



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MOBILE  
DISTRICT P.O. BOX 2288  
MOBILE, AL 36628-0001

16 September 2024

**CESAM-PD-EC**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE NO. FP24-HC01-13**

**JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE**

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MOBILE DISTRICT  
AND  
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY,  
OFFICE OF POLLUTION CONTROL  
AND  
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**

**FOR**

**HARRISON COUNTY COASTWIDE BEACH AND DUNE ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION  
PROJECT  
MISSISSIPPI COASTAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM  
HARRISON COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI**

**A FEDERALLY AUTHORIZED PROJECT**

Interested persons are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mobile District is proposing construction actions associated with the Harrison County Coastwide Beach and Dune Ecosystem Restoration Project, Harrison County, Mississippi, as an authorized element of the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program (MsCIP) Comprehensive Plan.

This public notice is issued in accordance with rules and regulations published in the Federal Register 26 April 1988. These laws are applied whenever dredged or fill materials may enter waters of the United States. The recipient of this notice is requested specifically to review the proposed action as it may have impact on water quality, relative to the requirements of Section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act and Coastal Zone Management Act. Review of any other potential impacts is also requested.

**WATERWAY AND LOCATION:** Harrison County, Mississippi.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE AUTHORIZED PROJECT:** As described in the MsCIP Comprehensive Plan and Integrated Programmatic EIS, the original authorized project was to construct a 60-foot-wide, 2-foot-high vegetated dune field approximately 50 feet seaward of the existing seawalls of beach and dune improvements to approximately 29 miles of beach in Harrison County, Mississippi.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION:** As described in the MsCIP Comprehensive Plan and Integrated Programmatic EIS, the proposed action includes beach and dune improvements to approximately 29 miles of beach in Harrison County, Mississippi. Improvements include the placement of approximately 2 million cubic yards (mcy) of sandy material to construct the authorized 250-foot-wide beach at mean high water (MHW) and vegetated dune field that is 70-feet wide from the frontal dune toe to back trough located approximately 30 feet seaward of the existing seawall. Material for the proposed action would be dredged from 22 borrow areas located about 2,000 feet offshore of Harrison County, Mississippi stretching from Pass Christian to Biloxi, Mississippi. This plan was selected because it provides the best balance of ecosystem and storm risk management benefits.

All dredging associated with the project will be completed using either a mechanical and/or a hydraulic cutterhead dredge. Material could be pumped directly on the beach and/or mechanically placed from scows or offloading barges. Work associated with the initial construction of this project is expected to commence in 2025 and extend through 2026.

**WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION:** Pursuant to the Clean Water Act, state water quality certification is required for the proposed actions described above. Water quality certification will be requested from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control (MDEQ). Upon completion of the required 30-day comment period, a decision relative to water quality certification will be made by MDEQ.

**COASTAL ZONE CONSISTENCY:** Pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act, the proposed action is consistent with the Mississippi Coastal Program to the maximum extent practicable. Concurrence with the determination will be requested from the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR). Upon completion of the required 30-day comment period, a decision relative to coastal zone consistency will be made by MDMR.

**USE BY OTHERS:** The proposed action is not expected to create significant impacts on land and water use plans in the vicinity. Use of the waters in the vicinity of the project area includes fishing and recreational boating.

**NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) CONSIDERATIONS:** In accordance with the requirements of NEPA, a draft Environmental Assessment (EA), prepared by USACE, Mobile District has been tiered from the MsCIP Comprehensive Plan and Integrated EIS dated September 2009. The MsCIP EIS is available for review on the MsCIP webpage at <https://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Program-and-Project-Management/Civil-Projects/MsCIP/MsCIP-Downloads/>. The tiered draft EA for this proposed action is available for review at <https://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning-Environmental/Environmental-Assessments/>.

**SECTION 404(B)(1) EVALUATION REPORT:** Impacts associated with the proposed action have been identified in an evaluation report prepared in accordance with Public Law 920500, and Section 404 (b)(1) Guidelines promulgated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under the Clean Water Act. The Draft Section 404 (b)(1) Evaluation Report is available for review on the District website at <https://www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Planning-Environmental/Environmental-Assessments/>. The report concludes that only minor and short-term turbidity impact would result from the implementation of the proposed action.

**ENDANGERED/THREATENED SPECIES:** Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, the proposed action is being coordinated with the U.S. Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service Protected Resources Division (NMFS-PRD). Federally protected species that may be found within the project area include the West Indian manatee (*Trishechus manatus*), Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*), Piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), Red knot (*Calidris canutus rufa*), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*), Loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), Green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), Leatherback sea turtle (*Dermochelys coriacea*), and the Giant manta ray (*Manta birostris*). Additionally, the project area falls within Piping plover and Gulf sturgeon critical habitat.

