

Jon Niermann, *Chairman*
Bobby Janecka, *Commissioner*
Catarina R. Gonzales, *Commissioner*
Kelly Keel, *Executive Director*



TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

October 7, 2024

Colonel Rhett A. Blackmon
Commander and District Engineer
USACE Galveston District
P.O. Box 1229
Galveston, TX 77553-1229

Attention: Dr. Cheryl Montgomery, Ph.D.

Re: Updated 401 Certification for the Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel
Improvement Project

Dear Colonel Blackmon:

In a letter dated November 21, 2019, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) provided Clean Water Act Section 401 water quality certification of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project Draft Final Integrated Feasibility Report-Environmental Impact Statement dated September 2019 (FIFR-EIS). The FIFR-EIS includes proposals to deepen and widen the Houston Ship Channel to accommodate larger vessels and traffic volume. The project is located in Harris and Galveston Counties, Texas.

Subsequent to the 401 certification of the FIFR-EIS, USACE provided TCEQ with revised modeling data associated with the FIFR-EIS in a report entitled *Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project (HSC ECIP), North of Morgan's Point Sediments, 404 Sediment Characterization and Testing - New Work Dredge Material Refined Mixing Zone Modeling for Discharge in Glendale and Filterbed Upland Placement Areas* dated August 5, 2024 (Report). This Report includes the results of refined CDFATE modeling for Segments 5 and 6 of the HSC ECIP. Under this effort, dredged material placement area discharge locations and design details were updated, along with bathymetry, flow and salinity data for Buffalo Bayou and the Houston Ship Channel.

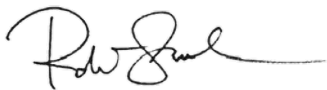
In light of this new information, the USACE requested that TCEQ review the information and provide an updated 401 water quality certification of the FIFR-EIS.

The TCEQ has reviewed the Report and related information. Based on our evaluation of the information contained in these documents, the TCEQ certifies that there is reasonable assurance that the project will be conducted in a way that will not violate water quality standards.

Colonel Rhett A. Blackmon Commander and District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project CDFate modeling
Page 2

If you require additional information or further assistance, please contact Mr. Peter Schaefer, Water Quality Assessment Section, Water Quality Division (MC-150), at (512) 239-4372 or by email at peter.schaefer@tceq.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Sadler", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Robert Sadler, Deputy Director
Water Quality Division
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

RS/PS

cc: Dr. Cheryl Montgomery, USACE via e-mail at cheryl.r.montgomery@usace.army.mil

