



# Protecting our bays and estuaries

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Date: April 11, 2024  
To: Matagorda Bay Mitigation Trust  
From: Rosario Martinez  
RE: Status of Matagorda Bay Mitigation Trust Projects

## **Protection and Restoration of the Blackjack Peninsula-ANWR (Contract #006):**

The USACE individual permit application and the Environmental Assessment was submitted to the USACE on December 3, 2021. The application includes the proposed shoreline protection and bluff stabilization for the eroding shoreline of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on the eastern shoreline of the Blackjack Unit along San Antonio Bay, particularly near Dagger Point. The USACE public comments letter was received on August 22, 2022, with comments from the TPWD and a member of the general public. Anchor QEA sent a response to comments letter back to USACE on August 23, 2022. We received correspondence from USACE on October 6, 2022, that USFWS needed to submit a NOAA Fisheries Section 7 Consultation. Anchor QEA submitted a USFWS programmatic Endangered Species Act consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service on November 3, 2022, which satisfied the Section 7 consultation. Anchor QEA also submitted the State Historic Preservation Office concurrence regarding cultural resources on November 15, 2022, to the USACE. The Essential Fish Habitat Assessment was submitted to the USACE on January 5, 2023.

The latest request from the USACE was an upland cultural resource survey. A work order between CBBEP and Anchor QEA was executed on May 17, 2023, and August 8, 2023, to allow for the archaeological survey. From June 6 to 10, 2023, and on February 6, 2024, SEARCH Inc. (coordinated through Anchor QEA, LLC), completed a Phase I cultural resource survey to identify and evaluate cultural resources that may be adversely affected within the Project Area. The report and the State Historic Preservation Office letter was submitted to the Texas Historical Commission (THC) in March 2024. SHPO concurrence was received on April 9, 2024. Once the USACE permit is approved, the breakwater and the high bluff design will be finalized.

Approval is still pending for the State of Texas General Land Office Application for State Land Use – Coastal Lease which was submitted in December 2021. The GLO indicated that the lease application will move forward once the USACE permit is approved.