The overall potential impacts from the proposed project to threatened and endangered species are expected to be minor and temporary. The species will likely avoid the area during construction and return shortly after construction has completed. Informal consultation with the USFWS for species under their purview was initiated on 31 July 2024. It is anticipated that the USFWS will concur with USACE's determination that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect nesting sea turtles, West Indian manatee, piping plover, and rufa red knot. Nesting shorebird and sea turtle monitoring for avoidance will occur if construction takes place during the nesting season. Consultation with the NMFS-PRD, for species under their purview, was completed on 20 February 2024 (Enclosure 2). The NMFS-PRD agreed with the USACE's determination that the proposed action is not likely to adversely affect sea turtles, Giant manta ray, and Gulf sturgeon. The NMFS-PRD also agreed that the project is not likely to adversely affect Gulf sturgeon critical habitat.

**ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH):** EFH is defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) as "those waters and substrate necessary for fish to spawn, breed, feed or grow to maturity." The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council in accordance with the MSFCMA (PS 94-265) has developed management plans for the following fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico: coastal migratory pelagic, red drum, snappers, groupers, tilefishes, jacks, triggerfishes, hogfish, shrimp, spiny lobster, and corals. The NMFS-Habitat Conservation Division (HCD) has identified EFH habitats for the Gulf of Mexico in its Fishery Management Plan Amendments. These habitats include estuarine areas, such as estuarine emergent wetlands, seagrass beds, algal flats, mud, sand, shell, and rock substrates, and the estuarine water column. USACE, Mobile District has determined that no significant long-term impacts to EFH would be expected due to the relatively small area of ecosystem that would be affected, and given

the rapid benthic recovery rates, no significant long-term impacts to EFH would be expected. This determination will be coordinated with the NMFS-HCD, and a concurrence is anticipated.

**CLEAN AIR ACT:** Air quality in the vicinity of the proposed action would not be significantly affected by the proposed action. The equipment and machinery would generate some air pollution during construction activities, such as increased particulate levels from the burning of fossil fuels. However, these impacts would be minor and temporary in nature. The proposed action is in compliance with the Clean Air Act, as amended. The project area is in attainment with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards parameters. The proposed action would not affect the attainment status of the project area or the region.

**EVALUATION:** The decision whether to proceed with the proposed action will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed action on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits that may be reasonably expected to accrue from the proposed action must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All environmental resources/factors which may be relevant to the proposed action will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof. The proposed action will proceed unless it is found to be contrary to the overall public interest.

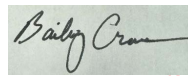
**COORDINATION:** Among the agencies receiving copies of this public notice are:

- Region 4, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Jackson, Mississippi
- U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service, Habitat Conservation Division, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service, Protected Resource Division, St. Petersburg, Florida
- Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
- Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
- Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Appropriate Federally Recognized Indian Tribes
- Mississippi State Historic Preservation Office

Other Federal, state, and local organizations are provided copies of this notice and are asked to participate in coordinating the proposed action. USACE, Mobile District request the information contained in this notice be communicated to any other parties who may have an interest in the proposed action.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Any person who has an interest that may be affected by this proposed activity may request a public hearing. Any comments or requests for a public hearing must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within 30 days of the date on this public notice. A request for a hearing must clearly set forth the interest, which may be affected, and the manner in which the interest may be affected.

Correspondence concerning this public notice should refer to Public Notice No. FP24-HC01-13 and should be directed to the Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District, Attention: CESAM-PD-EC, Ms. Angelia Lewis, Biologist, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628, within 30 days of the date on this public notice. If you require additional information, please contact Ms. Angelia Lewis at (251) 694-4105 or via email at [Angelia.V.Lewis@usace.army.mil](mailto:Angelia.V.Lewis@usace.army.mil).



