



**U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers**

**Galveston District
Southwestern Division**

**Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel
Improvement Project, Harris, Chambers,
Galveston Counties, Texas**

**Final Integrated Feasibility Report–Environmental
Impact Statement**

APPENDIX F

AGENCY AND TRIBAL COORDINATION

NOVEMBER 2019



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229**

**Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project,
Harris, Chambers, and Galveston Counties, Texas**

**Final Integrated Feasibility Report –
Environmental Impact Statement**

APPENDIX F

AGENCY AND TRIBAL COORDINATION:

Attachment 1: Agency Coordination Invitation Letters

Attachment 2: Tribal Coordination Invitation Letters

Attachment 3: Responses/Comments Received

Attachment 4: Responses/Comments Received

NOVEMBER 2019

ATTACHMENT 1

AGENCY COORDINATION INVITATION LETTERS



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Ms. Maria Martinez
Section Chief, Wetland Section
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

Dear Ms. Martinez:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

We are inviting the participation of your agency as a Cooperating Agency pursuant to Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR §1501.6 and §1508.5), the Water Resources Council principles and guidelines (42 U.S.C. §1962-3), and USACE Engineer Regulation (ER) 1105-2-100 (Paragraph 2-5.a.). The purpose of this request is to formalize, via designation as a Cooperating Agency, the continuing coordination and active participation by resource agencies in the study for the HSC ECIP. Furthermore, we would like to coordinate our review schedule for study completion so that all reviews and approvals will, to the maximum extent practicable, be conducted concurrently. This concurrent coordination is required by Section 2045 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 and Section 1001 of the Water Resources Reform Development Act of 2014. The following review periods for the IFR-EIS have been established in accordance with the current project schedule:

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May 3, 2016 – 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
USACE Galveston District Headquarters
2000 Fort Point Road
Galveston, Texas 77550
Conference Room 120

The purpose of the meeting is to also gain early key agency stakeholder input as recommended by ER 1105-2-100 on the problems and opportunities related to improving deep draft navigation in the planned reaches of the HSC. We appreciate this opportunity to invite your participation as a Cooperating Agency and request that you advise us as to whether the report review periods shown above are acceptable. In addition, please let us know if you plan to attend the Interagency Meeting, either remotely or in person. The meeting will be available by teleconference and web meeting (webinar address <http://www.webmeeting.att.com>, call-in and web meeting number 888-204-5984, access code 8149390, security code 2016). If you plan to attend in person, please advise my staff so we can facilitate your entry into the Galveston District facility. Please contact Andrea Catanzaro at (409) 766-6346, andrea.catanzaro@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Chuck Ardizzone
Project Leader
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Texas Coastal Ecological Services Field Office
17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211
Houston, Texas 77058

Dear Mr. Ardizzone:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Rusty Swafford
Branch Supervisor
National Marine Fisheries Service
Habitat Conservation Division
4700 Avenue U
Galveston, TX 77551

Dear Mr. Swafford:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Scott Alford
District Conservationist
US Department of Agriculture
National Resources Conservation Service
7705 West Bay Road
Baytown, TX 77523

Dear Mr. Alford:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



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P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Ms. Rebecca Hensley
Regional Director, Ecosystem Resources Program
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
1502 FM 517 East
Dickinson, TX 77539

Dear Ms. Hensley:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Director, Regional Planning and
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GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Matthew Mahoney
Waterways Program Coordinator
Texas Department of Transportation, Maritime Division
118 E. Riverside Drive
Austin, Texas 78704

Dear Mr. Mahoney:

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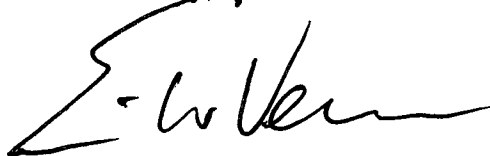
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Director, Regional Planning and
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Kevin Cauble
Manager, Emissions Assessment Section
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087, MC-164
Austin, TX 78711-3087

Dear Mr. Cauble:

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GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Ms. Karla Guthrie, Ph.D.
Team Lead, Bays and Estuaries Program
Texas Water Development Board
P.O. Box 13231
Austin, TX 78711-3231

