

*1. Administrative Details*

**Proposal Name: Authorization of federally-maintained channels,  
Houston Ship Channel system**

**by Agency: Port of Houston Authority of Harris County, Texas**

**Locations: TX**

**Date Submitted: 09/23/2015**

**Confirmation Number: 3891075c-d3ba-46d7-9c3e-98a9eaf4c52c**

*Supporting Documents*

<b>File Name</b>	<b>Date Uploaded</b>
2015-09-23 LTR to USACE - Stockton - Mod to Projects.pdf	09/23/2015
Authorization of Houston Channels Summary.pdf	09/23/2015

**2. Provide the name of the primary sponsor and all non-Federal interests that have contributed or are expected to contribute toward the non-Federal share of the proposed feasibility study or modification.**

Sponsor	Letter of Support
Port of Houston Authority of Harris(Primary)	Statement of Support. The Port of Houston Authority fully supports federal authorization of the projects to enable full and proper management of the channels by the USACE. See attached statement of support. The cited tributary channels to the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) and the HSC itself are key components of the maritime infrastructure which collectively and specifically have strong local and state support. The Port of Houston has been described as “irreplaceable” because the security and vital industrial infrastructure are one of a kind. Federal authorization will be transparent to the general public.

**3. State if this proposal is for a feasibility study, a modification to an authorized USACE feasibility study or a modification to an authorized USACE project. If it is a proposal for a modification, provide the authorized water resources development feasibility study or project name.**

[x] Modification to an Authorized USACE Project : Houston-Galveston Ship Channel; Houston Ship

***4. Clearly articulate the specific project purpose(s) of the proposed study or modification. Demonstrate that the proposal is related to USACE mission and authorities and specifically address why additional or new authorization is needed.***

Project Purpose. Facilitate management and future planning activities for tributary channels of the Houston Ship Channel and operation of the channels Specific Request(s): a. Request that improvements performed in accordance with Section 204(f) of the following projects be deemed formally authorized, and further that the channels be managed as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project. (1) Bayport Ship Channel (2) Barbours Terminal Ship Channel b. Request that the Jacintoport Ship Channel, approved by AOM authorized by S. 5001, WRDA 2007 be deemed formally authorized, and further that the channel be managed as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project. c. Request that Greens Bayou Ship Channel, maintenance of which was assumed by the Government in accordance with S. 819, PL 99-662 be deemed as fully authorized, and further that the channel shall be managed as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project. d. Request that the following reaches of the Houston Channel be operated as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project: (1) Sims Bayou to the main turning basin in Houston, including turning points at Hunting Bayou and Brady Island, as authorized by H. Doc 561, 80th Cong., 2nd. (2) Boggy Bayou to Sims Bayou (Deepen to 40' from Bolivar Roads to Brady Island, construct Clinton Island turning basin (H. Doc 350. 85th Cong., 2nd) These tributary channels are part of the Corps mission and are O&M funded. These fully functional waterways are not considered authorized, which limits their eligibility for certain Corps actions. The channel reaches from Boggy Bayou to the Turning Basin are authorized projects constructed by USACE, but are operated without an LCA/PCA/ PPA. There exists little guidance to the District describing Corps and NFS responsibilities, which serves to hinder federal operations, particularly in conjunction with adjacent reaches for which a PCA is available.

*5. To the extent practicable, provide an estimate of the total cost, and the Federal and non-Federal share of those costs, of the proposed study and, separately, an estimate of the cost of construction or modification.*

	<b>Federal</b>	<b>Non-Federal</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Study</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Construction</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0

**Explanation (if necessary)**

Estimate of Cost: Zero. Monetary benefits estimated at \$1.5 million annually. This request for authorization involves constructed projects currently maintained by the Corps under seven different authorizations within the Houston channel system.

