Houston Ship Channel Expansion
Project 11

History of Improvements

Timeline of significant projects over the channel's 100-plus year history

Project 1 – **1853-1857**

After the State of Texas appropriated $46,000, Buffalo Bayou and Galveston Bay are first improved for navigation

Project 2 – **1870-1874**

The first federal channel survey showed it to be at least 4 ft. deep and 70 ft. wide, and the first federal channel appropriations soon followed, at a project cost of $20,000

Project 3 – **1877-1882**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers improved the channel to 14.5 ft. across Galveston Bay, through Redfish Bar, and to the mouth of the San Jacinto River

Project 4 – **1897-1908**

The next federal project was 18.5 ft. deep and the Turning Basin at the head of channel navigation was dredged

Project 5 – **1912-1914**

Official deep-water port: the Houston Ship Channel was opened for ocean-going vessels in November 1914, dredged to 25 ft. deep and 150 ft. wide

ExpandTheHoustonShipChannel.com

Project 6 – **1925**

A federal project followed soon after and deepened the new ocean-going channel to 30 ft.

Project 7 – **1935**

Following the unprecedented growth of Port of Houston refining facilities, the channel was again deepened, to 34 ft., and widened to 400 ft. through Galveston Bay

Project 8 – **1948**

The ship channel was a vital artery during World War II, bringing the onset of the Port of Houston's petrochemical industries, and the next deepening to 36 ft. followed in peacetime

Project 9 – **1958**

Continued growth ushers in the federal project to deepen the channel to 40 ft.

Project 10 – **1968-2005**

To better serve Port of Houston manufacturing industries, the channel is deepened to 45 ft. and 530 ft. wide through Galveston Bay, and environmental restoration projects are constructed with dredged material

Project 11 – **2012-Present**

The federal feasibility report studying proposed improvements is expected to be completed in May 2020, with Congressional authorization later in the year. The Port Authority, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and industry are working together to expedite the project start and its completion

ExpandTheHoustonShipChannel.com