



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 60267
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

October 1, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Operations Division
Eastern Evaluation Section
Project Manager
Melissa Ellis
(504) 862-2543

SUBJECT: MVN 2011-2363-EQ

PUBLIC NOTICE

Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received by the District engineer for a Department of the Army permit to authorize the following pursuant to (X) Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151; 33 USC 403); and/or () Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (86 Stat. 816; 33 USC 1344).

**EXPAND EXISTING FLOATING OYSTER FARM IN CAMINADA BAY
IN JEFFERSON PARISH, LOUISIANA**

NAME OF APPLICANT: Grand Isle Port Commission, C/o: Wayne Keller, Post Office Box 500, Grand Isle, Louisiana 70358.

LOCATION OF WORK: The project is located across from Chenier/Caminada Point on the southern side of Tern Island in Caminada Bay, Latitude 29.21944, Longitude -90.04417, Jefferson Parish, Louisiana as shown on the enclosed drawings.

CHARACTER OF WORK: The applicant is proposing to expand an existing 4.8 acre commercial off-bottom oyster farming zone to 25.5 acres. Oysters will be raised in floating cages. The site will include five 2.2 acre oyster farming plots. Forty foot wide navigation lanes surround each farm site to provide proper passage of vessels servicing the farms. The perimeter of these plots will be marked with 2" PVC pipe to denote the location. Each farm site will include 20 Oyster Gro cage/longlines, including floating cages and submerged anchor lines. The project is designed to allow multiple participants to operate individual oyster farms within the permitted area. The project is a joint venture between the Louisiana Sea Grant Program/LSU and the Grand Isle Port Commission. The applicant is also proposing to install Coast Guard approved navigation aides to delineate the zone and farming areas. No wetlands are proposed to be impacted, therefore, no mitigation is anticipated.

The comment period will close **15 days** from the date of this public notice advertisement. Written comments, including suggestions for modifications or objections to the proposed work, stating reasons therefore, are being solicited from anyone having interest in this permit request. Letters must reference the applicant's name and the subject number, be addressed and mailed to the above address, ATTENTION: REGULATORY BRANCH. **Individuals or parties may request an extension of time in which to comment on the proposed work by writing to the project manager or clicking on the project manager's name on the public notice grid on the web page. Any request must be specific and substantively supportive of the requested extension, and received by this office prior to the end of the initial comment period. The Section Chief will review the request and the requestor will be promptly notified of the decision to grant or deny the request. If granted, the time extension will be continuous to the initial comment period and, inclusive of the initial comment period, will not exceed a total of 30 calendar days.**

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers 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 of Engineers 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 listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

No properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are near the proposed work. The possibility exists that the proposed work may damage or destroy presently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistorical or historical sites or data. Copies of this notice are being sent to the State Archeologist and the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Our initial finding is that the proposed work would neither affect any species listed as endangered by the U.S. Department of Interior or Commerce, nor affect any habitat designated as critical to the survival and recovery of any endangered species.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnus-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal would result in the destruction or alteration of 20.7 acres of EFH utilized by various life stages of red drum and penaeid shrimp. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

If the proposed work involves deposits of dredged or fill material into navigable waters, the evaluation of the probable impacts will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and certification that the proposed activity will not violate applicable water quality standards will be required from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, before a permit is issued.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.

The applicant has certified that the project will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program.



Michael Farabee

Chief, Eastern Evaluation Section

Enclosure