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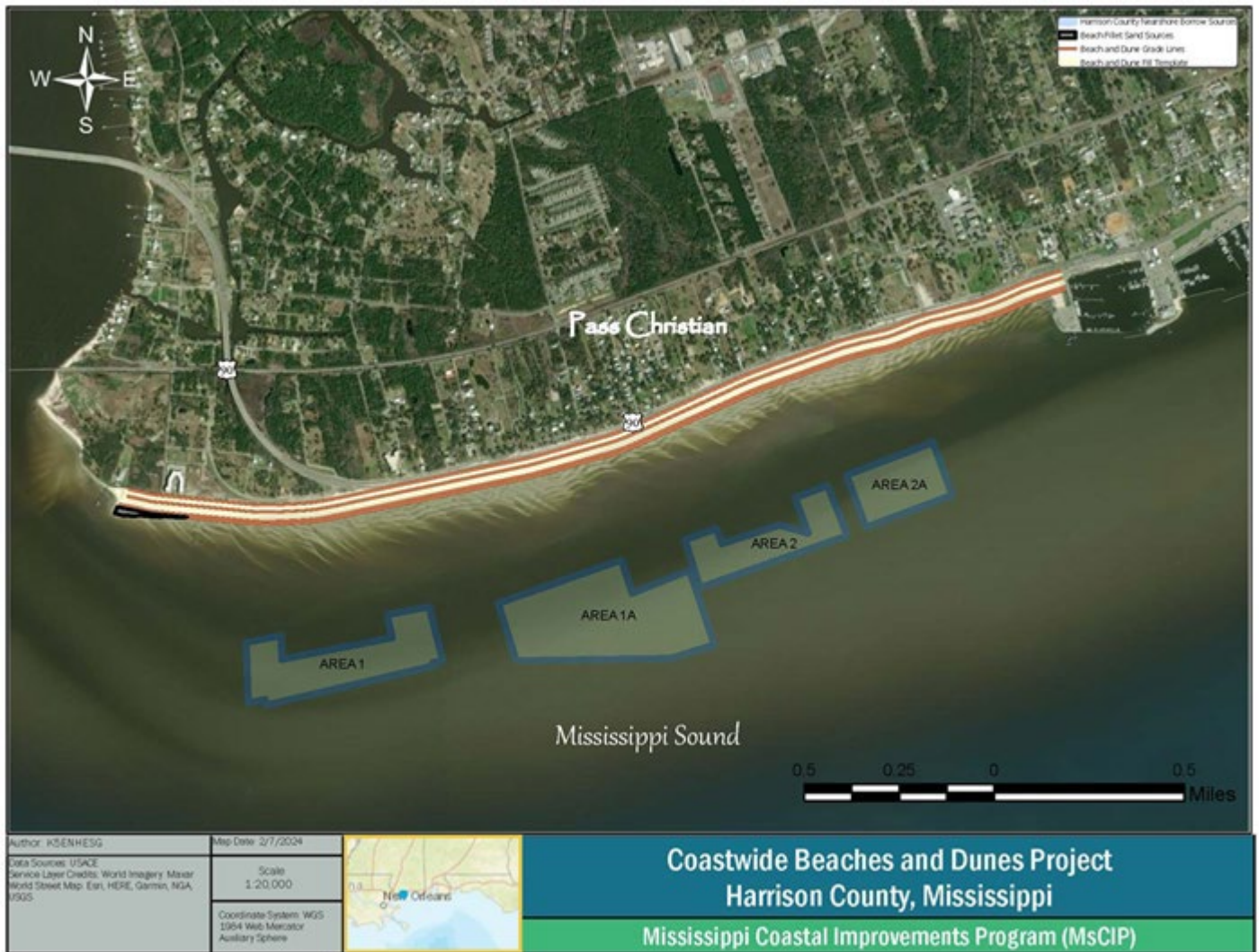
**RYAN B. CRANE**  
Acting Chief, Planning and Environmental  
Division

