

## Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report and Feasibility Study for -50' Dredging Project

As a subcontractor to Science Applications International, Inc. (SAIC), GAIA participated in the development of a major Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (EIS/EIR) and Feasibility Study (FS) for the proposed -50' channel deepening (dredging) project currently being designed by the Port of Oakland and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The total value of the contract to GAIA was approximately \$220,000, the total contract value was in excess of \$1 million. For this project GAIA prepared the FS with technical assistance from the Port and USACE, acted as deputy project manager for the entire project, evaluated three resource areas (water quality, hazardous waste, and human health risk), and compiled the regulatory framework.

This project presented a significant project management challenge because the preparation was highly compressed (the Final EIS/EIR and FS were released within 10 months, compared to a more typical project schedule for this size document of 3 to 4 years). In addition, much of the information required for the EIS/EIR and FS was collected and prepared on a schedule that overlapped heavily with the preparation of the EIS/EIR and FS. Furthermore, the -50' dredging project was one of four major inter-related infrastructure projects that were being planned by the Port at the time. Thus, the project management effort also required close coordination with the environmental documentation being prepared for the other three projects, to ensure the impacts and benefits were allocated appropriately to each project, and to ensure that the evaluations were consistent from project to project. Finally, the project is located adjacent to West Oakland, an economically disadvantaged, politically active community.

GAIA's project management role included intensive interactions with the Port, including daily contact with various Port staff and on-going participation in internal Port meetings. We then disseminated the technical and "soft" information gathered from these interactions to the other seven firms on the project team. GAIA was also responsible for coordinating the production schedule for the document with the Port, to ensure that the required information developed by the Port was available when needed for the EIS/EIR. Furthermore, GAIA worked extensively with Port staff and representatives from the other project teams to help ensure consistency between the various environmental documents, and to help allocate impacts and benefits to the various projects.

For the EIS/EIR, GAIA prepared the baseline and impact sections for three resource areas, and worked with the entire project team to compile the regulatory framework. The impacts to water quality and human health, and hazardous waste impacts were evaluated for nine potential reuse/disposal areas, ranging from deep ocean disposal to wetlands restoration, to in-Bay fill to create new fastand. GAIA was also responsible for proposing mitigations for significant impacts for the three resource areas. Because of the complexity of the project, GAIA worked closely with other team members preparing information for related resource areas.

As a result of the overlap in schedules between the EIS/EIR and projects collecting needed technical information, GAIA prepared several of the document sections under extremely tight deadlines. For example, we had approximately two weeks to evaluate data pertaining to sediment (dredged material) chemical concentrations and develop the corresponding impact analysis for human health.

---

In addition to the work outlined above, GAIA helped prepare the Notice of Preparation for the EIS/EIR, assisted with the scoping meeting, and participated in the development of the project description. GAIA also worked with SAIC and the Port to conduct a workshop for document reviewers which addressed reviewer comments and helped develop consensus on mitigation measures.

For the FS, GAIA compiled information provided by the Port and USACE, developed the outline for the document, and prepared multiple drafts of the document. We also responded to extensive comments by parties opposed to the project. We managed weekly project meeting between the Port and USACE that were critical to ensuring that the information required for the FS was available when needed. We compiled information regarding the channel design, design vessel, geotechnical considerations, environmental and social impacts, availability and feasibility of various reuse and disposal sites, estimated increases in O&M dredging, and turning basin design alternatives.

GAIA worked closely with USACE staff in the development of the economic benefits analysis and the development of the MCACES (cost estimates) for various potential reuse/disposal scenarios. GAIA developed the cost-benefit analysis and the proposed cost sharing based on the information from the benefits analysis and the MCACES. Due to the complexity of the project (the recommended plan included three habitat restoration sites as well as upland disposal), GAIA analyzed multiple plans – the National Economic Development (NED) Plan, the Locally Preferred Plan (LPP), and the Alternative NED Plan (which would be implemented should a key habitat restoration site not be approved by the local regulatory agencies). We worked closely with the Port of Oakland and USACE to develop a strategy that would allow the LPP rather than the NED to become the Selected Plan.

The FS was praised by USACE headquarters representatives as one of the best-written FSs they had ever received. GAIA worked directly with USACE headquarters staff to address comments and facilitate the on-going headquarters review prior to the completion of the Chief's Report and ROD. GAIA prepared draft comment responses and a draft Chief's Report for use by HQUSACE, and led the development of the presentation for OMB. In addition, GAIA provided support to the Port in its discussion with local stakeholders. We are continuing to provide on-going support and coordination for environmental matters and engineering design.



## **Addendum to the Port of Oakland –50-Foot' Dredging Project Environmental Impact Report**

GAIA, on behalf of the City of Alameda and in coordination with Bay Ship & Yacht (the project proponent), prepared an Addendum to the Port of Oakland -50-Foot Project EIR. This addendum provided additional environmental information regarding proposed mitigation for the -50-Foot Project that was not available at the time that the final EIR was certified in February 2000. The mitigation refinements that were the subject of this addendum are a more specific development plan for relocation of Bay Ship and Yacht. Relocation of Bay Ship and Yacht, one of the few remaining active boatyards in the San Francisco Bay Area, was required to accommodate the widening of the Inner Harbor Turning Basin (IHTB), a part of the -50-Foot Project. Relocation of Bay Ship was identified as a mitigation measure in the -50-Foot Project EIR. The Addendum included descriptions of the mitigation refinements, and analysis of changes to environmental impacts previously evaluated. The analysis addressed both project-related and cumulative impacts.

