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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS CHIEF VISITS PORT FREEPORT

FREEPORT, Texas (October 23, 2012) – During a special meeting on Friday, Port Commissioners met with Mark Mazzanti, Civil Works Directorate, Chief Programs Integration Division for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to discuss the Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project.

Port Freeport is seeking federal funding to deepen the Freeport Harbor Channel to 55 feet from its current 45 feet, and currently has Final Environmental Impact Statement for the project available online. The FHCIP, which is scheduled to begin construction next fall, will offer many benefits to Port Freeport, including improved navigation and safety.

“The new deeper, wider channel is just a few years away. Once completed, it will offer a safer, faster transit to ships with even larger payloads – saving both time and money,” Port Commission Chairman Bill Terry said. “The economic impact and long term benefits of this project to regional liner shipping companies, along with our local chemical and energy partners can’t be overstated,” Terry said.

From environmental to economic, the FHCIP offers numerous advantages. At its current 45 feet, the channel allows for 4,500 TEU container vessels, but the deeper channel will make room for the larger 7,000 TEU vessels to access the Velasco Terminal, where the first 800 feet of dock is scheduled to be completed by June 2013.

In addition to discussing the progress and time tables for the new channel, attendees discussed the current channel maintenance with the Brazos pilots and they collaborated on a maintenance plan that would relieve some of the short term silting problems that the pilots and clients are experiencing.

The Port Commission would also like to thank Congressman Ron Paul for all his efforts on behalf of the district and this channel project.

Port Freeport ranks 16th among U.S. ports in international cargo tonnage handled. With a current channel of 45-foot depth, soon to be widened and deepened, just 3 miles from open Gulf of Mexico waters, Port Freeport offers more than 7,500 acres for future development. Port Freeport serves its customers and stakeholders through development and marketing of competitive world-class navigational capabilities, technically advanced marine and multimodal terminal services and port-related industrial facilities while achieving profits and creating jobs as a leading economic catalyst for the Texas Gulf Coast.

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