



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

**Galveston District
Regulatory Division**

**Special Public Notice
Public Meetings for
Port of Corpus Christi Channel Deepening Project
Environmental Impact Statement
May 25, 2022**

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY AND PUBLIC MEETINGS FOR THE PORT OF CORPUS CHRISTI AUTHORITY'S CHANNEL DEEPENING PROJECT, NUECES AND ARANSAS COUNTIES, TEXAS (DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY PERMIT NUMBER SWG-2019-00067)

PURPOSE OF PUBLIC NOTICE: To inform you that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District (Corps) is issuing a notice to advise the public that a Draft Environmental Statement (DEIS), for which you may be interested, has been completed and will be published in the Federal Register on June 10, 2022. It is also to solicit your comments and information to better enable us to make a reasonable decision on factors affecting the public interest.

SCOPING: The Corps published a notice of intent and initiated the scoping process in the *Federal Register* to notify the public of the intent to prepare a DEIS on April 7, 2020. A meeting invitation was emailed to federal and state agencies for a virtual agency scoping meeting on May 14, 2020. Notices to interested parties and local, state, and federal elected officials were sent via email and mail on May 27 and May 28, 2020, respectively. The notices provided information about the proposed Action, announced the virtual public scoping meetings scheduled for June 9, June 11, June 16, and June 18, 2020, and provided a link to the Project website. Due to technical issues associated with the virtual meeting platform during the June 9, 2020, virtual public scoping meeting, the format was changed and an additional virtual public scoping meeting was scheduled for June 15, 2022, for a total of five scoping meetings. The Corps solicited comments on the proposed Action during the scoping period meetings from the public, federal, state, and local agencies and officials, Native American tribal groups, and other interested parties for the proposed permit activity.

BACKGROUND: The Corps received a permit application for a Department of the Army (DA) Permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 103 of the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act from the Port of Corpus Christi Authority (PCCA) (SWG-2019-00067) for the deepening of the Corpus Christi Ship Channel (proposed Action). The Corps is the lead Federal agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the President's Council on Environmental Quality regulations and has prepared an EIS for the proposed Action. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the U.S. Coast Guard are cooperating agencies under NEPA. The DA permit application was first publicized by an extended Public Notice issued on August 1, 2019.

The PCCA Channel Deepening Project (CDP) is located at Port Aransas, Nueces County, Texas. The CDP channel alignment is within the existing channel bottom of the Corpus Christi Ship Channel (CCSC) starting at Station 110+00 near the southeast side of Harbor Island. The CDP traverses easterly through Aransas Pass and extends beyond the currently authorized terminus at Station -330+00. The CDP extension terminates at an additional 29,000 feet into the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) at Station -620+00, the channel's proposed new terminus. The approximate distance of the proposed PCCA CDP is 13.8 miles. The Federal navigation channel segments from Stations 110+00 to -72+50 (Jetties Channel's seaward limits) is currently authorized at -54 feet Mean Lower Low Water (MLLW). The Federal navigation channel segments from -72+50 to -330+00 (Offshore Channel's seaward limits) is currently authorized at -56 feet MLLW. For these segments, the Federally authorized channel bottom widths vary from 530 feet (inshore segments) to 700 feet (offshore segments).

The proposed Action would deepen the channel from its current authorized depth of -54 feet MLLW from Station 110+00 to Station -72+50 to -75 feet MLLW. From Station -72+50 to Station -330+00, the channel would be deepened from -54 feet MLLW to -77 feet MLLW. The proposed project includes a 29,000-foot extension of the CCSC from Station -330+00 to Station -620+00 and would be deepened to -77 feet MLLW. Two feet of advanced maintenance and 2 feet of allowable over dredge would be applied to each CDP channel segment. The proposed Action would span approximately 13.8 miles from a location near the southeast side of Harbor Island to the -80-foot MLLW bathymetric contour in the Gulf. The proposed Action footprint would cover 1,778 acres, generating 46.3 million cubic yards of new work dredged material.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: The Corps invites full public participation to promote open communication on the potential concerns surrounding the DEIS. In addition, participation by Federal, State, local agencies and other interested organizations is encouraged.

The Corps will host an in-person public meeting on June 22, 2022, from 3 – 7:30 p.m. at the Ortiz Center 402 Harbor Dr, Corpus Christi, TX 78401. The open house session, where you will have the opportunity to learn more about the project, talk with project staff, and get questions answered, will be available from 3:00 PM-7:30 PM in the Kleberg Room.

For those participants who wish to provide oral comments at the public meeting, the Corps will be accepting public comments starting at 5:00 pm in the Nueces Room. Each speaker will be given three minutes to speak. If you have additional comments that you would like to submit beyond what you are able to address during your time allotted, please submit them in writing. Written comments are just as valid and count the same as verbal comments presented during the public meeting.

The public meetings will be conducted in English and a Spanish interpreter will be available. Those in need of additional language interpreters should contact the Corps at SWG201900067@usace.army.mil, by June 15, 2022 (7 days prior to the public meetings), to make arrangements. Every effort will be made to address requests.

The notice of availability for the DEIS will be published by the Corps in the Federal Register on June 10, 2022. The DEIS will be available for a 45-day public review period

beginning on June 10, 2022 and ending July 25, 2022. The DEIS will be accessible at the Project website included above and the Corps' Project webpage below.

www.swg.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Special-Projects-Environmental-Impact-Statements.aspx

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.

Comments received will be considered by the Corps to assist in determining whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a permit for the proposed Action. Comments will be considered in the Final Environmental Impact Statement analysis pursuant to NEPA. All comments must be received or postmarked by **Monday, July 25, 2022** (33 calendar days following the public meeting).

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.

CLOSE OF COMMENT PERIOD: Comments may be submitted during the entire 45-day period and will be reviewed and incorporated into the administrative record prior to the Corps' finalization of the procedure. All comments pertaining to this Notice must reach this office on or before **July 25, 2022**. Electronic (email) comments regarding the DEIS should be addressed to SWG201900067@usace.army.mil. Emailed comments, including attachments, should be provided in .docx, .jpeg, or .pdf formats. Written comments and requests for additional information should be submitted to:

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