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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PORT FREEPORT RECEIVES FEDERAL FUNDING FOR THE FREEPORT HARBOR CHANNEL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**

**FREEPORT, TX (February 13, 2020)** – The recently announced U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Work Plan includes \$19 million in funding for the Freeport Harbor Channel Improvement Project (FHCIP). Port Freeport is one of two seaports nationwide to receive a “new start” designation for commencement of construction.

The estimated total cost of the project is \$295 million, of which the federal government share is \$165 million and Port Freeport as the local sponsor will contribute the remaining \$130 million to be funded by the 2018 voter-approved bond package. This vitally important project will deepen the Freeport Harbor Channel to depths ranging from 51 to 56 feet.

“The inclusion of the FHCIP in the 2020 Work Plan is a significant milestone in the construction of the channel deepening and widening,” said Phyllis Saathoff, Port Executive Director/CEO. “A deeper channel and navigation improvements will allow the Freeport Harbor Channel to support the growing energy exports and need for more efficient transits using deeper draft vessels achieving greater economies of scale for our port and channel partners.”

The channel deepening project has been a strategic initiative for Port Freeport for many years, with the feasibility study being initiated in 2003 and receiving congressional authorization in 2014. The area’s recent industrial expansion fueled by the production of shale oil and gas and the Port’s proximity to fast-growing populations has intensified the need for this project. The next step for the FHCIP will be for Port Freeport to enter into a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) with the USACE, which can be expected within 90 days, allowing Port Freeport to accelerate the use of federal funding. With engineering and design complete, construction on the first segment

of the channel is expected to commence in the coming months.

“The advancement of the channel project has been a significant undertaking and was accomplished with the support of our port and industry partners and the community. We extend our sincerest gratitude to the Administration, Senator Cornyn, Senator Cruz, Congressman Weber, Congressman Olsen, USACE, Governor Greg Abbott, Speaker Bonnen, and all others that have worked together to reach this momentous achievement,” said Port Chairman Shane Pirtle. “We can all take great pride in the fact that this project will provide significant benefits to this region, the state and nation for decades to come.”

Port Freeport is a leading port in the export of crude oil and natural gas liquids and is ranked 10th in chemicals, 19<sup>th</sup> in total tonnage, and 26th in containers. A 2019 Economic Impact Study by Texas A&M Transportation Institution revealed that nationally the Freeport Harbor Channel generates 279,780 jobs and has a total economic output of \$149 billion. The Freeport Harbor Channel serves BASF, Chiquita Fresh N.A., CMA CGM, Dole Fresh Fruit, The Dow Chemical Company, Freeport LNG, Hoegh Autoliners, Horizon Auto Logistics, Mammoet, Phillips 66, Riviana Foods, Inc., Seaway Crude Pipeline Company, Sallaum Lines, Tenaris, and Vulcan Materials Company.

Port Freeport is committed to keeping the local community informed of our operation and results. If you have questions or comments about this article, please email or call Lauren McCormick, Public Affairs Manager.

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