

Technical Memorandum
Cedar Bayou/Vinson Slough Restoration Project
Aransas County, Texas

Progress Update #3: 5/19 through 5/25

General

As of 5/25/2014, RLB's progress continues with work on Cedar Bayou and Vinson Slough. The spoil pile excavation has been completed during this week. A tern nest located in Vinson Slough caused the contractor to shift operations in order to not disturb the hatched chicks.

Cedar Bayou

Dredging has continued in Cedar Bayou with approximately 1,400 feet of advance made during the past week. The contractor continues to maintain the silt curtains around the active dredging area to protect nearby aquatic resources. Figure 1 shows the hydraulic dredge working with support equipment nearby.



Figure 1. The hydraulic dredge in Cedar Bayou.

Vinson Slough

RLB continued excavation in Vinson Slough near the intersection with Cedar Bayou. On 5/20, a tern nest was discovered in the dredge template and no work distances were established to prevent the mother or eggs from being disturbed. The eggs hatched on 5/21 and the tern chicks have been monitored to date. The nest caused the contractor to shift excavation operations to the bay section of Vinson Slough which is affected by water level fluctuations. Progress is shown in Figure 2 with approximately 500 feet of advance total made in Vinson Slough.



Figure 2. Excavation of Vinson Slough (full channel dimensions shown)

Spoil Pile Excavation

As of 5/25 the spoil pile excavation has been completed and the surface has been graded to the specified elevation.

Beach Placement Areas

All material excavated from Vinson Slough is transported by off-road trucks along the haul route and dumped into Placement Area 1. Material dredged from Cedar Bayou is transported via pipeline to Placement Area 1. The contractor's dozer can be seen in Figure 3 blading out material into the surf zone that has built up near the pipeline discharge point. A diffuser is used on the end of the pipe to prevent scour of the beach as required by the project permit. All material transported to Placement Area 1 has been waterward of the MHHW line.



Figure 3. RLB's Dozer blading out material pumped from Cedar Bayou.

Environmental Monitoring

RLB's bird and turtle monitor patrolled the active work areas and work limits for any signs of turtle activity prior to the start of work every day, particularly in thick banks of washed up sargassum on the beach (Figure 4). No sightings of turtle nesting or piping plovers were recorded during this week. A tern's nest was discovered within the work template and all no-work buffers were immediately established as to not disturb the hatched chicks or the mother. RLB will continue to work in other areas of Vinson Slough until the tern chicks and mother have left the work area. The appropriate authorities were notified of the nesting tern as required by contract.



Figure 4. RLB's turtle monitor checking washed up sargassum for stranded turtles.

Overall Progress

Progress during the week of 5/19 to 5/25, as well as overall project progress to date, is shown in Figure 5.

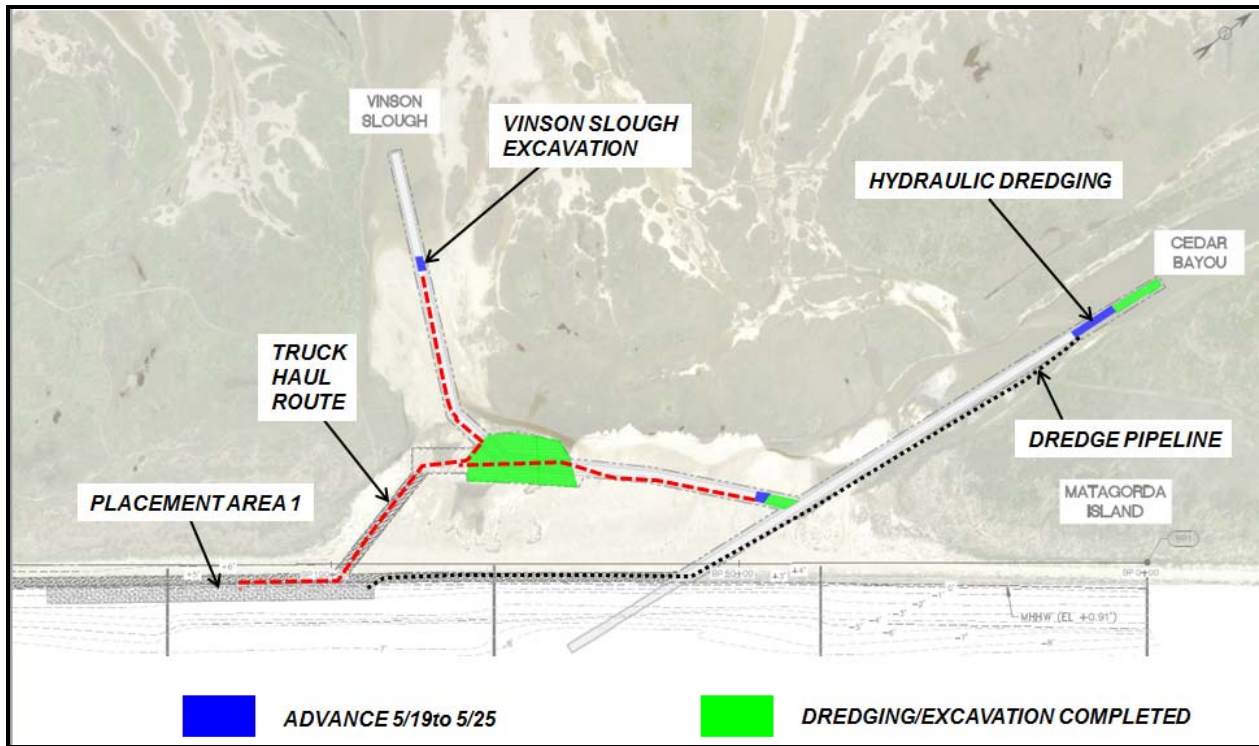


Figure 5. Cedar Bayou/Vinson Slough Restoration Project Progress.