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**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
Galveston District

# UPDATE REPORT FOR THE 15<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

Current as of May 2011



**Ruben Hinojosa**  
U.S. House of Representatives  
15th Congressional District

## About the Galveston District

**W**ith its rich heritage in Texas history, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District plays a key role in America's well-being by keeping waterways open for navigation and commerce and serves the nation as part of the world's largest public engineering, design and construction management agency.

Encompassing the Texas coast from Louisiana to Mexico; an area that spans across 50,000 square miles, includes 48 counties, two parishes and 16 congressional districts, the Galveston District successfully executes its mission of providing vital public engineering services in peace and war to strengthen our nation's security, energize the economy and reduce risks from disasters.

With its 370 dedicated professionals and annual budget of approximately \$150 million, the Galveston District will continue to provide valuable navigation, flood risk mitigation, environmental, shoreline protection, regulatory, military construction and emergency management services to our nation and remains fully committed to continuing our mission of building strong.

*"It is a great privilege to serve our nation  
as the commander of the U.S. Army  
Corps of Engineers Galveston District."*

**– Col. Christopher W. Sallese**  
District Engineer and Commanding Officer  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District

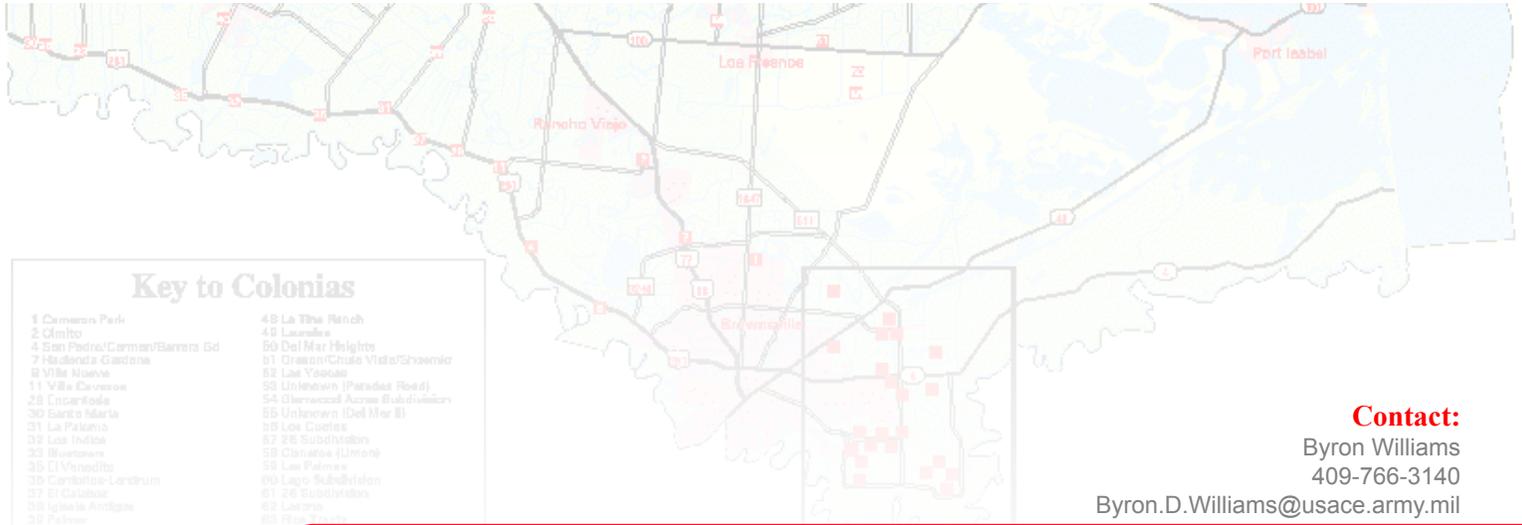


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### Key to Colonias

- 1 Cameron Park
- 2 Cimino
- 4 San Pedro/Coman/Barrera Gd
- 7 Hacienda Gardens
- 8 Villa Nueva
- 11 Villa Cruzana
- 28 Encantada
- 30 Santa Maria
- 31 La Paloma
- 32 Los Indios
- 33 Buena Vista
- 35 El Venadito
- 39 Cardenas-Lardrum
- 37 El Caballero
- 38 Iglesia Avila
- 34 Paloma
- 40 Unknown (TM 1478)
- 43 La Campa Del Norte
- 47 Llaneta
- 48 La Vitis Ranch
- 49 Lavandera
- 50 Del Mar Heights
- 51 Ocean/Chico Vista/Shermer
- 52 Las Yucas
- 53 Unknown (Paradise Road)
- 54 Divisadero Arroyo Subdivision
- 55 Unknown (Del Mar II)
- 56 Los Cueros
- 57 26 Subdivision
- 58 Colonias (Union)
- 59 Las Palmas
- 60 Lago Subdivision
- 61 26 Subdivision
- 62 Lueros
- 63 New Colony
- 64 26 Subdivision
- 65 26 Subdivision
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## Colonias

### Background:

Colonias (or barrios) are extremely poor, unincorporated communities located within 100 kilometers of the U.S.–Mexico border. In the colonias, water and sewer services are limited as rapid population growth has occurred with little or no wastewater or water supply infrastructure development. The local utility companies have placed priority on potable water distribution with secondary emphasis on central wastewater collection and treatment. The work is authorized by Section 219 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 1992. The local sponsor is required to pay 25 percent of the costs allocated to the assistance in cash. Completion of technical assistance for all projects identified by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is being determined. Originally, the

