

Questions asked by Community Stakeholders that focus on Contract 3:

1. Can USACE clarify what hydrologic, rainfall, land-use, and demographic datasets were used in the most recent analyses supporting Contract 3, and whether those datasets have been updated since the original project approvals? *(If so, please provide data.)*

- Yes, the datasets used have been updated since the original project approvals. The updated data is located on our website: <https://www.saa.usace.army.mil/Rio-Puerto-Nuevo/> under “project information”*

2. Were updated rainfall intensity projections or climate-related data incorporated into the most recent project analyses and modeling efforts?

- Yes, updated rainfall intensity projections and climate-related data were incorporated into the most recent project analyses and modeling efforts. The updated data is located on our website: <https://www.saa.usace.army.mil/Rio-Puerto-Nuevo/> under “project information”*

3. Were nature-based or hybrid flood mitigation alternatives reevaluated during the development of Contract 3, and what criteria were used to determine they would not meet project objectives?

- Yes, several technical evaluations and considerations were performed both formally within our Value Engineering Process and informally following several public and stakeholder engagements. Implementable changes that were hybrid green-gray designs include substantial removal of concrete from the channel bottoms that will replicate the existing condition of the channel. Bottom line, there will be much more subaquatic environment after the project is completed than currently exists.*

4. Will restoration plans, performance standards, and maintenance responsibilities for affected green spaces and community areas be made publicly available prior to implementation?

- The site restoration plans are still in development and currently only at the conceptual stage. As these plans advance and are incorporated into the construction phase of Contract 3, there will be opportunities for community and stakeholder input. Once finalized, the restoration plans and associated performance standards will be made publicly available. All long-term maintenance responsibilities for the project area, including green spaces, fall*

under the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER) unless that responsibility is formally reassigned.

5. What monitoring measures will be implemented during construction to assess impacts related to noise, dust, vibration, traffic disruption, and pedestrian safety, among others, in nearby communities and businesses?

- *USACE construction contracts include robust monitoring and compliance requirements that meet or exceed all Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (Junta de Calidad Ambiental) regulations and permit conditions. Contractors are required to implement continuous or periodic monitoring, as applicable, for noise, dust, vibration, and traffic control measures, along with safety protocols to protect nearby residents, pedestrians, and businesses.*

6. Has USACE established thresholds or criteria that would trigger additional mitigation measures if construction impacts exceed anticipated levels?

- *Yes. USACE construction contracts incorporate performance thresholds and compliance criteria aligned with Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board regulations and permit requirements. If monitoring indicates that impacts exceed allowable limits, contractors are required to implement additional mitigation measures to return conditions to compliant levels.*

7. What specific measures are being implemented to reduce impacts on vulnerable populations, including elderly residents, children, individuals with disabilities, and nearby schools or community programs? *(Please share actual Mitigation Plans)*

- *USACE construction contracts require mitigation measures that meet or exceed Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board regulations and permit conditions, including protections for sensitive receptors such as schools, elderly populations, and individuals with disabilities. These measures may include enhanced traffic control, noise and dust suppression, adjusted work hours, and safety protocols designed to minimize disruption to vulnerable community groups.*

8. How will residents be notified of significant construction changes, temporary access limitations, schedule shifts, or activities expected to generate elevated impacts in surrounding areas?

- *As part of our process to ensure stakeholder communication during construction, USACE is initiating biannual meetings to ensure stakeholders and community members are given the opportunity to provide feedback, ask questions and share any concerns. Additionally, information will be actively shared on the RPN project website, and a dedicated communication list will be maintained to facilitate direct contact with USACE staff if issues arise.*

9. Will there be a formal and accessible process for residents to report construction-related concerns or impacts, and what response timelines would apply to those reports? *(We would like to share our suggested communication model.)*

- *Yes. Points of contact will be provided so residents can report any construction-related concerns, and USACE will work to address those issues as promptly as possible.*
- *As part of our stakeholder communication process during construction, USACE is establishing biannual meetings to ensure community members have regular opportunities to share feedback, ask questions, and raise concerns. In addition, project updates will be posted on the RPN project website, and a dedicated communication list will be maintained to facilitate direct contact with USACE staff if issues arise.*

10. How will USACE document and follow up on questions, concerns, or unresolved issues raised by residents and community stakeholders throughout the construction phase? *(part of the above mentioned communication model)*

- *As part of our stakeholder communication process during construction, USACE is establishing biannual meetings to ensure community members have regular opportunities to share feedback, ask questions, and raise concerns. In addition, project updates will be posted on the RPN project website, and a dedicated communication list will be maintained to facilitate direct contact with USACE staff if issues arise. If an issue remains unresolved, additional situational meetings will be scheduled to ensure construction staff and the contractor have clear visibility into the concern and a defined plan to address any conditions that are not in compliance with EQB or other applicable regulatory standards.*

11. Has recently updated seismic hazard data for Puerto Rico (El Nuevo Día; May 13, 2026) been incorporated into current engineering analyses, design assumptions, or resilience considerations associated with the project, and if so, whether those updates influenced any planning or structural design decisions for contract 3.

- *The current design features the latest seismic criteria per USACE regulations and standards. A site-specific seismic study was prepared [when? Give year] for the project and used for the design. Data was compared to the recent updated seismic hazard data published by USGS 2026.*

12. As per updated studies and review of those mentioned and included in the RPN on your page, we can initially respond that some of these are still based on outdated data. As for other previously requested information, we are still waiting to receive updated documentation on:

- **BCR:** The official Benefit–Cost Ratio will be shared once the final documentation is completed and approved.
- **NEPA:** Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) began with the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) completed in 1984 to support the project’s Feasibility Study, which was authorized by Congress in 1986. Supplemental NEPA reviews or compliance evaluations have occurred multiple times since the 1984 EIS, including in 1992, 2002, 2017, 2018, 2021, and 2022. In 2026, a NEPA Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the new Bechara Materials Management Area. USACE has determined that Contracts 1, 2, and 3 remain in compliance with existing NEPA documentation. Any future construction contracts upstream of Contract 3 will require a new NEPA evaluation.
- **Water Quality Certification:** The project’s water quality certification was issued by Puerto Rico Environmental Quality Board (EQB) in 1993 and does not expire. The project remains in compliance with section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act.
- **Threatened & Endangered Species:** USACE updated its consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) between 2013 and 2015. The 2026 Bechara EA in 2026 initiated consultation for the new area not previously evaluated. Any new construction contracts upstream of Contract 3 will undergo reconsultation under the Endangered Species Act.
- **Sedimentation and erosion:** Information related to sedimentation and erosion is available on the project website listed above.

Questions regarding economics: Preliminary economic analysis indicates that Contracts 2 and 3 are incrementally justified, with Benefit–Cost Ratios (BCRs) well above 1. Additional details and updated economic data will be shared once the final analyses are completed and the information is approved for release.