

August 26, 2021

Colonel Timothy Vail
Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Galveston District
2000 Fort Point Road
Galveston, Texas 77550

RE: Letter of Support for WRDA 2014 § 7001 Application

Dear Colonel Vail:

The City of Corpus Christi, Texas (City) is pleased to submit the attached 2021 proposal in accordance with Section 7001 of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (WRDA 2014). We respectfully request the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) support the recommendation to modify the North Padre Island Storm Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration (Packery Channel) project to remove Flood Risk Management (FRM) as an authorized project purpose.

The Packery Channel project has been a major success for the region since project construction was completed in 2006. We have realized significant benefits as the maintained opened waterway provides easy access to the Gulf of Mexico for recreational and safety benefits. We have also realized significant fish and wildlife benefits from the project as it also provides a constant tidal exchange that has improved fishing in the Upper Laguna Madre. Flood Risk Management (FRM) benefits are incidental to the project resulting from placement of maintenance dredge material along the beach. It was our understanding that maintenance dredging was originally estimated to be required every year. However, since the project was completed, maintenance dredging only has been required twice. Since the project features do not produce primary FRM benefits, the Galveston District has informed the City the project is not eligible for rehabilitation assistance under the USACE P.L. 84-99 Rehabilitation and Inspection Program (RIP).

The fact the project never realized its FRM purpose has been a major issue as the City has struggled to identify funding sources to repair damages from major coastal storm events. Packery Channel experienced major damages from Hurricane Harvey in 2017. For more than 3 years, we worked with USACE and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to identify the federal agency that could assist in repairing the project. Initially, FEMA was unable to assist as the project was thought to be eligible for assistance under the USACE P.L. 84-99 Rehabilitation and Inspection Program (RIP). In our coordination with USACE, we were informed that since the jetties and associated structures were primarily built for channel alignment, protection against shoreline erosion, and for the benefit

of fish and wildlife, the project did not meet the economic criteria for funding under RIP.

We believe this confusion was finally resolved on May 25, 2021 with the receipt of the letter from your District that informed the City that a determination was finally made stating Packery Channel is not eligible for RIP. The City has now begun coordination with FEMA to identify the potential funding source to repair the damages which took place almost four years ago during Hurricane Harvey. To ensure we do not experience this issue again, the City is submitting a Section 7001 application to modify the section 556 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 (P.L. 106-53) project authorization to remove FRM as an authorized project purpose.

The City of Corpus Christi appreciates the work of USACE Galveston District, and the assistance it has provided to us on this issue. As the non-Federal sponsor for the project, the City maintains its commitment to USACE to ensure the project is maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Project Cooperation Agreement executed on May 20, 2003. Removing FRM as an authorized project purpose will ensure our ability to meet our commitments for the project.

Please contact Tammy Embrey on my staff at 361-826-3622 or tammye@cctexas.com, if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Paulette M. Guajardo
Mayor