USACE Galveston District was only able to provide design assistance; however, construction assistance was authorized by WRDA 2007 creating more requests where the need for construction funding is high.

### Issue:

Most residents use septic tanks or cesspools for sewage disposal. After years of use and with little sewage disposal regulatory enforcement, the tanks are failing and causing groundwater contamination. Without the development of infrastructure, groundwater contamination, health risks and other environmental, social and economic problems will continue to increase within the study area.



An example of a colonia located in South Texas.

### Current Status:

Fiscal year 2010 funds were used to coordinate with the State of Texas to identify potential colonias that need both design and construction. The project was not funded in the FY11 or FY12 President's Budgets.

Federal dollars to date:	\$984,000
Sponsor dollars to date:	\$160,699
Total cost of project:	\$27,979,000
FY11 President's Budget:	\$0
FY12 President's Budget:	\$0



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# Corpus Christi Ship Channel

## Background:

The Corpus Christi Ship Channel is a 45-foot deep, 34-mile long federally constructed deep-draft navigation channel serving the ports at Harbor Island, Ingleside and Corpus Christi. The recommended plan of improvement will deepen the channel to 52 feet, widen to 530 feet, add

barge shelves on both sides of the channel across Corpus Christi Bay and extend the La Quinta Channel 1.5 miles at a depth of 39 feet. Construction of this project was authorized in the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2007. A Limited Re-evaluation Report (LRR) is currently required to update the project economics and costs. There are four separable elements that make up the project – the La Quinta Channel extension, ecosystem restoration, the main channel and barge shelves. The sponsor’s priority is to construct the La Quinta Channel extension and ecosystem restoration. The economic update for these two separable elements is complete but the update for the main channel and barge shelves is ongoing.



Corpus Christi Ship Channel improvements.

## Issue:

Adequate funding to award a contract to continue construction of the La Quinta Channel Extension is required. Due to a shortage of federal funding, the sponsor requests approval to advance funds to cover the federal share of the total project cost (\$60 million) so that the La Quinta Channel Extension can be constructed. Funds are not in the fiscal year 2012 President’s Budget. By requesting to advance the federal share of funds, the sponsor is taking a risk in that there is no guarantee of reimbursement of these funds by the federal government. The only way the sponsor can be reimbursed for advancing funds is by a congressional add.