Enclosures



**Figure 1:** Harrison County Coastwide Beach and Dune Ecosystem Restoration Project Limits



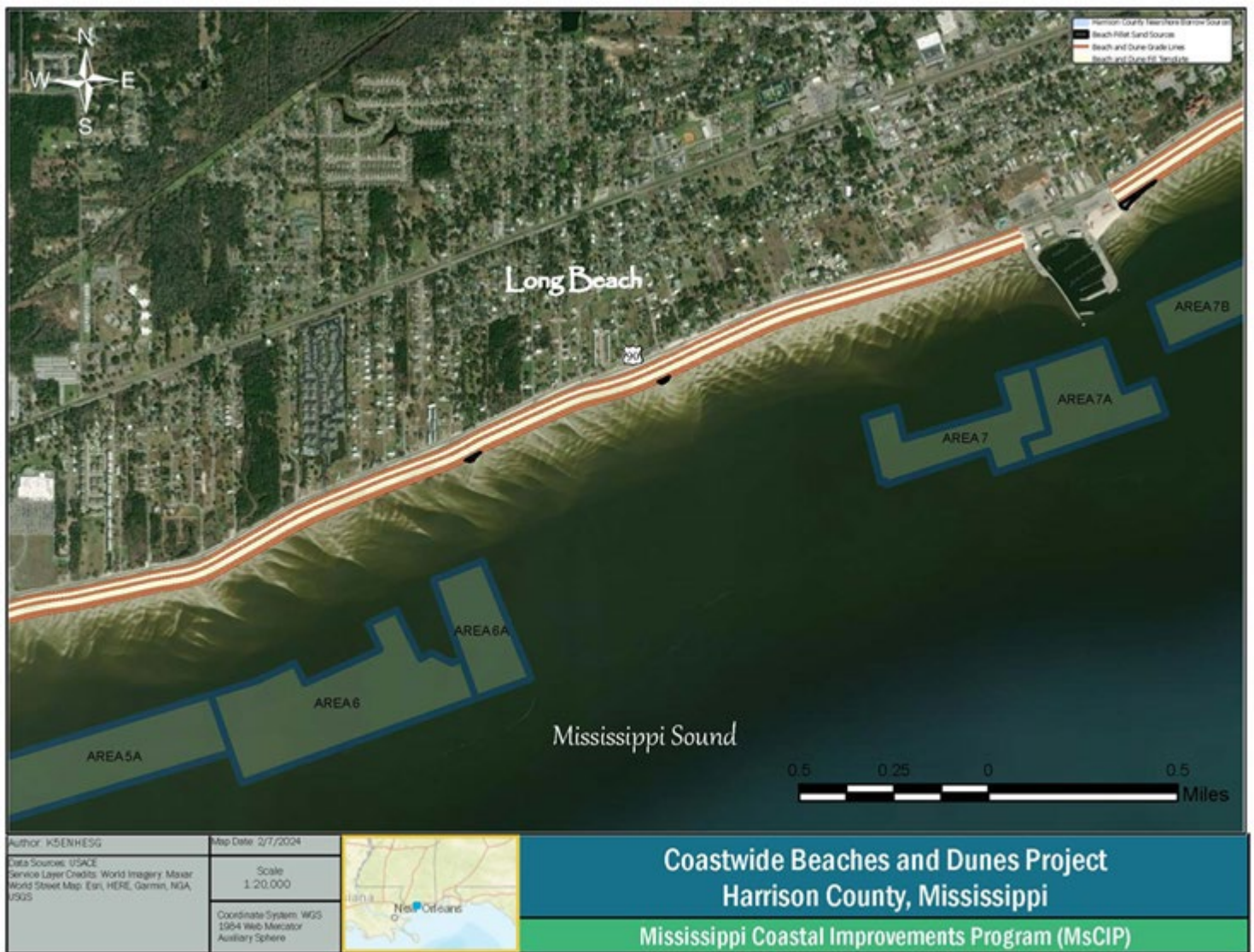


**Figure 2:** Design template