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Four SJRA Projects Advance in State Grant Process

Flood mitigation projects to involve local partners

Conroe, Texas – San Jacinto River Authority (SJRA) announced today that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) ranked four of its five proposed flood infrastructure projects as priorities for the 2020 Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF) cycle, advancing SJRA one step closer to funding for the projects.

With this selection, SJRA is now invited to submit full applications for the four projects to the TWDB for grant approval.

The Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF) program was made possible by Senate Bill 7 sponsored by Senator Brandon Creighton. Passed by the Legislature and approved by Texas voters through a constitutional amendment last year, the FIF program provides financial assistance in the form of loans and grants for flood control, flood mitigation, and drainage projects. In the two-stage process, applicants first submitted an abridged application for each project. TWDB then ranked the projects and prioritized them within the overall available funding capacity.

As with most Texas river authorities, SJRA is not a taxing entity and its revenue comes from services it provides to customer groups, therefore regional and local partnerships as well as local-match funding are necessary for these large-scale flood mitigation projects.

“Hundreds of abridged applications were submitted by entities—cities, counties, other political subdivisions—as part of this competitive process. We are very proud SJRA was selected to move ahead in the approval process on four of our five abridged applications,” said Chuck Gilman, SJRA Director of Water Resources and Flood Management. “The next step is to find local partners who, along with SJRA, will commit to the local-match funding and in-kind services. These large-scale, impactful projects come with a very high price tag. It will take a regional approach with various funding commitments to see these projects through to completion. The FIF funding is an essential piece of that process.”

According to FIF criteria, eligible projects must fall under one of four categories:

- Flood Protection Planning for Watersheds
- Planning, Acquisition, and Design, Construction/Rehabilitation
- Federal Award Matching Funds
- Measures Immediately Effective in Protecting Life and Property

TWDB is expected to review the full applications and make final selections for grant and loan funding later this year.

SJRA proposed projects headed to the next round

- Upper San Jacinto River Basin Regional Sedimentation Study would identify and create a plan for implementing potential sedimentation solutions in the Upper San Jacinto River Basin (Lake Houston watershed) by evaluating the input, output, and storage of sediment for the entire basin as well as for sub-watersheds within the basin.
- Spring Creek Watershed Flood Control Dams Conceptual Engineering Feasibility Study would perform a conceptual engineering feasibility study of two potential dam/reservoir locations within the Spring Creek watershed.

This project is proposed as a continuation or next phase of the *Spring Creek Siting Study*, which is currently being completed as a sub-task to the San Jacinto Regional Watershed Master Drainage Plan project being performed by the Harris County Flood Control District and supported by SJRA and other regional partners.

- Lake Conroe – Lake Houston Joint Reservoir Operations Study would develop a joint reservoir operations and communications strategy for Lake Conroe and Lake Houston.

The City of Houston is currently in the design phase of a project to add new tainter gates at the Lake Houston dam which could greatly increase the controlled release capacity of the dam. The main goal of the plan is to determine the most efficient and safe operation of the two reservoirs in series by evaluating multiple individual components of operational strategy. The project will include evaluation of the operational synergy between the two reservoirs, joint notification and communications protocols, pre-release, impacts on water supply, and the use of forecasting tools. This project is beneficial to both water supply and flood mitigation in the region.

- Flood Early Warning System for San Jacinto County would provide for installation of rain and river/stream stage gaging equipment at three locations identified as critical by San Jacinto County to provide early warning information to the county during storm events.

The identified gage locations are Winters Bayou at State Highway 150, East Fork San Jacinto River at FM 945, and Peach Creek at FM 3081. Rain and river/stream stage data obtained at the sites would be transmitted to SJRA's ALERT2 network and displayed on SJRA's Contrail system which can be viewed online via SJRA's website, allowing San Jacinto County staff and residents to easily access and view the data at any time.

One of the major river authorities in Texas, SJRA's mission is to develop, conserve, and protect the water resources of the San Jacinto River basin. Covering all or part of seven counties, the organization's jurisdiction includes the entire San Jacinto River watershed, excluding Harris County. For additional information on SJRA visit our website at www.sjra.net, like SJRA on Facebook [@SanJacintoRiverAuthority](https://www.facebook.com/SanJacintoRiverAuthority), or follow us on Twitter [@SJRA_1937](https://twitter.com/SJRA_1937), or find us on Instagram [@SanJacintoRiverAuthoritySJRA](https://www.instagram.com/SanJacintoRiverAuthoritySJRA).

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