Dear Ms. Guthrie:

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APR 19 2016

Mr. Peter Schaefer
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Water Quality Division
P.O. Box 13087, MC-150
Austin, TX 78711-3087

Dear Mr. Schaefer:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

We are inviting the participation of your agency as a Cooperating Agency pursuant to Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR §1501.6 and §1508.5), the Water Resources Council principles and guidelines (42 U.S.C. §1962-3), and USACE Engineer Regulation (ER) 1105-2-100 (Paragraph 2-5.a.). The purpose of this request is to formalize, via designation as a Cooperating Agency, the continuing coordination and active participation by resource agencies in the study for the HSC ECIP. Furthermore, we would like to coordinate our review schedule for study completion so that all reviews and approvals will, to the maximum extent practicable, be conducted concurrently. This concurrent coordination is required by Section 2045 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 and Section 1001 of the Water Resources Reform Development Act of 2014. The following review periods for the IFR-EIS have been established in accordance with the current project schedule:

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USACE Galveston District Headquarters
2000 Fort Point Road
Galveston, Texas 77550
Conference Room 120

The purpose of the meeting is to also gain early key agency stakeholder input as recommended by ER 1105-2-100 on the problems and opportunities related to improving deep draft navigation in the planned reaches of the HSC. We appreciate this opportunity to invite your participation as a Cooperating Agency and request that you advise us as to whether the report review periods shown above are acceptable. In addition, please let us know if you plan to attend the Interagency Meeting, either remotely or in person. The meeting will be available by teleconference and web meeting (webinar address <http://www.webmeeting.att.com>, call-in and web meeting number 888-204-5984, access code 8149390, security code 2016). If you plan to attend in person, please advise my staff so we can facilitate your entry into the Galveston District facility. Please contact Andrea Catanzaro at (409) 766-6346, andrea.catanzaro@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Rear Admiral David R. Callahan
Eighth Coast Guard District
Hale Boggs Federal Building
500 Poydras St., Suite 1324
New Orleans, LA 70130-3396

Dear Rear Admiral Callahan:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Ray Newby
Texas General Land Office
P.O. Box 12873
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Mr. Newby:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Mark Wolfe
Texas Historical Commission
Executive Director
PO BOX 12276
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Mr. Wolfe:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Ms. Sarah P. Bernhardt, Ph.D.
Galveston Bay Estuary Program
Program Manager
17041 El Camino Real, Ste. 210
Houston, TX 77058

Dear Ms. Bernhardt:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Port of Houston Authority, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
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ATTACHMENT 2

TRIBAL COORDINATION INVITATION LETTERS



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Kevin Stickney
Chairman
Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
1940 C.C. Bel Road
Elton, Louisiana 70532

Dear Chairman Stickney:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Texas General Land Office, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

In partial fulfillment of responsibilities under Executive Order 13175, the National Environmental Policy Act, Federal water resource planning policy, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Corps offers you the opportunity to review and comment on the potential of the proposed study to significantly affect protected tribal resources, tribal rights, or Indian lands. Furthermore, we would like to coordinate our review schedule for study completion so that all reviews and approvals will, to the maximum extent practicable, be conducted concurrently. This concurrent coordination is required by Section 2045 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 and Section 1001 of the Water Resources Reform Development Act of 2014. The following review periods for the IFR-EIS have been established in accordance with the current project schedule:

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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Ms. Nina Battise
Chairperson
Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas
571 State Park Road 56
Livingston, Texas 77351

Dear Chairperson Battise:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Texas General Land Office, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

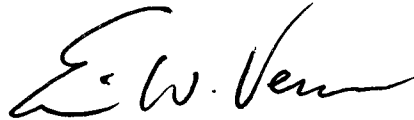
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Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Ms. Amber Toppah
Chairperson
Kiowa Indian Tribe of Oklahoma
P.O. Box 370
Carnegie, Oklahoma 73016

Dear Chairperson Toppah:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Texas General Land Office, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. William Owens
Tribal Administrator
The Comanche Nation
584 NW Bingo Road
Lawton, Oklahoma 73507

