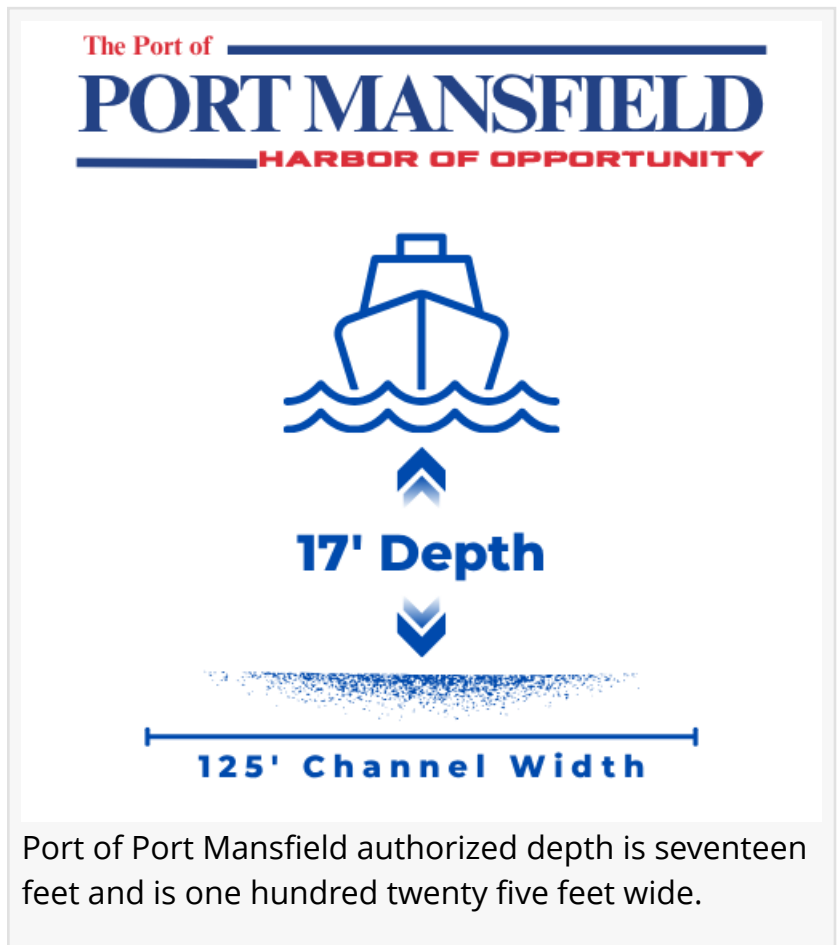


Port of Port Mansfield Channel Dredging Project Complete

Authorized Depth Restored from Jetties to Harbor

RAYMONDVILLE, TX, UNITED STATES, July 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Willacy County Navigation District (WCND) is proud to announce that the channel dredging project at the [Port of Port Mansfield](#) is complete. From the mouth of the jetties at the Gulf of Mexico entrance westward through the navigational channel, the Intracoastal Waterway junction, the Harbor, and into the turning basin, the authorized depth has been fully restored. This milestone marks one of the most significant infrastructure achievements in the Port's recent history and positions [Port Mansfield](#) for expanded maritime activity, stronger commercial opportunity, and continued support of the recreational and commercial fishing economy that defines life in Willacy County.



Scope of the Project

The Port Mansfield Navigation Channel, a man-made inlet originally constructed in the late 1950s and maintained as a federal project, serves as the sole direct gateway between the Gulf of Mexico and the Port. Over time, natural shoaling had reduced navigable depths, constraining vessel traffic and raising operational risks. The recently completed maintenance dredging restored the channel to its authorized dimensions—approximately 17 feet deep and 125 feet wide—across the full length from the jetties through the Harbor and turning basin. Dredged material was beneficially used for beach and dune nourishment, habitat enhancement, and confined placement, consistent with modern best practices.

Funding and Federal Partnership

The project was made possible through federal funding secured after sustained advocacy by WCND leadership. In 2024 the District received significant Work Plan funds from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District. The primary construction contract—a \$21.4 million firm-fixed-price award to Callan Marine Ltd.—was funded with fiscal year 2025 Department of Defense operation and maintenance appropriations. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Galveston District served as the contracting activity. Permits were obtained following extensive environmental review, and work proceeded on schedule toward the July 31, 2026 completion target.

Responsible Stewardship by the WCND Board

Throughout the multi-year effort, the WCND Board of Commissioners maintained a clear focus on Harbor development and long-term maintenance. Chairman Eric Kennedy, Commissioners Ernesto “Lefty” Cavazos, Stacey Reyes, Steve Kendrick, and Alberto Treviño provided

consistent oversight, ensuring the project advanced with attention to safety, environmental protection, and fiscal responsibility. Their stewardship kept the District aligned with federal partners, engineering consultants, and local stakeholders while safeguarding the Lower Laguna Madre ecosystem that makes Port Mansfield unique.

Capacities Restored and Opportunities Ahead

With authorized depth restored, the Port of Port Mansfield can once again reliably accommodate small commercial vessels, recreational offshore fishing, and other commercial maritime interests. The facility sits just one mile from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, offers more than 1,500 acres of leasable land for commercial and mixed-use development, and includes on-site airport access. These attributes open the door to expanded short-sea shipping, logistics support, light manufacturing, fuel and material transfer, commercial fishing operations, and marine-related services.



Aerial view of the entrance to the Port of Port Mansfield



Port of Port Mansfield Harbor of Opportunity

As South Texas commerce continues to grow—particularly at the nearest deep-water and river facilities in the Port of Brownsville and the Port of Harlingen—available water-to-land transfer capacity is becoming increasingly constrained. Port Mansfield is positioned to become a valuable complementary asset, offering accessible draft, available land, and a strategic location that can absorb demand for maritime traffic, recreational charter support, and smaller-scale commercial movements.

Professional Execution and Environmental Care

Callan Marine Ltd. executed the work with professionalism and without reported safety incidents. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided essential technical and contracting support. WCND Commissioners exercised diligent oversight. The project incorporated rigorous environmental protocols, including seagrass surveys, hydrodynamic modeling, avoidance of sensitive habitats, and beneficial use of dredged material for coastal resilience rather than simple offshore disposal. These measures reflect a commitment to best dredging practices that protect the very resources—clean water, healthy fisheries, and natural shoreline—that sustain the Port and its community.

Statements from Leadership

Commissioner Stacey Reyes (Precinct 2):

“We live here. We fish here. We understand what’s at stake. This project restores more than a navigation channel, it strengthens our local economy, supports our commercial and recreational fishing industries, and reflects our commitment to protecting the Laguna Madre while preparing for responsible growth.

Chairman Eric Kennedy and fellow Commissioners have emphasized that completing this critical capital improvement demonstrates the Board’s long-standing priority: maintaining the Harbor as a reliable economic and recreational asset for all of Willacy County while preparing it for responsible future growth.

Oscar Montoya Sr., Executive Director, Willacy County Navigation District:

“Coming on board mid-project gave me a clear view of both the challenges already overcome and the opportunity still ahead. The channel is now a better, safer, more reliable harbor. Looking forward, our focus is on translating this restored depth into tangible benefits—supporting the commercial and recreational fishing fleets that are the heart of this community, attracting new maritime and logistics users, and developing the Port’s available land in a way that strengthens Willacy County’s economy while protecting the Laguna Madre. The Board’s stewardship got us here. Now we build on it.”

Looking Ahead

The completion of the channel dredging project is not an endpoint; it is a foundation. With authorized depth restored from the jetties to the turning basin, the Port of Port Mansfield stands ready to serve growing maritime commerce, sustain the charter and commercial fishing

industries that so many families depend upon, and welcome carefully planned commercial development. Through responsible Board leadership, strong federal partnerships, and professional execution, the WCND has delivered a critical improvement that will serve Willacy County for years to come. The Port of Port Mansfield is our Port of Opportunity and is open for the future.

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