



**US Army Corps
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Voluntary Settlement Agreement for Wetland Restoration Reached on Aransas Pass Properties

GALVESTON — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District, recently reached a Voluntary Settlement Agreement with Mr. Steve Couchman and Ms. Tiare Couchman for the voluntary restoration of more than one acre of estuarine wetlands located off of State Highway 361 between Aransas Pass and Port Aransas, in Nueces County, Texas.

The affected wetlands are adjacent to the Channel to Aransas Pass and Redfish Bay and contain mostly mudflats with intermittent areas of mangrove and smooth cordgrass.

The agreement stems from the alleged unauthorized placement of fill material into wetlands without first obtaining necessary Department of the Army fill permits from the Corps of Engineers as required under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. In addition to total restoration of the alleged violations on the site, the settlement agreement requires the Couchmans to pay a monetary fine, and requires that they sponsor an area-wide seminar to help better educate the public on the Corps' regulatory program. The date for the seminar has yet to be determined.