Dear Administrator Owens:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Texas General Land Office, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

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Director, Regional Planning and
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Danny Breuninger, Jr.
President
Mescalero Apache Tribe
P.O. Box 227
Mescalero, New Mexico 88340

Dear President Breuninger:

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We request that you advise us as to whether the report review periods shown above are acceptable. In addition, please let us know if you plan to attend the Interagency Meeting, either remotely or in person. The meeting will be available by teleconference and web meeting (webinar address <http://www.webmeeting.att.com>, call-in and web

meeting number 888-204-5984, access code 8149390, security code 2016). If you plan to attend in person, please advise my staff so we can facilitate your entry into the Galveston District facility. Please contact Andrea Catanzaro at (409) 766-6346, andrea.catanzaro@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric W. Verwers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
GALVESTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 1229
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77553-1229

APR 19 2016

Mr. Russell Martin
President
Tonkawa Tribe of Oklahoma
1 Rush Buffalo Road
Tonkawa, Oklahoma 74654

Dear President Martin:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District (Corps) intends to prepare an Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) Expansion Channel Improvement Project (ECIP) Feasibility Study. The Corps and the non-federal sponsor, the Texas General Land Office, would like to invite your agency to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of the IFR-EIS. The IFR-EIS will identify and evaluate the feasibility of developing a plan for improving deep draft navigation along the HSC. The study will focus on opportunities to deepen and widen the upper reach of the HSC (Boggy Bayou to the Main Turning Basin), improvements to the HSC side channels Bayport Ship Channel (BSC) and Barbour's Cut Channel (BCC), and safety and efficiency enhancements in the Galveston Bay Reach of the HSC such as anchorages and meeting lanes.

In partial fulfillment of responsibilities under Executive Order 13175, the National Environmental Policy Act, Federal water resource planning policy, and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Corps offers you the opportunity to review and comment on the potential of the proposed study to significantly affect protected tribal resources, tribal rights, or Indian lands. Furthermore, we would like to coordinate our review schedule for study completion so that all reviews and approvals will, to the maximum extent practicable, be conducted concurrently. This concurrent coordination is required by Section 2045 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 and Section 1001 of the Water Resources Reform Development Act of 2014. The following review periods for the IFR-EIS have been established in accordance with the current project schedule:

Review of Draft IFR-EIS – 45-day review period begins May 2017
State & Agency Review of Final IFR-EIS – 30-day review begins July 2019

We request that you advise us as to whether the report review periods shown above are acceptable. In addition, please let us know if you plan to attend the Interagency Meeting, either remotely or in person. The meeting will be available by teleconference and web meeting (webinar address <http://www.webmeeting.att.com>, call-in and web

meeting number 888-204-5984, access code 8149390, security code 2016). If you plan to attend in person, please advise my staff so we can facilitate your entry into the Galveston District facility. Please contact Andrea Catanzaro at (409) 766-6346, andrea.catanzaro@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric W. Verwers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "E" and "V".

Eric W. Verwers
Director, Regional Planning and
Environmental Center

ATTACHMENT 3

**AGENCY AND TRIBAL RESPONSES/COMMENTS
RECEIVED DURING SCOPING PHASE**



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 6

1445 Ross Avenue, Suite 1200

Dallas, TX 75202-2733

23 MAY 2016

Eric W. Verwers
Galveston District
Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 1229
Galveston, TX 77553-1229

Dear Mr. Verwers:

This letter is in response to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (COE) letter, dated April 19, 2016, requesting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to become a cooperating agency in the development of a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement (IFR-EIS) for the Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project Feasibility Study, Texas. The EIS will analyze the impacts of the proposed project to the human and natural environment.

The EPA agrees to participate in this proposed project as a cooperating agency. As a cooperating agency, the EPA will

- provide expertise on NEPA compliance and other subject matter such as wetlands, water quality, air quality, and environmental justice, during EIS planning and development;
- provide timely technical reviews and comments on preliminary documents, reports, analyses, and sections of the Draft EIS;
- participate in meetings and provide information as requested by COE, as resources allow;
- provide sources for information or support in the analysis of such information, when known, during preparation of the Draft EIS in areas in which EPA has expertise;
- review and comment on the Draft EIS pursuant to our regulatory responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The EPA anticipates that a cooperative team approach will streamline the environmental process and result in a high quality EIS. We look forward to continued involvement and cooperation in the environmental assessment phase of the project. If you have any questions, please contact Robert Houston of my staff at 214-665-8565 or houston.robert@epa.gov for assistance.