and borrow areas - Pass Christian

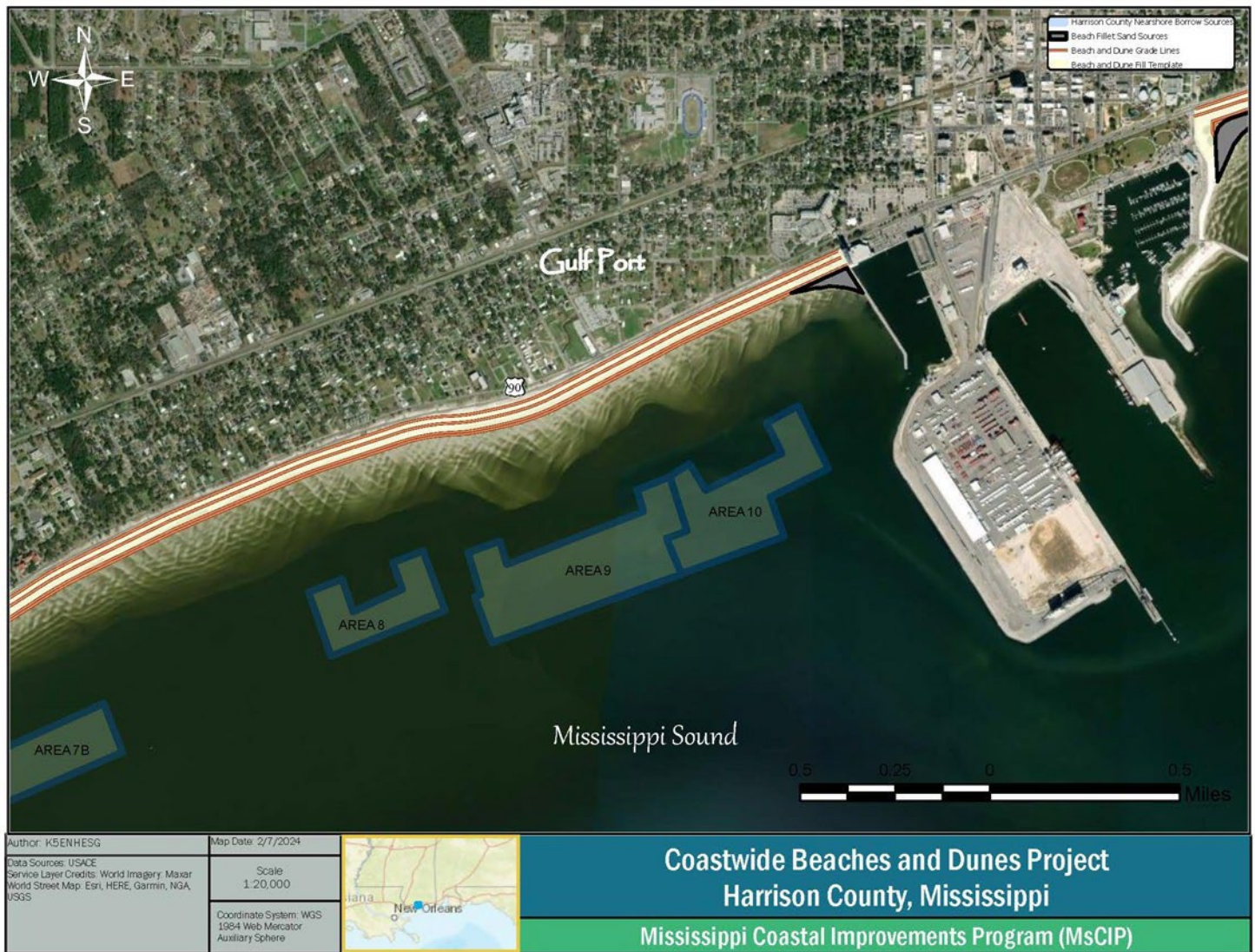


**Figure 3:** Design template and borrow areas – East of Pass Christian



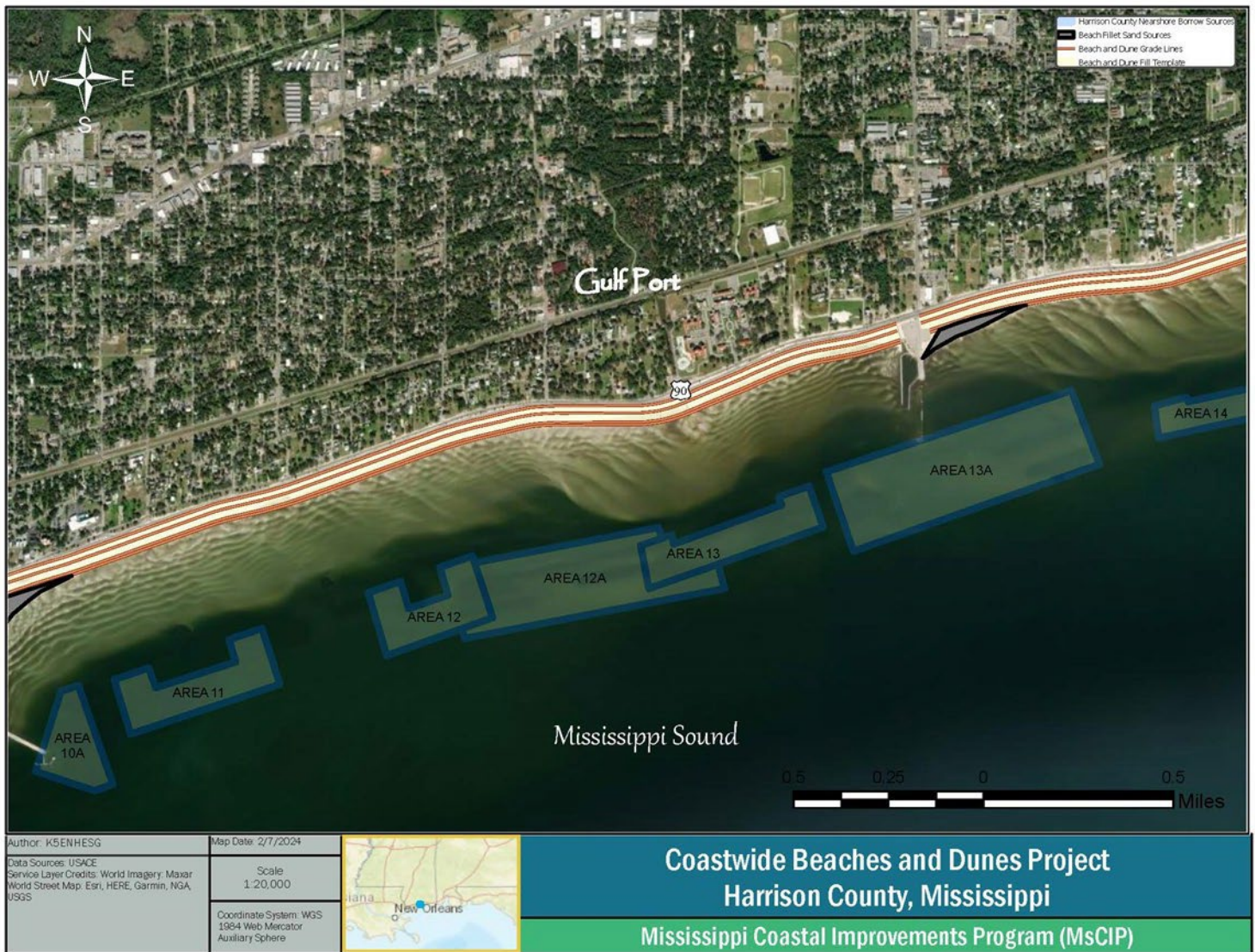


