



Public Notice

**U.S. Army Corps
Of Engineers**

Galveston District

Permit Application No: SWG-2018-00077

Date Issued: 15 February 2018

Comments

Due: 19 March 2018

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, GALVESTON DISTRICT
AND
TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC NOTICE: To inform you of a proposal for work in which you might be interested. It is also to solicit your comments and information to better enable us to make a reasonable decision on factors affecting the public interest. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is not the entity proposing or performing the proposed work, nor has the Corps taken a position, in favor or against the proposed work.

AUTHORITY: This application will be reviewed pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

APPLICANT: Entergy Texas, Inc.
350 Pine Street
Beaumont, Texas 77701-2437
POC: Andrew Guempel
Telephone: (409) 981-2057

AGENT: SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA)
10245 West Little York Road, Suite 600
Houston, Texas 77040-2937
POC: Richard Howard
Telephone: (281) 617-3217

LOCATION: The project site is located in wetlands adjacent to Taylor Bayou approximately .59 mile from the intersection of State Highways 73 and 82, west of Port Arthur, Jefferson County, Texas. The project can be located on the U.S.G.S. quadrangle map titled: Port Arthur North, Texas.

LATITUDE & LONGITUDE (NAD 83):
Latitude: 29.87566° North; Longitude: 93.99524° West

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant proposes to discharge approximately 3,456 cubic yards of dredged or fill material into 2.142 acres of palustrine emergent wetlands for the purpose of constructing an electrical substation and an 800 foot access road.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION: The applicant has stated that they have avoided and minimized the environmental impacts by restricting the road right of way to the minimum distance necessary to construct the road as well as restricting the area proposed to be filled to the minimum area required for the electrical substation.

MITIGATION: The applicant proposed to mitigate for the proposed impacts by purchasing credits from the Graham Creek Mitigation Bank.

CURRENT SITE CONDITIONS: The project site is a previously impacted site on which the impacted wetlands have been restored. The project tract is adjacent to the Golden Triangle railroad offloading facility. The surrounding area is low lying and relatively undeveloped. The majority of the surrounding area is wetlands adjacent to Taylor Bayou. The project site has an area of historic industrial development to the south and an area of undeveloped herbaceous wetlands to the north. Forested wetlands, developing in what was formerly a USACE dredged material placement area, are located along the western limit of the project site. The former industrial development is characterized by large areas of disturbed soil, most of which is covered by concrete slab or rock. The herbaceous wetlands are characterized primarily by marsh-hay cordgrass (*Spartina patens*) and various other grasses, rushes, and sedges. The forested area is dominated by Chinese tallow (*Triadica sebifera*) trees with a thick undergrowth of eastern baccharis (*Baccharis halimifolia*).

NOTES: This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This project information has not been verified by the Corps. The wetland delineation has been completed and was verified by the Corps on November 15, 2017. The applicant's plans are enclosed in 8 sheets.

A preliminary review of this application indicates that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required. Since permit assessment is a continuing process, this preliminary determination of EIS requirement will be changed if data or information brought forth in the coordination process is of a significant nature.

Our evaluation will also follow the guidelines published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 404 (b)(1) of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

OTHER AGENCY AUTHORIZATIONS: Consistency with the State of Texas Coastal Management Plan is required. The applicant has stated that the proposed activity complies with Texas' approved Coastal Management Program goals and policies and will be conducted in a manner consistent with said program.

Although this project would result in a direct impact to less than three acres of waters of the state or less than 1500 linear feet of streams, the project would impact certain types of rare or ecologically significant wetlands. Therefore, the project is not eligible for inclusion in the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) Tier I project criteria and an individual water quality certification is required, even though the project is below the Tier I thresholds. Concurrent with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) processing of this application, the TCEQ is reviewing this application under Section 401

of the CWA and in accordance with Title 30, Texas Administrative Code Section 279, 1-13 to determine if the work would comply with State water quality standards. By virtue of an agreement between the Corps and the TCEQ, this public notice is also issued for the purpose of advising all known interested persons that there is pending before the TCEQ a decision on water quality certification under such act. Any comments concerning this application may be submitted to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, 401 Coordinator, MSC-150, P.O. Box 13087, Austin, Texas, 78711-3087. The public comment period extends 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. A copy of the public notice with a description of the work is made available for review in the TCEQ's Austin office. The complete application may be reviewed in the Corps office listed in this public notice. The TCEQ may conduct a public meeting to consider all comments concerning water quality if requested in writing. A request for a public meeting must contain the following information: the name, mailing address, application number, or other recognizable reference to the application; a brief description of the interest of the requester, or of persons represented by the requester; and a brief description of how the application, if granted, would adversely affect such interest.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: The Corps Staff Archaeologist has reviewed the latest published version of the National Register of Historic Places, lists of properties determined eligible, and other sources of information. The following is current knowledge of the presence or absence of historic properties and the effects of the undertaking upon these properties: The permit area has been so extensively impacted by previous earth moving activities that there is no potential for historic properties to exist within the permit area. Therefore the proposed project has no potential to affect historic properties.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES: Preliminary indications are that no known threatened and/or endangered species or their critical habitat will be affected by the proposed work.

PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW FACTORS: This application will be reviewed in accordance with 33 CFR 320-332, the Regulatory Programs of the Corps of Engineers, and other pertinent laws, regulations and executive orders. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors, which may be relevant to the proposal, will be considered: among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shore erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

SOLICITATION OF COMMENTS: The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public, Federal, State, and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

This public notice is being distributed to all known interested persons in order to assist in developing facts upon which a decision by the Corps of Engineers may be based. For accuracy and completeness of the record, all data in support of or in opposition to the proposed work should be submitted in writing setting forth sufficient detail to furnish a clear understanding of the reasons for support or opposition.

PUBLIC HEARING: The purpose of a public hearing is to solicit additional information to assist in the evaluation of the proposed project. Prior to the close of the comment period, any person may make a written request for a public hearing, setting forth the particular reasons for the request. The District Engineer will determine if the reasons identified for holding a public hearing are sufficient to warrant that a public hearing be held. If a public hearing is warranted, all known interested persons will be notified of the time, date, and location.

CLOSE OF COMMENT PERIOD: All comments pertaining to this Public Notice must reach this office on or before **19 March 2018**. Extensions of the comment period may be granted for valid reasons provided a written request is received by the limiting date. **If no comments are received by that date, it will be considered that there are no objections.** Comments and requests for additional information should reference our file number, **SWG-2018-00077**, and should be submitted to:

North Evaluation Unit
Regulatory Division, CESWG-RD-E
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 1229
Galveston, Texas 77553-1229
409-766-3869 Phone
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swg_public_notice@usace.army.mil

DISTRICT ENGINEER
GALVESTON DISTRICT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS