



NEWS RELEASE

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Galveston Bay flood risk reduction studies deemed compatible by officials

In a joint statement today, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District, the General Land Office of the State of Texas and the SSPEED Center at Rice University announced the compatibility of two widely-publicized concepts to enhance and protect Galveston Bay.

The organizations concluded the different concepts can be designed to be complementary and that, together, comprise a comprehensive, multipurpose regional plan for resilience and economic development.

The concepts, which have been widely-publicized, use different approaches and funding mechanisms to reduce flood risk.

"We are all working toward the same goal," Col. Christopher Vail, commander of the Galveston District, said. "The construction of one of the concepts doesn't preempt the construction of the other."

"We want to clarify that these projects are not in competition with each other," said Tony Williams, Director of Planning, Coastal Resources, Texas General Land Office.

"Stories that present these as either-or options are just plain wrong," said Jim Blackburn of the SSPEED Center. "They're compatible, and each will benefit the people who rely on, live by and enjoy Galveston Bay."

The statement on compatibility reads as follows:

There are two concepts for flood risk management work involving Galveston Bay. These two concepts – the Coastal Barrier proposal of the Corps of Engineers and the General Land Office of the State of Texas and the Galveston Bay Park Plan of the SSPEED Center at Rice University – have been reviewed by the various entities and can be designed to be compatible and complementary.

The Coastal Barrier takes a multiple-lines-of-defense approach. The primary intent is to stop storm surge from entering Galveston Bay. Secondary features (gates and pumps) are included to offer protection from in-bay storm surge. The Coastal Barrier is proposed to be funded by federal and state sources.

The Galveston Bay Park Plan proposes a levee along the Houston Ship Channel to protect from more extreme events. If constructed, the Galveston Bay Park Plan could replace the secondary features recommended by the Corps and GLO for west Galveston Bay (gates/pumps at Clear Creek and Dickinson Bayou). The Plan proposes to construct its levees and park space by using dredged material from a future expansion of the Houston Ship Channel beyond the current proposed 700-foot width of the Corps/Port dredging project, called Project 11 by the Port of Houston. The future expansion (Project 12) would add an additional 100-feet to provide greater navigation safety to the ship channel widening. The Galveston Bay Park Plan proposes to be funded by private sources and local governments.

Both projects include large navigation gates. Most likely only one set would initially be constructed.

As such, the two flood risk management projects focus on different solutions with different funding sources that do not interfere with each other, leading to the conclusion that they will be compatible and complementary and together comprise a comprehensive, multipurpose regional plan for resilience and economic development.

For more information on the Coastal Texas Study, visit <https://coastalstudy.texas.gov/>. For more information on the Galveston Bay Park Plan, visit https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d29356_5cde1ed3665a42d78ed7e4ac2b3bfea5.pdf.