## Current Status:

Recovery funds were provided in FY10 to initiate the first construction contract, Placement Area 14, of the La Quinta Channel Extension. That contract was completed Oct. 12, 2010. Regular construction funds will be used to complete a LRR to update the benefits and costs for the main channel and barge shelves and to determine if the total project cost estimate for the overall Corpus Christi Ship Channel will exceed the 902 limit.

Federal dollars to date:	
	\$4,315,000
Sponsor dollars to date:	
	\$954,458
Total cost of project:	
	\$352,270,000
FY11 President’s Budget:	
	\$0
FY12 President’s Budget:	
	\$0



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# Falfurrias

**Background:**

Falfurrias, located in Brooks County about 60 miles southwest of Corpus Christi, is subject to flooding from Palo Blanco, Cibolo creeks and watershed overflows from Los Olmos Creek.

Repeat flooding causes approximately \$9 million in damages annually, and with the conversion of brush land to pastureland, wildlife habitat has been minimized resulting in a decline in wildlife species in the area. The initiation of a feasibility phase of the project would enable staff to determine if the study would be in the federal interest and if it is, staff could proceed in developing a Project Management Plan and executing a Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreement to cost-share the study with the sponsor.

**Issue:**

The monetary damage will continue to burden the City of Falfurrias until the flooding is ceased. The project is not in the fiscal year 2012 President's Budget.



Falfurrias project area.

**Current Status:**

The project has never been funded and is not in the FY 2012 President's Budget.

Federal dollars to date:	\$0
Sponsor dollars to date:	\$0
Total cost of project:	\$100,000
FY11 President's Budget:	\$0
FY12 President's Budget:	\$0





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# Texas Environmental Infrastructure Program

**Background:**

The program consists of providing environmental assistance in the form of planning, design and construction assistance for water-related environmental infrastructure and resource protection and development projects to non-federal interests in Texas. This work includes projects for water supply; storage; treatment and related facilities; water quality protection; wastewater treatment and related facilities; environmental restoration; and surface water resource protection and development; as identified by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). The TWDB, in coordination with the Texas Water Conservation Association, Texas Rural Water Association and individual local public entities, have identified \$210 million in currently proposed projects that are in urgent need of funds to meet short-term water supply needs. Out of this \$210 million, 12 high-priority projects have been identified totaling \$46,086,000.



*Example of a reservoir near Brownsville, Texas.*

**Issue:**

The Texas State Water Plan regional planning groups identified about 4,500 water management strategies to meet water supply needs over the next 50 years. Many of these strategies have been initiated and federal assistance (under the Texas Environmental Infrastructure Program, coupled with significant funding appropriated by the Texas Legislature), will ensure that water supply needs are met in the most efficient and timely manner.

**Current Status:**

There were no funds allocated in the fiscal year 2011 or FY12 President's Budgets for this program.



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## 15th District Authorized Studies

### Brazos Island Harbor

**NAVIGATION STUDY:** The study area encompasses the entire Brownsville Ship Channel and surrounding region. The entrance channel is located offshore of Cameron County, Texas, in the Gulf of Mexico and ends at the Port of Brownsville Main Harbor. The primary purpose of the study is navigation, which consists of enlarging the existing Brownsville Ship Channel by deepening the entrance channel, jetty channel, and the lower section of the main channel to 48 feet and the upper section of the main channel and turning basin to 45 feet.

FY11 President's Budget:
<b>\$726,000</b>
FY12 President's Budget:
<b>\$726,000</b>
Total cost of project:
<b>\$9,721,000</b>

### Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Brazos River to Port O'Connor

**NAVIGATION STUDY:** The study area includes approximately 72 miles of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) in Brazoria, Matagorda and Calhoun counties, from the Brazos River near Freeport to Port O'Connor, Texas. Tonnage transported along this section of the GIWW totaled over 53 million tons in 2008, with petrochemicals as the major commodity shipped. This study will evaluate operational problems along this reach of the GIWW. Initial problems identified by users along this reach included difficulties navigating currents encountered as a result of river flows from the San Bernard; high shoaling at Jones Creek, bank erosion, safety concerns and dangerous currents across Matagorda Bay, and delays and one-way traffic at Caney Creek. In order to expedite identifying a viable solution to these safety issues, the Matagorda Bay reach was studied separately as an interim to the overall feasibility study. No feasibility cost sharing agreement is required and all study costs are 100 percent federal.