***6. To the extent practicable, describe the anticipated monetary and nonmonetary benefits of the proposal including benefits to the protection of human life and property; improvement to transportation; the national economy; the environment; or the national security interests of the United States.***

The Houston Ship Channel is the busiest deep draft harbor in the U.S., with over 8,300 deep draft vessel calls (20,000 ship movements, including shifts) and over 200,000 barge transits. It is ranked number one in foreign tonnage, and number two among all U.S. ports in total tonnage. Houston is the largest petrochemical port in the U.S., and is national significant. The tributary channels are maintained by the Corps but are not authorized (maintenance responsibility approved as assumptions of maintenance); as a result, the Corps is limited in its ability to management, modernize, or correct operational issues that periodically occur because tributary channels were not cited in Congressional authorization language. The main ship channel is authorized but by statutes as early as 1948, which means that PCA language for the recent channel deepening and widening project completed in 2005 is not applicable to the original, unmodified reaches of the channel. a. Authorization of the projects enables the USACE to better operate, budget, and otherwise manage the projects with a potential administrative and contracting savings of \$1,000,000 per year. b. Authorization facilitates and potentially streamlines future planning activities for channel improvements. c. Authorization to operate the main channel reaches and tributary channels as a system would facilitate reduced administration, improved management of placement areas (now covered by seven agreements or authorities), and generally lower operating costs, with an additional potential cost savings of \$500,000 per year.

**7. Does local support exist? If ‘Yes’, describe the local support for the proposal.**

Yes

### **Local Support Description**

The cited tributary channels to the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) and the HSC itself are key components of the maritime infrastructure which collectively and specifically have strong local and state support. The Port of Houston has been described as “irreplaceable” because the security and vital industrial infrastructure are one of a kind. Federal authorization will be transparent to the general public.

**8. Does the primary sponsor named in (2.) above have the financial ability to provide for the required cost share?**

Yes

# Primary Sponsor Letter of Support

(As uploaded)

**2015-09-23 LTR to USACE - Stockton - Mod to Projects.pdf**

# Port of Houston Authority

111 East Loop North  
Houston, Texas 77029-4327 | Office: 713.670.2480  
portofhouston.com

Roger Guenther, Executive Director  
rguenther@poha.com

September 23, 2015

Mr. Steven L. Stockton, SES  
Director of Civil Works  
Headquarters, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
441 G Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20314

Subject: Letter of Support for Proposals for Modifications to Projects for Inclusion in the  
Annual Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development

Dear Mr. Stockton:

The Port of Houston Authority supports the work of the Corps of Engineers to develop, operate, and maintain navigation projects. The correction of navigation safety deficiencies on a completed project as critical to the Nation's economy as the Houston Ship Channel warrants immediate attention and resolution, without regard to routine administration. Furthermore, the authorization of projects which have long been maintained by the Corps at the direction of Congress is a necessary action that provides flexibility to the Corps for operation and maintenance of the projects, and is in the best interest of the United States.

Finally, the Port Authority fully supports revisions to federal law which result in improvements to navigability of ports and channels, facilitate growth in trade, and increase national economic development benefits.

The Port of Houston Authority intends to support its projects as required by law and understands the cost-sharing implications of the recommended project authorizations and changes to law submitted in accordance with Section 7001 of WRRDA 2014.

Sincerely,



Roger D. Guenther  
Executive Director



# Additional Proposal Information

(This is as uploaded, a blank page will show if nothing was submitted)

**Authorization of Houston Channels Summary.pdf**

1. Administrative Information.
  - a. Name of Proposal. Proposal for authorization of federally-maintained channels, Houston Ship Channel system
  - b. Agency: Port of Houston Authority of Harris County, Texas
  - c. POC: Mark Vincent, PE [mvincent@poha.com](mailto:mvincent@poha.com), 713.670.2605
  - d. Applicable State: Texas
2. Primary Sponsor: Port of Houston Authority
3. Proposal is for Modification to an Authorized USACE Project (multiple projects)
4. Project Purpose. Facilitate management and future planning activities for tributary channels of the Houston Ship Channel and operation of the channels  
Specific Request(s):
  - a. Request that improvements performed in accordance with Section 204(f) of the following projects be deemed formally authorized, and further that the channels be managed as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project.
    - (1) Bayport Ship Channel, Texas
    - (2) Barbours Terminal Ship Channel, Texas
  - b. Request that the Jacintoport Ship Channel, Texas, approved by Assumption of Maintenance authorized by Section 5001, WRDA 2007 be deemed formally authorized, and further that the channel be managed as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project.
  - c. Request that Greens Bayou Ship Channel, Texas, maintenance of which was assumed by the Federal Government in accordance with Section 819, PL 99-662 be deemed as fully authorized, and further that the channel shall be managed as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project.
  - d. Request that the following reaches of the Houston Ship Channel be operated as a component of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project:
    - (1) Channel from Sims Bayou to the main turning basin in Houston, Texas, including turning points at Hunting Bayou and Brady Island, as authorized by H. Doc 561, 80<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Session.
    - (2) Channel from Boggy Bayou to Sims Bayou in Houston, Texas (Deepen to 40' from Bolivar Roads to Brady Island, construct Clinton Island turning basin (H. Doc 350. 85<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Session)

These tributary channels are part of the Corps' navigation mission and are funded for operations and maintenance. As a result, these significant waterways are not considered authorized in their present fully functional condition, which limits their eligibility for certain actions by the Federal Government. The main channel reaches from Boggy Bayou to the Turning Basin are

authorized projects constructed by USACE, but are operated without a Local Cooperation, Project Cooperation, or Project Partnership agreement. As a result, there exists little or no guidance to the USACE district describing federal and non-federal sponsor responsibilities, which serves to hinder federal operations, particularly in conjunction with adjacent reaches for which a PCA is operable.

This request has not been included in the report table of any previous Annual Report to Congress on Future Water Resource Development, and if authorized, could be carried out by the USACE.

5. Estimate of Cost. Zero. Monetary benefits estimated at \$1.5 million annually.

6. Description of Anticipated Benefits.

The Houston Ship Channel is the busiest deep draft harbor in the U.S., with over 8,300 deep draft vessel calls (20,000 ship movements, including shifts) and over 200,000 barge transits. It is ranked number one in foreign tonnage, and number two among all U.S. ports in total tonnage. Houston is the largest petrochemical port in the U.S., and is national significant. The tributary channels are maintained by the Corps but are not authorized (maintenance responsibility approved as assumptions of maintenance); as a result, the Corps is limited in its ability to management, modernize, or correct

- a. Authorization of the projects enables the USACE to better operate, budget, and otherwise manage the projects with a potential administrative and contracting savings of \$1,000,000 per year.
- b. Authorization facilitates and potentially streamlines future planning activities for channel improvements.
- c. Authorization to operate the main channel reaches and tributary channels as a system would facilitate reduced administration, improved management of placement areas (now covered by seven agreements or authorities), and generally lower operating costs, with an additional potential cost savings of \$500,000 per year.

7. Statement of Support. The Port of Houston Authority fully supports federal authorization of the projects to enable full and proper management of the channels by the USACE. See attached statement of support. The cited tributary channels to the Houston Ship Channel (HSC) and the HSC itself are key components of the maritime infrastructure which collectively and specifically have strong local and state support. The Port of Houston has been described as “irreplaceable” because the security and vital industrial infrastructure are one of a kind. Federal authorization will be transparent to the general public.

8. NFS Statement of Financial Capability. The Port of Houston Authority is the non-federal sponsor of the Houston Ship Channel (part of the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project), and the Bayport, Barbours Cut, Jacintoport Ship Channels and has the financial capability for continued

support of the waterways as described by the existing project agreements for each channel, and the Project Cooperation Agreement for the Houston-Galveston Navigation Channels project.