

**APPENDIX VII**

**ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT**

## **ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ASSESSMENT TAMPA HARBOR-YBOR TURNING BASIN**

1. A study has been conducted in response to a resolution adopted July 23, 1997 by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives. The resolution requests review of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reports pertaining to the Tampa Harbor Federal navigation project to determine whether project modifications are advisable. The purpose of the study is to verify the Federal interest in navigation improvements authorized in 1970 for the Ybor Turning Basin.

The problems with the Ybor Turning Basin are unsafe conditions for maneuvering vessels and economic inefficiency of maneuvering vessels.

The existing project would be modified by enlarging the existing turning basin approximately 200 feet to the southwest.

Approximately 165,000 cubic yards of dredged material would be placed in Garrison Channel and at Hooker's Point. The purpose of placing the material in Garrison Channel would be to reduce poor water quality conditions, cover undesirable sediments and create shallow-water habitat for aquatic life. The dredged material placed at Hookers Point would be used to supplement other fill material to create Port facilities.

2. The Ybor Turning Basin expansion would affect 6.5 acres of shallow-water habitat as identified as EFH. Impacts to this resource are identified in Section 4, Environmental Consequences of the Environmental Assessment. We consider these impacts to be minimal on an individual project and cumulative affects basis. Because of the poor habitat quality associated with the Tampa Harbor, the only mitigation would be the relocation of 1,021 square feet of oyster beds to adjoining shallow-water habitat.