**Figure 4:** Design template and borrow areas – Long Beach



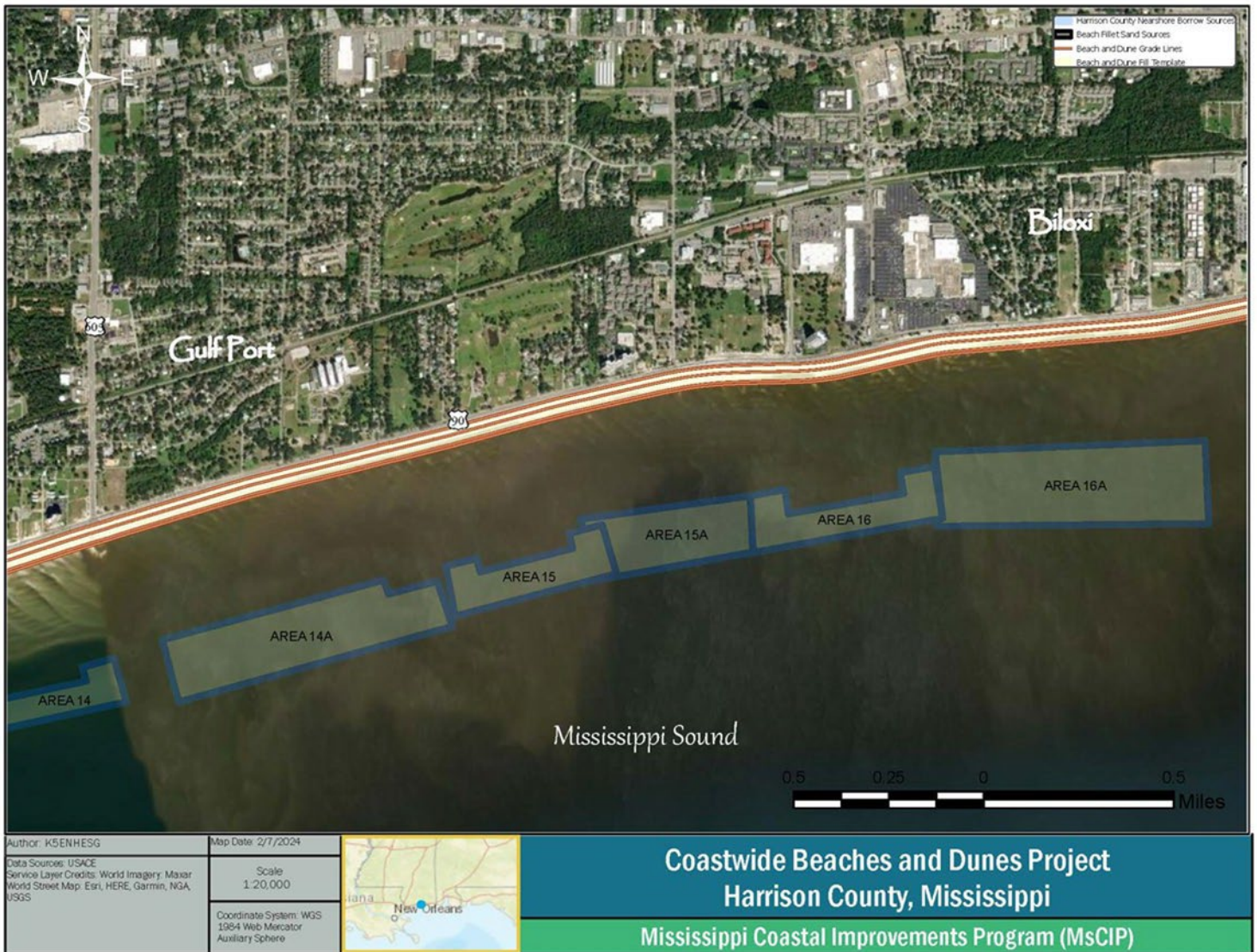
**Figure 5:** Design template and borrow areas – West Gulfport