Sincerely,



John Blevins

Director

Compliance Assurance and

Enforcement Division

Texas Water Development Board

P.O. Box 13231, 1700 N. Congress Ave.
Austin, TX 78711-3231, www.twdb.texas.gov
Phone (512) 463-7847, Fax (512) 475-2053

June 1, 2016

Ms. Tammy Gilmore, CEMVN-PDN-CEP
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160-0267

RE: Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project (HSC ECIP)

Dear Ms. Gilmore:

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) appreciates the opportunity to participate as a Cooperating Agency in the development of an *Integrated Feasibility Report and Environmental Impact Statement* for the *Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project* (HSC-ECIP) which is being conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Galveston District (USACE). The improvement plan includes the potential to deepen the upper, landlocked reaches of the Houston Ship Channel, including Boggy Bayou to Sims Bayou (deepening beyond 40 feet) and Sims Bayou to the Main Turning Basin (deepening beyond 36 feet).

The TWDB historically has developed, maintained, and utilized two-dimensional and three-dimensional hydrodynamic and salinity transport models which are capable of producing high-resolution, dynamic simulations of estuarine circulation and salinity patterns over periods covering a year or more. These models have been used to evaluate changes in bathymetry (*e.g.*, dredging, reef building, storm impacts, *etc.*), water level, and freshwater inflow management. The TWDB has investigated salinity intrusion in the Salt Bayou/Keith Lake wetland system of the Sabine-Neches Estuary (Pothina and Guthrie 2009) and in the Brazos River Estuary (Negusse 2014). Impacts of salinity intrusion due to deep draft channel dredging also have been quantified in Matagorda Bay (Ward 1983).

Our primary concern with modifying the bathymetry of the upper Houston Ship Channel is the potential for increased salinity intrusion to the upper estuary. Because the planned deepening will occur in the confined (landlocked) portion of the Houston Ship Channel, dense saline water will have a pathway farther upstream in the absence of lateral, cross-channel exchange. Just below the planned area are shallow, intertidal areas such as Channelview and Scott Bay. Further downstream of the Houston Ship Channel are Tabbs Bay and upper Galveston Bay. While there is a good possibility that the influence of deepening the channel is minimal in these areas, it is sound practice to investigate whether channel alterations will facilitate greater salinity intrusion and the degree to which it may affect biota and water users (industrial and municipal) in the immediate vicinity. We therefore encourage the USACE to consider conducting a comprehensive, three-dimensional modeling study of the final project design to examine the

Our Mission

To provide leadership, information, education, and support for planning, financial assistance, and outreach for the conservation and responsible development of water for Texas

Board Members

Bech Bruun, Chairman | Kathleen Jackson, Board Member | Peter Lake, Board Member
Jeff Walker, Executive Administrator

Ms. Tammy Gilmore, CEMVN-PDN-CEP
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
June 1, 2016
Page 2

potential for salinity intrusion (including both in magnitude and spatial extent) in the upper reaches of the Houston Ship Channel and the Channelview area to upper Galveston Bay. We also encourage the USACE to develop a monitoring plan and/or a partnership to collect important salinity and water quality data in the vicinity of the channel improvements.

We appreciate the opportunity to be involved in the stakeholder process for this project. Please contact TWDB staff, Dr. Junji Matsumoto (junji.matsumoto@twdb.texas.gov or 512-936-0825) or Mr. Taylor Sansom (taylor.sansom@twdb.texas.gov or 512-463-5604), for further clarification or additional discussion of our comments.

