



## Savannah Maritime Association

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Mr. William Bailey  
ATTN: PD, US Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District  
100 West Oglethorpe Avenue  
Savannah, GA 31401-3640

**SUBJECT:** Comments on the USACE Draft Tier II Environmental Impact Statement and Draft General Reevaluation Report for improvements and continued maintenance of the Savannah Harbor Federal Navigation Project, Chatham County, Georgia and Jasper County, South Carolina.

Dear Mr. Bailey,

The Savannah Maritime Association supports and encourages the expansion of the Savannah Harbor to 48 ft as described in the subject documents.

The Savannah District has been outstanding in including the maritime community and public in every phase and every decision for the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project. At the conclusion of project planning, the Stakeholders Evaluation Group is a team working on a project that benefits the entire community.

The engineering aspects of the project have been evaluated in detail and result in a positive approach to expansion. There are no unanswered questions or excessive risk in completing the project. An adaptive management approach provides resources to address any unknown or evolving risks.

The environmental issues and associated mitigation improve the overall environment of the Savannah River basin. When the project is approved, there will be more protected wetlands, more fish and wildlife support and no risk to the Floridian Aquifer.

The economic analysis of the project is conservative in calculating benefits and the cost/benefit ratio will greatly exceed 4 to 1. Increased efficiencies in transportation costs will benefit both imports and exports. The economic analysis does not predict what would actually happen if the project is not approved. The analysis indicates no change in volume if there is no change in the channel depth. It is clear that the more efficient Post-Panamax vessels will shift to other ports and trade in Savannah, both import and export will falter if the channel is not deepened.

USACE has done an outstanding job in managing the project but there have also been delays, most recently over two additional years for the economic analysis. USACE must complete the work and gain approval as quickly as possible. Anything else will be a disappointing failure to support all the people who work in our port and the southeast.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Sutlive  
Executive Director