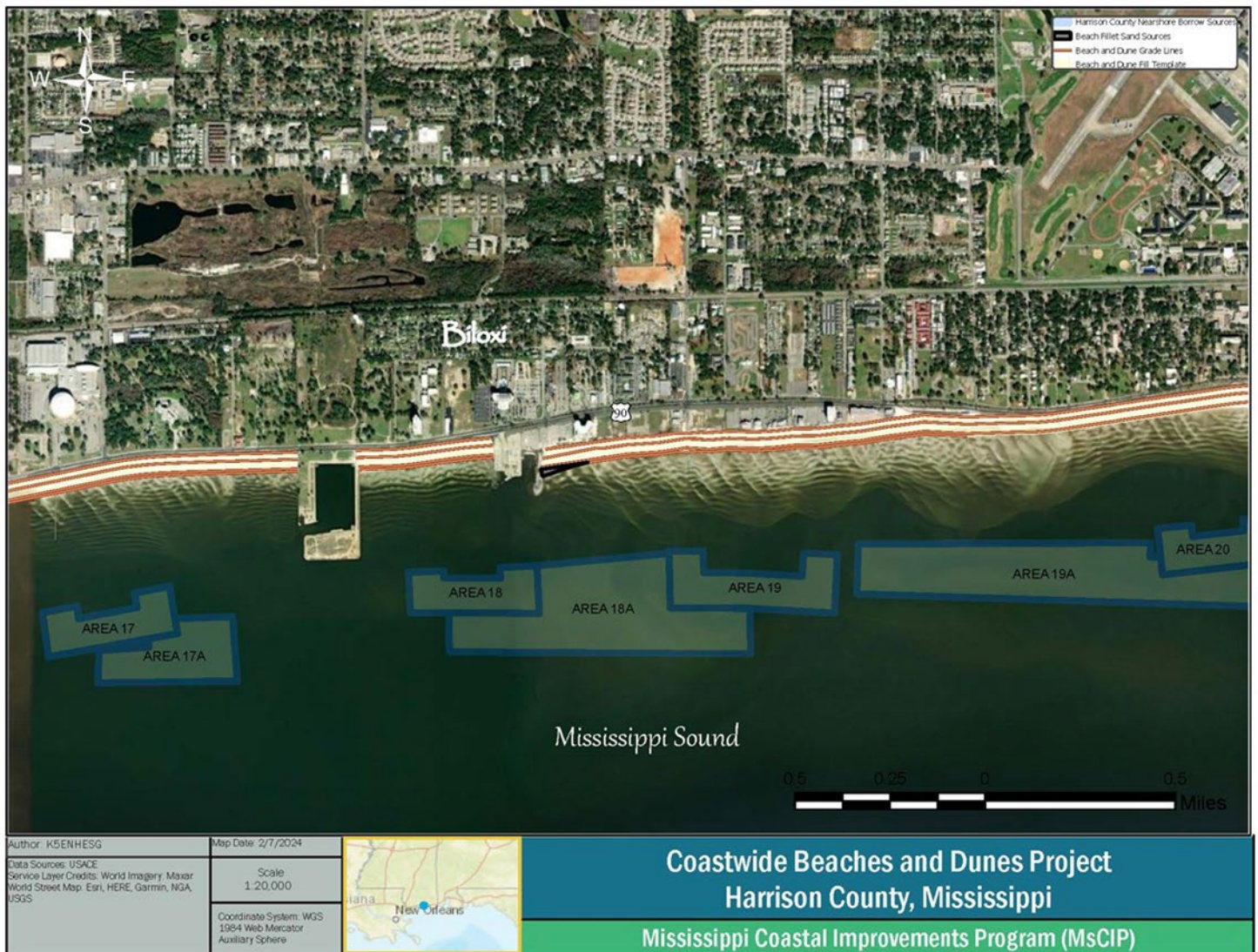
**Figure 6:** Design template and borrow areas – East Gulfport





