critical to the long-term viability of the mixed subsistence-cash economy of the area.

"Currently, the unsafe conditions near the harbor directly impact the cost of living at St. George," said Col. David Hibner, acting commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Alaska District. "Consumables are flown into the community at a higher cost than ocean going vessels can deliver. This proposal can alleviate the economic situation for residents."

Conditions near and within the harbor are unsafe due to the wave climate in the entrance channel, seiche conditions within the inner basin, and degradation and overtopping of the existing breakwaters.

The final feasibility study recommends the dredging of a 450-foot wide by 550-foot long mooring basin to -20 feet. The basin will be protected by a 1,731-foot long north breakwater and a 250-foot long spur breakwater at its west edge. The basin connects to the Bering Sea with a 250-foot wide navigation channel dredged to -25 feet. Dredging the channel and basin requires the removal of about 353,000 cubic yards of material. Also, inner harbor facilities will be constructed such as a 300-foot long pile-supported dock and a concrete boat launch ramp to -5 feet for full tide launching access. The estimated cost of these enhancements is about \$160 million.

St. George is the southernmost island of the Pribilof Islands group. The United States purchased the Pribilof Islands from Russia in 1867. Since the cessation of commercial seal harvesting in 1973, the community has attempted to expand and diversify its economic base by concentrating on the groundfish and shellfish industries.

For more information on this project, please visit the Alaska District's Reports and Studies website: <https://go.usa.gov/xfG7f>. At the top of the left column under "documents available for review," select "civil works."

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