

PRELIMINARY REPORT ON OPERATION OF HOPPER DREDGES
IN THE SABINE-NECHES WATERWAY PROJECT

JANUARY - MAY, 2000

On January 11, 2000 the contract hopper dredge *B.E. Lindholm* began work on the Sabine Pass Outer Bar, and Sabine Bank Channels of the Sabine-Neches Waterway Project. Contract specifications required dredging an estimated 3,677,000 cubic yards (CY) of shoal material. The required depth of dredging was 44 feet below Mean Low Tide (MLT, Corps of Engineers Datum), with 2 feet of allowable overdepth dredging.

Dredging began on January 11, 2000, and was completed on May 2, 2000. Dredging operations were continuous during this time period. The dredge left the site on January 26 to perform dredging elsewhere, and returned on March 7. A total of 2,154 loads of dredged material were collected and deposited into Placement Area Nos. 2 and 4. Dredging was performed between Stations 2+000 and 18+000 along the Outer Bar Channel, and from 50+000 to 80+000 along the Sabine Bank Channel. A total of 4,782,702 CY of material was excavated from this project.

The dredge was equipped with rigid draghead turtle deflectors, and 100% inflow screening with a 4-inch square mesh. NMFS-approved turtle observers provided 24-hour/day monitoring of dragheads and screens for each load cycle. The observers were employed by Coastwise Consulting, Inc. under a subcontract to the dredging contractor, Weeks Marine, Inc.

During the performance of this dredging, no lethal turtle takes were experienced. The water temperature ranged from 13°C - 15°C during January operations, and 20°C - 26°C during the remainder of the job. A copy of the daily and weekly observer reports is enclosed.