Sincerely,



Carla G. Guthrie, Ph.D.
Director
Surface Water Division

References:

- Negusse, S. 2014. *Influences of the Lower Brazos River realignment and construction of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway on the Brazos River and the San Bernard River estuaries*. A report submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Texas Water Development Board, Austin, Texas. pp. 48.
- Pothina, D., and C.G. Guthrie. 2009. *Evaluating inverted siphons as a means of mitigating salinity intrusion in the Keith Lake/Salt Bayou system, Jefferson County, Texas*. A report submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Gulf of Mexico Program. Texas Water Development Board, Austin, Texas. pp. 105.
- Ward, G. H. 1983. *The Effect of Deepdraft Ship Channels on Salinity Intrusion in Shallow Bays*. Proceedings of the Specialty Conference on Port Modernization, Upgrading, and Repairs. American Society of Civil Engineers, New Orleans, Louisiana, March 21-23, 1983.



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Texas Coastal Ecological Services Field Office

17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211

Houston, Texas 77058

281/286-8282 / (FAX) 281/488-5882



In Reply Refer To:
FWS/R2/02ETT
X00-2017-CPA-
0007

March 13, 2017

Colonel Lars Zetterstrom
District Commander
Attention: Andrea Catanzaro
Galveston District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Post Office Box 1229
Galveston, Texas 77553-1229

Dear Colonel Zetterstrom:

Thank you for your email dated of December 5, 2016 requesting Cooperating Agency status on behalf of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) for the Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) preparation of a Planning Aid Letter(s) and Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report(s) in conjunction with the Matagorda Ship Channel Improvement Project (MSCIP), located in Calhoun and Matagorda Counties, Texas. This study seeks to analyze alternatives aimed to improve ship movement throughout the entire 22-mile deep draft Matagorda Ship Channel system.

The regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) define a "Cooperating Agency" as "any Federal agency other than a lead agency which has jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impact involved in a proposal (or a reasonable alternative) for legislation or other major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment" (40 C.F.R. § 1508.5). A similarly qualified State or local agency may, by agreement with the lead agency, become a cooperating agency (40 C.F.R. 1508.5; see also 40 C.F.R. § 1501.6). The Corps and the Service have formally committed to work together to conserve, protect, and restore fish and wildlife resources while ensuring environmental sustainability of our Nation's water resources under the January 22, 2003, Partnership Agreement for Water Resources and Fish and Wildlife. Accordingly, the Service would be pleased to serve as a cooperating agency in developing the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed project in accordance with applicable NEPA/Council on Environmental Quality guidance. Our participation will be specifically limited to: (1) participating in meetings and field trips to obtain baseline information on project-area fish and wildlife resources; (2) evaluating the proposed project's impacts to wetlands and associated fish and wildlife resources, and assisting in the development of measures to avoid, minimize, and/or compensate for those impacts (including project alternatives); and (3) providing technical

assistance in the development of a Biological Assessment describing the impacts of the proposed activity to federally listed threatened or endangered species and/or their critical habitat(s). Agreeing to be a cooperating agency does not preclude the Service from providing comments on the draft and final NEPA documents and does not ensure our support of the final selected plan.

Thank you for contacting the Service regarding the MSCIP. We look forward to enhancing our relationship with Corps and value your contribution to effective conservation of the natural resources found in the Galveston Bay complex. If you require further assistance, or if you have any questions, please contact staff biologist, Donna Anderson at 281-286-8282 or by email at donna_anderson@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Charles Ardizzone
Field Supervisor

ATTACHMENT 4

**AGENCY AND TRIBAL RESPONSES/COMMENTS
RECEIVED ON DIFR-EIS**

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D., P.E., *Chairman*
Toby Baker, *Commissioner*
Jon Niermann, *Commissioner*
Richard A. Hyde, P.E., *Executive Director*



TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

November 10, 2017

Dr. Kelly A. Burks-Copes
Coastal Section, Regional Planning & Environmental Center
Galveston District CESWG-PE-RE
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 1229
Galveston, Texas 77553-1229

Re: Houston Ship Channel Improvement Project EIS

Dear Dr. Burks:

As described in the Joint Notice of Availability, dated August 18, 2017, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District in partnership with the Port of Houston Authority, prepared a draft feasibility study and integrated environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed Houston Ship Channel 45-foot Expansion Channel Improvement Project (HSC ECIP) where different reaches of the channel will be widened and deepened to accommodate larger vessels and traffic volume. The project is located in Harris and Galveston counties, Texas.