FY11 President's Budget:
<b>\$0</b>
FY12 President's Budget:
<b>\$0</b>
Total cost of project:
<b>\$6,550,000</b>

### Raymondville Drain

**FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT STUDY:** The Raymondville Drain flood damage reduction project provides drainage for a large area in western Hidalgo and northern Willacy counties. The authorized plan provides for enlarging existing and constructing new channels - a total of 43.8 miles of channel work. Edinburg, Texas, in Hidalgo County and the City of Raymondville, in Willacy County, would receive flood protection against a 9.5-year storm. Additional flood protection features proposed include new drainage channels, enlarging existing channels, water control structures, and on-site and off-site retention basins. The project is located in one of the most economically depressed areas of the country.

FY11 President's Budget:
<b>\$0</b>
FY12 President's Budget:
<b>\$0</b>
Total cost of project:
<b>\$8,393,000</b>



# 15th District Operations and Maintenance

## Brazos Island Harbor

The Brazos Island Harbor project provides deep draft access from the Gulf of Mexico through a jettied entrance channel to Brownsville, a side channel (authorized to 36 feet) and a shallow draft fishing boat harbor near Port Isabel. The project is 22.8 miles in length. The authorized depths are 42 feet for the main channel and 44 feet through the jetties and outer bar. Operations and maintenance funds allow for the continued maintenance of the waterway, which fulfills the Corps' mission of keeping waterways open for navigation so that vessels carrying steel are not forced to be rerouted to Mexico.

FY11 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$3,468,000</b>
FY12 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$3,878,000</b>

## Channel to Harlingen

The project is located in the vicinity of Rio Hondo and Harlingen in Cameron and Willacy Counties, Texas. The project consists of a channel 25.8-miles long. The channel extends from its junction with the main channel of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway through the Arroyo Colorado to the turning basin at Harlingen. It also includes a barge-mooring basin near the channel's junction with the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. Authorized channel dimensions are 12 feet by 125 feet. The inability to maintain the project to the authorized depth will cause safety hazards and severe economic loss to the agricultural and petrochemical industries in the region.

FY11 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$0</b>
FY12 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$0</b>

## Corpus Christi Ship Channel

The Corpus Christi Ship Channel (CCSC) is a 45-foot deep channel that extends from the Gulf of Mexico 34 miles into the Port of Corpus Christi. The Port of Corpus Christi is ranked 5th in the nation for tonnage shipped (2009). The CCSC is used by both commercial and recreational traffic – oil tankers, barges, and private fishing and recreational vessels. Operations and maintenance funds allow the Corps to keep the waterway open for navigation, address high shoaling in the area and prevent navigation restrictions.

FY11 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$4,608,000</b>
FY12 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$5,912,000</b>

## Gulf Intracoastal Waterway - Channel to Victoria

This navigation project is located in the vicinity of Seadrift and Victoria in Calhoun and Victoria counties, Texas. The Channel to Victoria project provides a 34.8-mile shallow draft channel (authorized project dimensions 12 by 125 feet) extending from its junction with the main channel of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway at Mile 492 northwesterly across San Antonio Bay through a landlocked section lying east of the Guadalupe River and terminating at the turning basin near the City of Victoria. Operations and maintenance funds allow the Corps to keep the waterway open for navigation, as the commodities imported and exported through the channel contribute to the economic success of the nation.

FY11 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$1,825,000</b>
FY12 President's Budget:	
	<b>\$3,519,000</b>