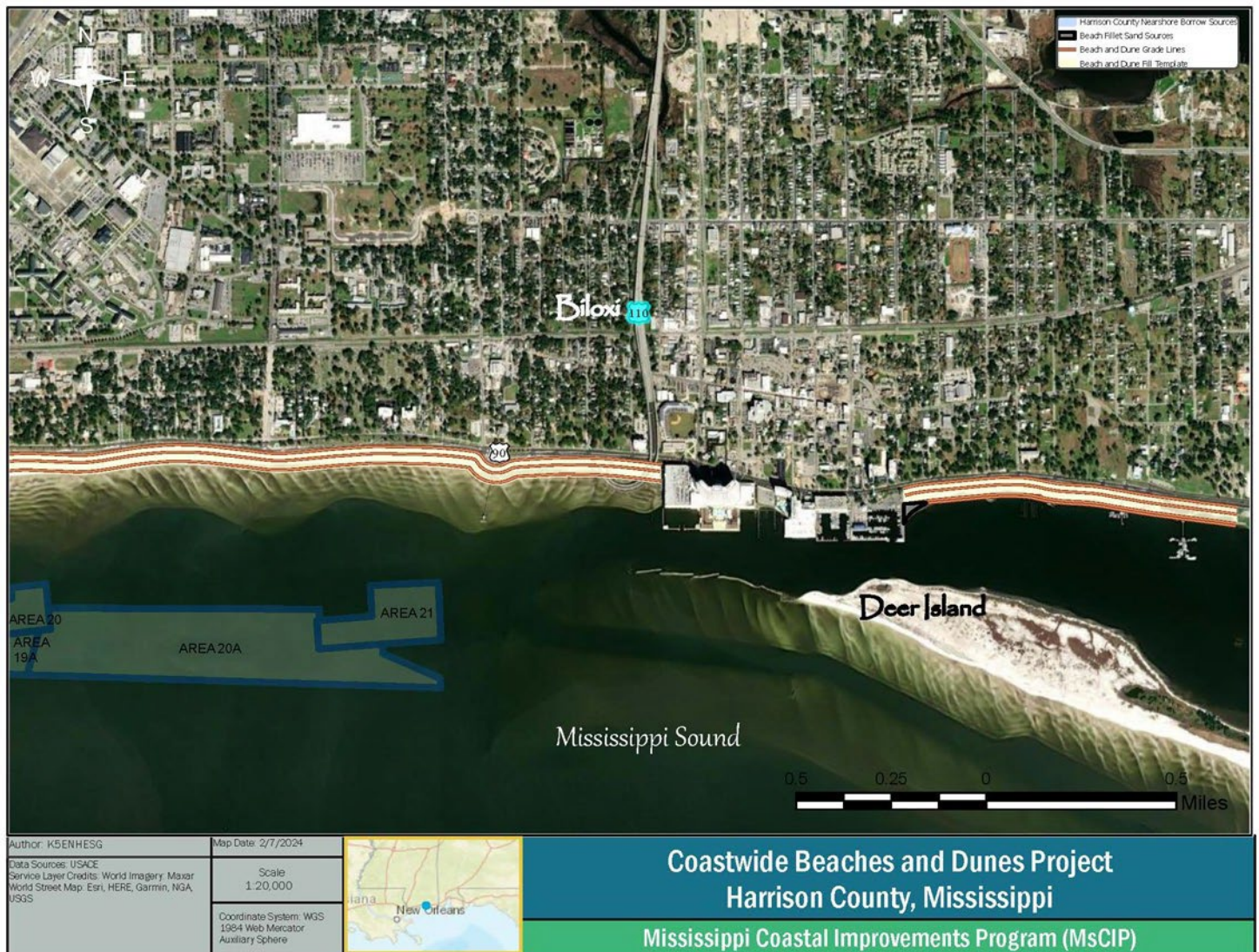
**Figure 7:** Design template and borrow areas – Gulfport to Biloxi





**Figure 8:** Design template and borrow areas – Biloxi





**Figure 9:** Design template and borrow areas – East Biloxi