



Neches Wild and Scenic River Initiative

DREDGING

Dredging is an essential element of maintaining the Sabine-Neches Waterway, the ship channel servicing Beaumont, Port Arthur, and other communities.

Designating the upper Neches as a National Wild and Scenic River would not affect maintenance or deepening of the ship channel, first because the channel is more than 80 river miles below the proposed study area.

Even when it was proposed that the study area extend all the way to the I 10 bridge, neither the study nor the designation would have affected maintenance or deepening of the ship channel.

Dredging is not expressly forbidden by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, but new activities that both (1) require a federal permit, and (2) impact the outstandingly remarkable values for which a river is named to the Wild and Scenic River System, require an assessment of what impacts the activity would have on the river.

On-going maintenance dredging of the current channel is an already-permitted activity, so would not be subject to review by the Wild and Scenic Rivers team. It also does not result in salt water intrusion above the Port of Beaumont.

Earlier modeling indicated that channel improvement proposed downstream in the Sabine-Neches ship channel might cause salt water intrusion upstream on the Neches, lowering its water quality. However, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers found inaccuracies in the earlier model and has corrected it. The Corps' models indicate that *there will be no salt water intrusion above the Interstate 10 bridge as a result of the proposed deepening of the Sabine-Neches Waterway*¹.

¹Brown, Gary, et.al., in preparation, *Revised Numerical Model Study of Potential Salinity Impacts Due to the Proposed Navigation Improvements to the Sabine-Neches Waterway, Texas*. U.S. Army Engineer Research Development Center – Coastal and Hydraulics Laboratory, Vicksburg, Mississippi.