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Corps of Engineers issues permit for Bayport

GALVESTON -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has issued a Department of the Army permit to the Houston Port Authority for the Bayport Container/Cruise Terminal Project. Coastal consistency and water quality certification were forwarded to the Corps by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality Tuesday.

The final step in the permit process is the signing of the permit and acceptance of its conditions by the Port Authority. The Corps has sent copies of the unsigned permit to the port authority, along with a signed copy of the record of decision. The applicant signs both copies, then returns them to the Corps for a co-signature by the Commander and District Engineer, Col. Leonard Waterworth. Only then is the permit actually in effect.

Mitigation agreed upon will compensate for impacts to habitat and ecological values at the project site and is satisfactory to all resource agencies involved. Benefits to be provided by the Port of Houston Authority include approximately 1,130 acres of mitigation to to compensate for the only 20 acres of jurisdictional wetlands on the site. Included in mitigation efforts are wetlands creation, wetlands enhancement, prairie enhancement, and uplands preservation at the 174-acre Memorial Tract adjacent to Armand Bayou, preservation of the 456-acre Banana Bend Tract on the San Jacinto River, and preservation of 500 acres of coastal prairie within the Cypress Creek watershed, San Jacinto River Basin, or within the San Jacinto-Brazos Coastal Basin. The Port of Houston Authority proposes to determine the exact location of the 500-acre coastal prairie tract at a later date in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

For more information, check the Galveston District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers website which can be seen at: www.swg.usace.army.mil.