

# **FREERPORT HARBOR, TEXAS CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT LESSONS LEARNED**

Civil Works Review Board (CWRB) Briefing

Galveston District

June 2011

**Colonel Christopher Salles**

**Commander**

**Galveston District**



®



# SWG Lessons Learned

---

- Independent External Peer Review
  - ▶ Issue – What level of analysis is sufficient considering new review requirements?
  - ▶ Discussion – For the IEPR of this project, the District was asked to provide several iterations of analyses, with each analysis leading to new questions and new analysis requests. The District questioned whether the additional analyses were necessary to satisfy USACE planning requirements and determined that the new, extensive analysis was not likely to provide information that would affect the existing recommended plan.
  - ▶ Resolution – Created ad-hoc Resolution Panel of USACE subject matter experts to evaluate comments and responses, and determine what is reasonable and necessary for technical and policy compliance.



# SWG Lessons Learned

---

- Parallel processing of separate permitted and Federal projects in same project area
  - ▶ Issue – The complexity of planning issues for concurrent, interrelated projects can lead to confusion, inefficiencies and delays in study completion.
  - ▶ Discussion – In this case, planning for a permitted channel widening proceeded concurrently with a USACE study of channel deepening. Since the widening would be constructed first, it became an alternative future without-project condition for the Federal deepening study. Changes in either study had the potential to significantly affect alternatives analysis and engineering/design for the other.
  - ▶ Resolution – Frequent and regular coordination between PDTs, early engagement of RIT, and in-depth involvement of non-Federal sponsor and permittee in planning process are needed to ensure that project changes are coordinated with both PDTs and RIT, and to ensure regulatory and policy compliance.



# SWG Lessons Learned

---

- Lengthy Preliminary Screening
  - ▶ Issue: In-depth screening of numerous alternatives can be significant in evaluating deep draft navigation improvements due to considerations of both depth and width.
  - ▶ Discussion: The Freeport study evaluated more than 50 different combinations of depths and widths in order to identify the most effective alternatives to be advanced into detailed screening. This amount of analysis adds to the time required to complete a feasibility study.
  - ▶ Resolution: Additional guidance would be helpful on what level of preliminary screening would be acceptable during policy review in order to reduce both the size of documents and the time and cost necessary to perform the analysis.



# Southwestern Division

## LESSONS LEARNED

- It takes a BIG TEAM
- Sponsor, District, Division and HQUSACE, CXs, Labs, States and Other Agencies
- Teamwork needs to continue to move this project from plan to reality