The Houston Ship Channel (HSC) encompasses three separate classified water quality segments within Basin 10 of the San Jacinto River Basin: HSC/San Jacinto River Tidal (Segment 1005), HSC Tidal (Segment 1006), and HSC/Buffalo Bayou Tidal (Segment 1007). The study limits for the HSC ECIP also include several water quality segments in Basin 24 of the Bays and Estuaries including Segments 2421, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2436, 2438, and 2439.

According to the EIS, dredging would not be expected to degrade the long-term water quality within the project area. Minimal temporary impacts from increased turbidity and decreased dissolved oxygen could occur as a result of water column mixing during dredging and placement activities.

Sediment testing will continue to be conducted in accordance with the joint EPA/USACE Inland Testing Manual, with handling requirements and selection of placement areas to be further refined.

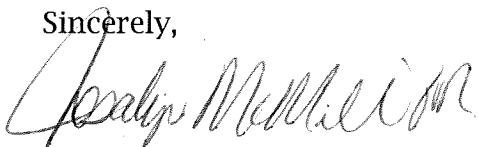
In addition to the information contained in the Joint Notice of Availability, the following information is needed for review of the proposed project. Responses to this letter may raise other questions that will need to be addressed before a water quality certification determination can be made.

Dr. Kelly A. Burks-Copes
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Houston Ship Channel Improvement Project EIS
Page 2
November 10, 2017

1. According to the EIS, none of the segments listed above meet their fish consumption uses due to high levels of PCBs and/or dioxins in edible fish tissue, and sediment analyses throughout the HSC show the presence of constituents of concern. The EIS states that sediment quality has been assessed for the majority of dredging projects occurring within the HSC. These sampling events typically characterized both sediment chemistry and sediment elutriate, the latter of which simulates chemical leaching during dredging. Some of the parameters analyzed include numerous metals, polychlorinated biphenyls, volatile organic compounds, polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, among others. Please explain how the bioavailability of the contaminants suspended during dredging will be mitigated so as not to contribute to the impairment of the fish consumption use and other uses.
2. Two basic types of wetlands are common in the study area: depression and estuarine wetlands. Only 5.7 acres of potential wetland areas were identified along the shoreline adjacent to the HSC in the few areas noted upstream of Morgans Point. Please provide a complete and detailed mitigation plan for impacts to wetlands and other aquatic resources should they occur.

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) appreciates the opportunity to comment and looks forward to receiving and evaluating other agency or public comments. Please provide any agency comments, public comments, as well as the applicant's comments, to Ms. Lili Murphy of the Water Quality Division MC-150, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas 78711-3087. Ms. Murphy may also be contacted by e-mail at lili.murphy@tceq.texas.gov, or by telephone at (512) 239-4596.

Sincerely,



David W. Galindo, Director
Water Quality Division
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

DWG/LM/tc



In Reply Refer To:
FWS/R2/02ETTX0
0-2016-CPA-0051

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Texas Coastal Ecological Services Field Office
17629 El Camino Real, Suite 211
Houston, Texas 77058
281/286-8282 / (FAX) 281/488-5882



November 13, 2017

Colonel Lars Zetterstrom
District Commander
Attention: Andrea Catanzaro
Galveston District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Post Office Box 1229
Galveston, Texas 77553-1229

Dear Colonel Zetterstrom:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Houston Ship Channel Expansion Channel Improvement Project (HSC ECIP), Harris, Chambers, and Galveston Counties, Texas Draft Integrated Feasibility Report (DIFR) – Environmental Impact Statement dated August 2017. The HSC ECIP aims to evaluate Federal interest in alternative planning for reducing transportation costs while providing for safe, reliable navigation on the HSC system. Previous HSC ECIP documented input from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) occurred on March 29, 2017 (Planning Aid Letter) and then on October 27, 2017 (Section 7 letter); however, the Service was involved in the planning and alternative process with the Corps since early 2016. The DIFR identifies the Corps' Tentatively Selected Plan (TSP) as:

