**Studio Lab PPD xxx**

**CEQA/NEPA Colloquium and the Federal Civil Works Planning Process:**

**The East San Pedro Bay Restoration Project**

**Thursday Afternoon**

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San Pedro Bay is protected by three rock breakwaters. Two protect the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and a third called the “Long Beach Breakwater” was constructed during the period 1941 to 1949 to provide protected anchorage for the U.S. Navy Pacific Fleet and to provide protection to the Long Beach shoreline. While providing protection from waves, the rock structure changed the character of the recreational amenities of a city that historically was one of great beach resorts of the early 20th century. In the late 1990’s, upon the 50th anniversary of the breakwater, surfers from Huntington Beach formed the “Breakwater Task Force.” The goal of the task force was to return surf to Long Beach and their efforts were dubbed “Sink the Breakwater.” They created the Long Beach Surfrider Foundation and lobbied the City of Long Beach to have the breakwater removed. The concept was eventually taken up by the Long Beach City Council and in 2005, the City began studying the project, ultimately joining the U.A. Army Corps of Engineers to advance the project through the planning process for a federal civil works project. In June 2016, the City and the U.S. Army Corps approved the initiation of a federal feasibility study on the project which is now known as the East San Pedro Bay Restoration Project. This is a project that has significant stakeholder engagement/concerns and potentially impacts all facets of the character of downtown Long Beach.



**Course Objective:**

The purpose of this course is to give students:

1. An in-depth understanding of the planning process used by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to undertake a federal civil works project;
2. An understanding of the tools and techniques on how to carry out impact analysis required under the NEPA and CEQA process and practical experience in using those tools.

The project that will be analyzed is the East San Pedro Bay Restoration Project proposed by the City of Long Beach and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Federal civil works projects undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of engineers are generally navigation improvements, flood protection and environmental restoration. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers utilizes a planning process which is very different than the typical planning process used by local government. The aim of a federal planning process is to determine whether or not a federal interest existing in the project and depending on that outcome, the study process can pave the way for federal authorization and appropriation of funds to carry out the project. Even if you never work for a federal agency, understanding the federal planning process is valuable background for any planner that works along a coastline or near any inland navigable waterway. A similar seven year planning process was undertaken to develop the plan for the restoration of the Los Angeles River.

Doing an impact analysis pursuant to CEQA and NEPA that can withstand technical and legal scrutiny involves a process of identifying potential impacts, determining the magnitude of those impacts and determining whether those impacts are significant. Impact analyses is not an exact science, involves the use of professional judgement and significant assumptions to be made about future conditions. Students will learn how to analyze a proposed project, predict potential impacts, make reasoned assumptions about future conditions, and learn to hand calculate impacts in disciplines where quantification is appropriate. After a thorough understand of the analyses is achieved, students will learn to use computerized models which are typically used by EIR consultants to analyze impacts. At the conclusion of the course, students will have produced the key portions of an environmental impact report/statement for the project.

**Resource Documents for the Project** will be uploaded to the course website and include:

1. City of Long Beach Breakwater Reconnaissance Study, July 2009
2. East San Pedro Bay Ecosystem restoration study 905(b) Analysis, July 2009
3. East San Pedro Bay Ecosystem Restoration Study Project Management Plan (PMP) July 2010, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
4. CRS Report for Congress, The Civil Works Program of the Army Corps of Engineers: A Primer by Nicole T. Carter, Analyst in Environmental Policy Resources, Science, and Industry Division and Betsy A. Cody, Specialist in Natural Resources Policy Resources, Science, and Industry Division. Updated September 20, 2006
5. Economic Primer for the National Economic Development Plan, Institute of Water Resources, IWR Report 09-R-3, 2009.

**Resource Documents for the Impact Analysis**: We will rely on regulatory agency methodologies for impact analysis and they will be uploaded to the class website or links will be provided. Note that quantitative impact assessment techniques will be learned initially through hypothetical problem solving that will require the students to develop assumptions, justify those assumptions, calculate impacts and compare with agency published “thresholds of significance.” Yes, we will do math. Students will be given individual homework assignments to practice these techniques which will be reviewed at the following class in an open discussion that overtime will facilitate the student’s ability to improve their analyses and refine their assumptions.

**General Reading**- In my courses, I like to pick a general book in addition to the academic/ technical readings for the class to read over the course of the semester (imagine you are part of a book club!). For this course, we will read and discuss the book, *The Land of Sunshine, the Environmental History of Los Angeles*, edited by Deverell and Hise. This book is available from Amazon in hard copy of as an eBook at low cost.

**Expected Deliverables and Grading (Total 100 points)**

Technical Memorandums (40 Points)

(One each in the area of air quality, noise environment, socio-economic, and traffic analysis)

Stakeholder engagement assignment (10 Points)

Environmental Impact Group Report (40 points- 25 written, 15 oral)

Class Participation and Reading (10 points)

**Course Calendar**

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| **DATE** | **TOPIC** | **ASSIGNMENT DUE** |
| Week 1 | Introduction: Review of Course Objectives and Syllabus  Project Introduction  Formulation of Research Groups  Required Deliverable |  |
| Week 2 | NEPA/CEQA Overview  Defining Thresholds of Significance in the Environmental Impact Process | Reading- Deverell Chp 6 Who Killed the LA River? |
| Week 3 | Federal Planning Process- Guest Speaker, U.A. Army Corps of Engineers.  The Relationship to the California Coastal Act | Project team and assignments outline Due |
| Week 4 | How to Do Impact Analysis, Sources of data, types of analysis, qualitative or quantitative, professional judgement. | Reading- Deverell Chp 5. Beaches vs. Oil |
| Week 5 | Air Quality Impact Analysis |  |
| Week 6 | Traffic Impact Analysis | Technical Memo No 1- Air impacts |
| Week 7 | Understanding Project Benefits, Defining the Federal Interest and how that relates to local stakeholder interests.  Guest Speaker, Surfrider Foundation | Technical Memorandum No. 2 Traffic Impact Analysis |
| Week 8 | Site Visit |  |
| Week 9 | Analyzing stakeholder concerns- homeowners along the coast, recreational boaters, the operators of the oil islands in East San Pedro Bay, etc. Development of survey instruments for stakeholder assignment. | Reading Deverell, Chp. 6 Pollution and Public Policy |
| Week 10 | Socio-economic Impact Analysis | Reading- Deverell Chp 9 Zoning and Environmental Inequity |
| Week 11 | Noise Impact Analysis | Technical Memorandum No. 3 Socio-economic analysis Due |
| Week 12 | City of Long Beach Sustainability Plan, Guest Speaker | Technical Memorandum No.4 Noise Impact Analysis Due |
| Week 13 | CEQA Reform | Reading- Deverell, Chp 10, Los Angeles Against the Mountains |
| Week 14 | Ethics in the Environmental Impact Assessment Process | Stakeholder Engagement Assignment Due |
| Week 15 | Round-up of open issues. | Deverell- Epilogue: The Present as History |
| Week 16 | Student Oral Reports and “Mock” Public Hearing |  |

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences.  Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* [https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions](https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/).  Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable.  See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, [http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/).

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university.  You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>.  This is important for the safety of the whole USC community.  Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person.  *The Center for Women and Men* http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

**Support Systems**

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing.  Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more.  Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.  *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* <http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html> provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.  If an officially  declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* [*http://emergency.usc.edu*](http://emergency.usc.edu)will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.