

## WHAT IS A LOCALLY PREFERRED PLAN?

### About the Study

Serving as an important economic and industrial hub for the United States, the Texas Gulf Coast is home to a coastal ecosystem vital to our national economy which provides valuable natural resources, abundant seafood, recreational fishing and tourism, and a rich cultural heritage. Growth of a healthy economy and preservation of natural resources along the Texas coastline is imperative to provide improved coastal protection measures thus ensuring the stability of the state of Texas and the nation for years to come. Historical and current weather events continue to challenge the vulnerabilities of the Texas coast emphasizing the need for enhanced resiliency of the coast to prevent future damage and loss.

With this in mind, the Coastal Texas Protection and Restoration Feasibility Study, also known as the Coastal Texas Study, was developed to identify coastal storm risk management and ecosystem restoration measures. These key measures will protect the health and safety of Texas coastal communities, reduce the risk of storm damage to industries and businesses critical to the national and local economy, and address important coastal ecosystems needing restoration.

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### Federal Projects

In the 1970 Flood Control Act, Congress identified four equal national objectives for use in water resources development planning. They were: national economic development (NED); regional economic development (RED); environmental quality (EQ); and other social well-being (OSW). During the 1970s, two of these, NED and EQ, were identified as national objectives. Today, NED remains the national object.

As such, the Federal authorization process requires that U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) projects the NED objective and have the greatest net economic benefit. NED guidelines prescribe the minimum acceptable economic benefit-to-cost ratio for a civil works project - for each dollar spent, there should be an equal amount of future cost savings.

To meet the public safety and community resiliency objectives of the Coastal Texas Study, however, USACE will seek an exception to the NED policy from the ASA(CW). The study team will formulate the recommended plan to maximize the benefits of a comprehensive plan.

This will be the Federal Plan.

### Locally Preferred Plan

If the local sponsor (GLO) wants alternative actions to what is identified in the Federal Plan, a Locally Preferred Plan, or LPP, can be developed. An LPP would include changes to project component(s) to address local interests.

An LPP would have to be approved by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

An LPP would be evaluated in the same way as the federal plan is analyzed, including a full environmental assessment to identify the impacts as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA. The LPP components can be presented to Congress by USACE as alternatives to the study findings.

If the LPP is smaller in scale and cost than the Federal Plan, the Federal cost-share will be 65 percent of total project costs as long as the LPP changes are consistent with the objectives of the project.

An LPP that costs more than the Federal Plan is eligible for ASA(CW) consideration, if the following conditions are met:

1. The LPP must produce as many or more benefits as the Federal Plan.
2. The Non-Federal Sponsor, in this case possibly the State of Texas, must pay all increased costs of the LPP over the Federal Plan. The Federal cost share of a higher-cost LPP is established as 65 percent of the Federal Plan for flood/coastal risk management on projects.