



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

**Galveston District
Regulatory Division**

**Special Public Notice
for
Port of Corpus Christi Channel Deepening Project
Final Environmental Impact Statement
March 22 2024**

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FOR THE PORT OF CORPUS CHRISTI 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 Final Environmental Statement (EIS), for which you may be interested, has been completed and is available for review.

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT: The Notice of Availability for the Final EIS was published by the Corps in the *Federal Register* on March 22, 2024. The Final EIS is available for public review beginning on March 22, 2024. The Corps will execute a final decision regarding the proposed action and complete a Record of Decision no sooner than 30 days (April 21, 2024) following publication of the Notice of Availability of the Final EIS. The Final EIS is accessible at the Corps' Project webpage below.

<https://www.swg.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/Special-Projects-Environmental-Impact-Statements/>

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 intends to prepare 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 -81-foot MLLW bathymetric contour in the Gulf.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: 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 Draft EIS on April 7, 2020. A meeting invitation was emailed to Federal and State agencies on April 28, 2020, and a virtual interagency scoping meeting was held on May 14, 2020. Notices to interested parties and local, State, and Federal elected officials were sent via email on May 27, 2020 and email on May 28, 2020, providing information about the Proposed Action, announcing the public meetings scheduled for June 9, 11, 15, 16, and 18, 2020, and providing a link to the Project website. 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.

On May 25, 2022, the Corps published a special public notice inviting full public participation on the potential concerns surrounding the Draft EIS. In addition, participation by Federal, State, local agencies and other interested organizations was encouraged. An in-person public meeting was held on June 22, 2022, to provide information about the proposed Action and to receive public input and comment on the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS was available for a public review period beginning on June 22, 2022, and ending on July 25, 2022. The comment period for the Draft EIS was extended to August 9, 2022.

Comments from the public, Federal, State, and local agencies and officials, Indian tribes, and other interested parties regarding the impacts of this proposed activity were considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for the proposed Action. Comments were considered in the Final EIS analysis pursuant to NEPA.

The Final EIS will be used to inform the Corps' decisions regarding PCCAs permit application and may inform the decisions of other agencies that evaluate the Proposed CDP as part of their regulatory or permit processes. The information in the Final EIS will help decision makers, public officials, and citizens to understand the potential environmental impacts of the proposed CDP and its alternatives before decisions regarding the proposed Project are made.

Comments may be submitted during the entire 30-day review 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 April 21, 2024. Electronic (email) comments regarding the Final EIS should be addressed to SWG201900067@usace.army.mil. Emailed comments, including attachments, should be provided in .docx, .jpeg, or .pdf formats. Written comments should be submitted to:

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