- Four bend easings on main HSC channel with associated relocation of barge lanes;
- Widening (in whole or in part) the HSC main channel between Bolivar Roads and the Barbours Cut Channel (BCC) from the existing 530-foot width to between 650 and 820 feet with associated relocation of barge lanes;
- Addition of a new multipurpose mooring on the HSC near the San Jacinto Monument;
- Flare expansion on Bayport Ship Channel (BSC);
- Shoaling attenuation structure near the BSC Flare;
- Widen BSC from existing 300-400 feet to 455 feet;
- Widen BCC from existing 300 feet to 455 feet;
- Combination flare and turning basin on BCC;
- Deepen the HSC main channel from Boggy Bayou to Sims Bayou from the existing 41.5-foot depth up to 46.5 feet;
- Widen the HSC main channel from Boggy Bayou to Greens Bayou from the existing 400-foot wide channel up to 530 feet;
- Deepen the HSC main channel from Sims Bayou to I-610 Bridge from the existing 37.5-foot depth to 41.5 feet; and

- Deepen the HSC main channel from I-610 Bridge to Main Turning Basin from the existing 37.5-foot depth up to 41.5 feet deep

Additional features included in the TSP that are believed to be necessary for safe and efficient navigation in the HSC are:

- Minor widening of the channel in the bayou portion of the HSC main channel in the Hog Island stretch,
- The alleviation of a channel restriction in Segment 4 by widening from the existing 400-foot to 530-foot for a distance of approximately 1.3 miles from just west of the San Jacinto Monument and Boggy Bayou;
- A turning basin requested by the pilots to provide for additional turning opportunities at the BSC in Segment 2 at the mouth of the BSC land cut;
- Turning Basin at Station 775+00 would be the most upstream location for Aframax vessels to turn;
- Hunting Turning Basin to ensure continued Federal maintenance; and
- Improvement of and consideration of federalizing an existing turning basin located near Brady's Landing

The Service coordinated with the Corps and Port of Houston (POH) (since the early 1990s) on previous deepening and widening efforts through the Beneficial Use Group (BUG) and more formally through the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act process. The BUG provided input on previous Dredge Material Management Plans (DMMP) for the POH recommending the beneficial use of dredge material creating thousands of acres of marsh habitat supporting foraging shorebirds, excellent estuarine habitat for recreational and commercially important fish species, sand and mudflats for the endangered piping plover, a bird rookery island supporting 10,000 pairs of colonial waterbirds yearly, and the creation of oyster reef habitat. The Service continues to provide input on project features and studies to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife resources along the Houston Ship Channel and the throughout the greater Galveston Bay complex.

The Service reviewed the Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and has the following general comments:

- The Corps expects to permanently impact between 469 and 538-acres of oyster reef. The Service recommends the Corps minimize project impacts to oyster and shell habitat to the greatest extent possible. Unavoidable oyster impacts should be compensated fully and oyster restoration or creation (reef design and location) should be coordinated with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
- A comprehensive evaluation of the TSPs from both the HSC ECIP and the Texas Coastal Study should be conducted to assess impacts of the combined projects. Project features from both projects will impact the other and potential impacts to fish and wildlife resources are expected to be heightened with the implementation of both projects.

- Closely coordinate the development of the Dredge Material Placement Plan spanning the 50-year period of analysis (to be develop during the feasibility-level analysis and design phase) with the BUG to include beneficial use and marsh creation to the greatest extent practical.

Thank you for contacting the Service regarding the HSC ECIP. More specific comments and recommendations related to TSP measure impacts and mitigation will be addressed in the upcoming Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report. We look forward to enhancing our relationship with the Corps and value your contribution to effective conservation of the natural resources found in the Galveston Bay complex. If you require further assistance, or if you have any questions, please contact staff biologist, Donna Anderson at 281-286-8282 or by email at donna_anderson@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles Ardizzone', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Charles Ardizzone
Field Supervisor

Cc: Rusty Swafford, NOAA
Barbara Keeler, EPA Dallas
Rebecca Hensley, TPWD