



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

NOVEMBER 9, 2012

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army; Corps of Engineers

Notice of Availability for the Draft Environmental Assessment for Section 408 Evaluation, Construction of a New Pump Station, Alligator Bayou Pump Station No. 16, Port Arthur and Vicinity, Texas, Hurricane Flood Protection Project, Port Arthur, Jefferson County, Texas.

AGENCY: Department of the Army, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

ACTION: Notice of Availability

SUMMARY: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Galveston District (District) announces the release of the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for 33 U.S.C. 408 (Section 408) evaluation of modifications to the Federal Alligator Bayou Pump Station No. 16, Port Arthur and Vicinity, Texas, Hurricane Flood Protection Project, Port Arthur, Texas.

DATES: The USACE, Galveston District will provide the Draft EA for review November 9 through November 23, 2012.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Questions about the proposed action and the Draft EA should be addressed to Ms. Carolyn Murphy (409) 766-3044. Written inquiries and comments should be sent to the USACE, Galveston District, Attn: Ms. Carolyn Murphy, P.O. Box 1229, Galveston, TX 77553-1229 or emailed to carolyn.e.murphy@usace.army.mil.

PURPOSE: This public notice is to inform interested parties that the USACE, Galveston District has prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Public Law 91-190, regulations for implementing the Procedural Provisions of the NEPA, 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1500-1508, USACE's regulation ER 200-2-2 (Environmental Quality: Policy and Procedures for Implementing NEPA, 33 CFR 230), and other pertinent laws, regulations, and executive orders. This notice is being distributed to interested state, Federal, and local agencies, private organizations and individuals in order to assist in collecting facts and recommendations concerning proposed modification by Jefferson County Drainage District No. 7 to the Federal Port Arthur and Vicinity, Texas, Hurricane Flood Protection Project. The decision to approve Section 408 modification of the existing Federal project will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed action on the public interest. This project has also undergone NEPA review under Department of the Army Permit No. SWG-2007-00850 and a subsequent application for amendment of that permit, as well as under a 2008 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) EA and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for Alligator Bayou Pump Station Expansion Project, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, Port Arthur, Texas.

PROJECT LOCATION: The Port Arthur and Vicinity, Texas, Hurricane Flood Protection Project is located in southern Jefferson County in southeast Texas. The proposed project modification is located approximately two miles southwest of Port Arthur at the confluence of Alligator and Taylors Bayous, at Pump Station (PS) 16 on the flood protection levee.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Proposed Project would restore 25-year storm pumping capacity at PS 16 through the construction of an additional pumping facility on Alligator Bayou at PS16. The new pump station on the east bank of Alligator Bayou would consist of a 4-level concrete structure designed to withstand 200 mph winds (a Category 5 hurricane) housing six 250,000-gallon diesel pumps, with office space, a bunk room, showers, potable water, generators, and fuel storage. The footprint of the new pump station and ancillary parking would cover 2.9 acres. Construction would require two temporary coffer dams, staging areas, and excavated material placement areas. The total construction impact footprint would be 17.2 acres. Mitigation of impacts to 1.3 acres of fringe wetlands would be accomplished by restoration of 1.8 acres of tidal marsh dominated by *Spartina alterniflora* behind a recently constructed rock breakwater on the west shoreline of the Taylors Bayou Diversion Channel near the project area. This EA has been prepared as part of a Section 408 evaluation of proposed modifications to the Federal Port Arthur and Vicinity, Texas, Hurricane Flood Protection Project.

NEED FOR WORK: The existing PS 16 is part of the Port Arthur and Vicinity, Texas, Hurricane Flood Protection Project, a system of levees, concrete and steel sheet pile floodwalls, and 12 pump stations constructed in the early 1980s to protect urban and industrial development at Port Arthur and surrounding communities from a 100-year event hurricane storm surge. The levee and floodwall system extends approximately 30 miles with levees ranging from 14 to 19 feet high. The system includes a series of 12 pump stations to drain the area behind the levees during high rainfall and flood events, and was authorized to provide protection within the levee system for a 50-year rainfall or flood event; however, the system was constructed to provide only 25-year event protection. Over the last 30 years, subsidence has compromised the functioning of the existing PS 16 to the point that it only provides protection for an 11.5-year storm event. The Proposed Project would provide additional pumping capacity such that 25-year event protection would be re-established.

PROPOSED WORK: The work would consist of the construction of a new pump station on the east bank of Alligator Bayou, as described above, that would work in concert with the existing PS16 facility on the west bank of the bayou to restore 25-year storm event capacity at this location.

COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS: PS 16 is one of 12 pump stations authorized for the Federal Port Arthur and Vicinity, Texas, Hurricane Flood Protection Project. Approval for modification of PS 16 is being sought under Section 408. Jefferson County Drainage District No. 7 has also applied for an amendment to Department of the Army Permit No. SWG-2007-00850 for construction of this project.

The draft EA will be coordinated with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and other Federal, state, and local agencies. Our initial determination is that the proposed action will not have any adverse impacts on threatened or endangered species or Essential Fish Habitat or federally-managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico.

The following is a list of Federal, State, and local agencies with which these activities are being coordinated:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6
- U.S. Department of Commerce
- U.S. Department of the Interior
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Budget and Planning Office, Office of the Governor of Texas
- Texas Historical Commission
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Texas General Land Office
- The Texas Office of State-Federal Relations
- Texas Department of Transportation
- Texas Water Development Board

EVALUATION FACTORS: The decision whether to approve Section 408 modifications to PS 16 will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources as well as public and environmental safety and economic concerns.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION: A preliminary review of this proposed action indicates that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required. This preliminary determination of an EIS requirement will be changed if information brought forth in the coordination process is of a significant nature. Based on this determination, a draft EA has been prepared. The EA assesses potential impacts to the human and natural environment that would result from the proposed action. The document is available online on both Jefferson County Drainage District No. 7 and Galveston District websites:

<http://www.dd7.org>


<http://www.swg.usace.army.mil/BusinessWithUs/PlanningEnvironmentalBranch/DocumentsforPublicReview.aspx>

CDs of the Draft EA can be requested from Jefferson County Drainage District No. 7's agent, Horizon Environmental Services, Inc., Attn: C. Lee Sherrod, 1507 South IH 35, Austin, TX 78741; or email at lee_sherrod@horizon-esi.com.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Persons desiring to express their views or provide information to be considered in evaluating the impact of approval of Section 408 modification of a Federal project are requested to mail or email their comments within 15 days of the date of this notice to:

District Engineer
U.S. Army Engineer District, Galveston
ATTN: Ms. Carolyn Murphy, CESWG-PE-PR
P.O. Box 1229
Galveston, Texas 77553-1229

All comments must be post-marked or received by November 23, 2012. Any person who has an interest that may be affected by this action may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing within 15 days of the date of this notice and must clearly set forth the interest that may be affected and the manner in which the interest may be affected by this activity. Any questions concerning the proposed action may be directed to Ms. Carolyn Murphy at (409) 766-3044.



Dolan Dunn
Chief, Planning, Environmental
and Regulatory Division
Galveston District