

17 District Engineer's Recommendation

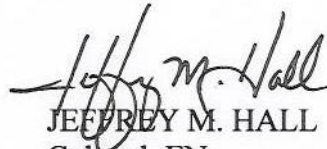
After considering the information provided in this document about the analyses that the Corps of Engineers conducted in collaboration with its partners to evaluate the proposed deepening of Savannah Harbor, after considering the comments that the public and natural resource agencies provided after their review of the draft reports, after considering that the non-Federal sponsor shall, prior to implementation, agree to perform the required items of cooperation, and after considering the views of the Cooperating Agencies, I recommend approval and implementation of the Selected Plan described in Section 14, with such modifications thereof as in the discretion of the Commander, HQUSACE, may be advisable.

The Selected Plan has a total project first cost of \$652 million with an estimated Federal share of \$454 million and an estimated non-Federal share of \$198 million (prior to the sponsor's 10% payback of General Navigation Feature costs), a benefit to cost ratio of 5.5 to 1, and would save the Nation more than \$213 million each year in transportation costs.

The Selected Plan is the 47-foot depth alternative with navigational improvements including channel deepening, constructing two meeting areas and three channel bend wideners, enlarging one turning basin, deepening berths, constructing advance maintenance features, and increasing capacities in dredged material containment areas. Mitigation for environmental impacts associated with the project include an oxygen injection system, various flow re-routing measures, a boat ramp, a fish bypass at the New Savannah Bluff Lock and Dam, funding a Striped bass restocking program, restoring brackish marsh, removing and curating the CSS *Georgia*, constructing a raw water storage impoundment, and monitoring and adaptive management. HQUSACE issued a policy review memorandum on 21 October 2011 recommending implementation of the mitigation plan, including those features not consistent with normal Corps policy, as outlined in the reports. On 28 November 2011, ASA(CW) issued a memorandum concurring with the HQUSACE recommendation. The Selected Plan is economically justified, environmentally sustainable, and in the best interest of the Nation.

The project was authorized in Section 101(b)(9) of WRDA 1999 to be carried out at a total cost of \$230,174,000. When escalated to October 2011 price levels in accordance with the procedure set out in ER 1105-2-100, Appendix G, implementing Section 902 of WRDA 1986, the authorized total project cost amounts to \$469 million. The current estimated first cost of \$652 million exceeds that amount by more than 20 percent, necessitating a statutory modification to the project to increase its authorized total cost.

The recommendations contained herein reflect the information available at this time and current Departmental policies governing formulation of individual projects. They do not reflect program and budgeting priorities inherent in the formulation of a national Civil Works construction program nor the perspective of higher review levels within the Executive Branch. Consequently, the recommendations may be modified before they are transmitted to the Congress as proposals for authorization and implementation funding. However, prior to transmittal to the Congress, the sponsor, the States, interested Federal agencies, and other parties will be advised of any modifications and will be afforded an opportunity to comment further.


JEFFREY M. HALL
Colonel, EN
Commanding