Jefferson County and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Assessment for the
McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Beach Ridge Restoration Project
CEPRA No. 1530
Jefferson County, Texas

Jefferson County has applied to the USFWS for assistance with the construction of approximately 20 miles of dune ridge and nourished beach face along the McFaddin NWR shoreline, utilizing sediments from an offshore borrow area. Total ground disturbance in the entire project area (on- and off-shore) will be approximately 2,852 acres. The improvements plan to protect the sensitive wetlands within the 59,000 acre Refuge and the 100,000 acre Salt Bayou watershed from increasing seawater inundation; protect the chenier beach ridge from further erosion and shoreline retreat; and re-create lost dune/beach habitat.

A draft Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared to assess the potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives on the human and natural environment in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500 – 1508), the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Order 11988, Executive Order 11990, and the implementing regulations of FEMA (44 CFR Parts 9 and 10). Included with this Environmental Assessment is the required Compatibility Determination (CD) for the project.

The draft EA evaluates alternatives that provide for compliance with applicable environmental laws. The alternatives evaluated include (1) no action; (2) shoreline stabilization methods; (3) sand source identification; (4) sand delivery methods; and (5) dune/beach configuration.

The draft EA and CD will be available for public review and comment between February 24, 2016, and March 25, 2016, in the Jefferson County Engineering Department located at 1149 Pearl Street; the Office of the Jefferson County Clerk located at 1085 Pearl Street in Beaumont; and at the Chambers County Library located at 202 Cummings St in Anahuac, Texas. An electronic copy can be accessed on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/mcfaddin/.

Written comments regarding this proposed project can be mailed to: Jefferson County Engineering Dept., 1149 Pearl Street, 5th Floor, Beaumont, TX 77701. Electronic comments can also be submitted to drao@co.jefferson.tx.us. Comments should be received no later than 4 p.m. on March 25, 2016. If no substantive comments are received, the draft EA will become final and a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) will be issued for the project. Substantive comments will be addressed as appropriate in the final documents.