



Public Notice

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

Galveston District

Permit Application No: SWG-1993-00438

Date Issued: 6 July 2023

Comments

Due: 7 August 2023

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, GALVESTON DISTRICT

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 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

APPLICANT: Houston Audubon Society
440 Wilchester Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77079
POC: Helen Drummond
Telephone: 713-932-1639
Email: hdrummons@houstonaudubon.org

AGENT: Houston Audubon Society
2089 5th Street, P.O. Box 111
High Island, Texas 77623
POC: Peter Deichmann
Telephone: 314-330-8538
Email: pdeichmann@houstonaudubon.org

LOCATION: The project site is located in the Gulf of Mexico, approximately 1.4 miles south of the intersection of Texas State Highway 87 and Rettilon Road, in Port Bolivar, Galveston County, Texas.

LATITUDE & LONGITUDE (NAD 83):

Latitude: 29.37212° North; **Longitude:** 094.72784° West

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant proposes to modify Department of the Army (DA) Permit SWG-1993-00438 to reconstruct and extend a vehicular barrier for the protection of a wildlife sanctuary. This barrier will consist of wooden pilings spaced 2-3 feet apart and extending from the mean higher high-water line to 100 yards seaward of the mean higher high-water line of the Gulf Mexico. The pilings will be installed via water jetting and hammer pile driving. The pilings will be 8-10 inches in diameter and placed 8 to 10 feet deep

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION: The applicant has stated that they have avoided and minimized the environmental impacts by designing the project that would not adversely affect critical habitat.

BACKGROUND: DA Permit SWG-1993-00438 was originally issued to the Houston Audubon Society on 24 June 1993 and authorized the installation of a vehicular barrier composed of wooden pilings and a steel cable for the protection of a portion of a public wildlife sanctuary. The barrier was authorized to extend approximately 50 yards seaward of the mean high water line.

MITIGATION: The applicant has not proposed any compensatory mitigation.

CURRENT SITE CONDITIONS: The project area includes sandy shoreline, saltmarsh, and open water below the mean high-water line of the Gulf of Mexico.

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 applicant's plans are enclosed in 3 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.

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.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES: The 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 proposed project is of such limited nature and scope that it has no potential to affect historic properties, even if present within the project area.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES: Threatened and/or endangered species or their critical habitat may be affected but not likely to be adversely affected by the proposed work. Consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife and/or the National Marine Fisheries Service will be initiated to assess the effect on endangered species.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on Essential Fish Habitat or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

PUBLIC INTEREST REVIEW FACTORS: This application will be reviewed in accordance with 33 CFR 320-332, the Regulatory Programs of the Corps, 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 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 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 EIS 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 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 **7 August 2023**. 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-1993-00438**, and should be submitted to:

North Unit
Regulatory Division, CESWG-RDE
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Galveston District
2000 Fort Point Road
Galveston, Texas 77550
409-766-3869 Phone
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DISTRICT ENGINEER
GALVESTON DISTRICT
CORPS OF ENGINEERS