---

## **Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report for Napa Salt Marsh Restoration Project**

As a subcontractor to Jones & Stokes, GAIA prepared air quality, water quality, biology, and hazardous materials/hazards impact analysis for the Napa Salt Marsh Restoration EIS/R. In addition to preparing the various sections of the document, GAIA provided overall review and QC of the entire document. Construction issues included use of explosives to breach levees to tidal influence, and extensive levee repairs, including repairs of levees located on islands. The Napa Salt Marsh Restoration Project consists of 9,500 acres of former salt evaporation ponds in the North Bay that have been acquired by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) for wetland restoration.

---

## **Environmental Impact Statement/Report for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers SF Bay Rock Removal Project – SF District**

GAIA Consulting, Inc. prepared a draft EIS/R for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District. GAIA had two subcontractors: SAIC and Illingworth & Rodkin. The California State Lands Commission was the local sponsor the project. Interested agencies included the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Harbor Safety Committee, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the California Department of Fish and Game.

The goal of the project was to remove certain large rock outcroppings in the San Francisco Bay. These rock outcroppings are adjacent to major navigation lanes, and pose a potential grounding hazard to vessels that lose power or steerage. The Harbor Safety Committee, responsible for implementing programs to reduce the risk of oil spills in the San Francisco Bay, has developed a comprehensive program to address risk of oil spills. The rock removal project is one aspect of this program. It is currently anticipated that the rock removal will include use of explosive materials to shatter the rocks in place, with potential reuse of the debris as rock substrate habitat adjacent to the existing rocks.

The primary issues associated with this proposed project were impacts to biological resources, noise/vibration/shock waves, water quality, and commercial and recreational fisheries impacts. Several related studies were on-going simultaneously. These included an oil spill model

---

predicting the impacts of oil spills at the various rock outcroppings, a risk assessment to predict the likely frequency and magnitude of oil spills, and a survey of the rock outcroppings to assess the existing benthic community.

Because much of the information required to complete the impact analysis was not available until the Fall 2002, and the schedule was critical, GAIA prepared a 50% Administrative Draft EIS/R report (including setting information, significance criteria, and impact assessment methodology.) for USACE review prior to completing the remainder of the Administrative Draft EIS/R. Staggering the document preparation in this manner allowed the remaining studies to be completed while minimizing delays in the schedule.

GAIA managed the project, performed the regulatory analysis, and analyzed several resource areas. SAIC mentored GAIA in other resource areas and Illingworth & Rodkin provided expertise in noise/vibration.

---

## **Addendum II (Winter Island) to the Port of Oakland –50-Foot' Dredging Project Environmental Impact Report**

GAIA prepared an Addendum to the Port of Oakland -50-Foot Project EIR. This addendum provided additional environmental information regarding a new dredged material disposal site that would be considered as an alternative to landfill disposal for contaminated sediments. The site was proposed by a contractor, and required to meet the contractor's bid estimate for the dredging work, and was therefore under a tight deadline. The Addendum included a description of the additional disposal site, including specific permit requirements, and an analysis of changes to environmental impacts previously evaluated. The analysis addressed both project-related and cumulative impacts for air quality, hazards, human health, vessel transportation, and traffic.

---

## **Environmental Impact Report for Oakland Army Base/ West Oakland Redevelopment District**

As subcontractor to Gayle Borchard and Associates, GAIA prepared the hazardous materials/hazards analysis, geology, and water quality sections of the Oakland Army Base EIR. The City of Oakland required a comprehensive assessment of the environmental impacts associated with creating a redevelopment district encompassing the former Army Base. Potential activities associated with the redevelopment of the Army Base and adjacent areas included filling of open water areas, demolition of overwater structures and existing buildings, removal and construction of subsurface utilities, and extensive construction of new buildings. The proposed redeveloped district was divided into three subdistricts, we evaluated the potential presence of contaminated soil and groundwater, as well as related concerns (e.g., the presence of PCB transformers) for all three subdistricts. We also performed an initial evaluation of all reported sites identified in an EDR survey obtained by the outside counsel for the City. Due to long review cycles within the City, our work products typically had to be prepared on a compressed schedule to ensure that the City could meet its legal deadlines for establishing the redevelopment district.

---

## Environmental Impact Report for Port of Oakland Joint Intermodal Terminal Project

On behalf of the Port of Oakland, GAIA prepared a major Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Joint Intermodal Terminal (JIT). The total value of the contract was \$430,000. The JIT project is one of four major inter-related infrastructure projects that comprise the Port's redevelopment of the former Fleet and Industrial Supply Center Oakland. The project is located adjacent to West Oakland, an economically disadvantaged, politically active community, and was tracked closely by several local unions. GAIA managed the project (including four subcontractors), prepared the hazardous materials and human health evaluation, and collaborated with the Port in conducting the public meeting and responding to agency and public comments. The EIR was completed within eight months and certified with no public opposition.



This project presented a significant project management challenge because the preparation was highly compressed (allowing eight months to complete a document that typically requires several years). The project also required close coordination with the environmental documentation being prepared for the other three projects, to ensure the impacts and benefits were allocated appropriately to each project, and to ensure that the impact analyses and evaluations were consistent from project to project. GAIA's role included intensive interactions with the Port and Port counsel, including daily contact with various Port staff and on-going participation in internal Port meetings.

The JIT EIR was tiered off of a programmatic EIS/EIR. Thus, the document was organized to clearly identify the resource areas adequately evaluated previously, and to limit the level of evaluation required for the remaining resource areas. The primary resource areas addressed by the document included air quality, contaminated/hazardous materials, noise, and traffic. As the project manager, GAIA prepared the workplan for the project and the project description. GAIA staff also prepared the evaluation of the contaminated/hazardous materials resource area. We managed four subcontractors who prepared the remaining documentation, and provided public outreach support. GAIA was responsible for the production of the document. GAIA worked with the Port and Port counsel to prepare master comment responses. The schedule allowed only 6 weeks to complete the final EIR after the close of the comment period.