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[Home \(/index.html\)](#) → [Overview \(../index.html\)](#)

WHY THIS STUDY

What Makes the Coastal Texas Study Different?

Environmental Impact Analyses – Unlike other on-going coastal-related studies, the Coastal Texas Study will include a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)-compliant environmental impact statement. This requires the planning process to consider the impacts (both positive and negative) projects will have on natural, economic, social and cultural resources. National security interests also are researched during the environmental analysis.

Citizen input on the potential environmental, economic and social effects of the projects is another valuable benefit to the NEPA process. The Federal Register is an online portal that provides notice of federal actions and allows for public feedback through public meetings and public comment periods.

The information collected during the NEPA process will be used by the USACE and the GLO to make informed decisions when selecting projects to include in the final draft of the Coastal Texas Study. This will ensure that all outcomes, as they relate to the preservation and maintenance of the affected environment and coastal communities, are based on environmental impact analyses and public input.

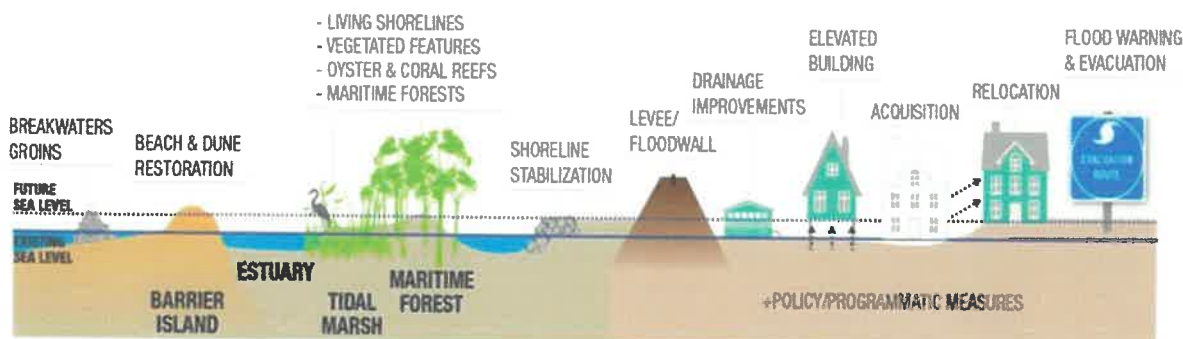
A more detailed explanation of the NEPA process can be viewed on the Get Involved tab of this website.

Coastal Storm Risk Management – The planning process for the Coastal Texas Study includes the examination and feasibility analysis of viable storm surge risk reduction solutions for the Houston/Galveston Region, Matagorda and South Padre Island. Based on the net economic benefits (anticipated economic benefits minus the cost of the project), other benefits (reduction of industrial damage, reduced risk to infrastructure, life safety, increased resiliency) and the environmental impacts, one or more solutions will be recommended for Congressional funding consideration for construction.

Multiple Lines of Defense - A multiple lines of defense strategy has been utilized in the formulation of the Coastal Texas Study. Employing three primary strategies – avoid, accommodate and preserve – coastal communities should consider a system of comprehensive, resilient and sustainable coastal storm risk management solutions. The system should include a

combination of measures (structural, natural and nature-based features, and non-structural) to form resilient, redundant, robust and adaptable strategies that promote life safety based on local site conditions and societal values. To achieve a multiple lines of defense approach, the Coastal Texas Study evaluates the following coastal problems:

- Economic damage from coastal storm surge;
- Inland shoreline erosion;
- Gulf shoreline erosion;
- Loss of threatened and endangered critical habitats; and
- Disrupted hydrology.



Ecosystem Restoration – The Coastal Texas Study identifies nationally significant environmental restoration strategies along the entire Texas coast. These restoration projects are evaluated based on long-term benefits, costs, feasibility and resiliency. Objectives for ecosystem restoration focus on:

- Restoring fish and wildlife habitat;
- Improving hydrologic connectivity;
- Reducing erosion to shorelines;
- Creating/Restoring oyster reefs; and
- Implementing sediment management.

Congressional Authorization – At the completion of the Coastal Texas Study, and upon approval by the Chief of Engineers, a recommended plan that consists of storm risk management and ecosystem restoration projects would be recommended to Congress for authorization, funding and construction.

The Coastal Texas Study is authorized under Section 4091, Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007 Public Law (P.L.) 110-114 which states: “Sec. 4091. Coastal Texas Ecosystem Protection and Restoration, Texas.

(a) In General—The Secretary shall develop a comprehensive plan to determine the feasibility of carrying out projects for flood damage reduction, hurricane and storm damage reduction, and ecosystem restoration in the coastal areas of the State of Texas.

(b) Scope—The comprehensive plan shall provide for the protection, conservation, and restoration of wetlands, barrier islands, shorelines, and related lands and features that protect critical resources, habitat, and infrastructure from the impacts of coastal storms, hurricanes, erosion, and subsidence.

(c) Definition—For purposes of this section, the term “coastal areas in the State of Texas” means the “coastal areas of the State of Texas from the Sabine River on the east to the Rio Grande River on the west and includes tidal waters, barrier islands, marshes, coastal wetlands, rivers and streams, and adjacent areas.”

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