

City of Laredo

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October 18, 1990

The Honorable Albert Bustamante
United States Representative
1116 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Bustamante:

I am writing this letter to request your assistance in contacting the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers on the City's behalf to urge the Corps of Engineers to give the Laredo environmental restoration project at the Laredo International Airport a higher and urgent priority. Priority is urged to correct an environmental and public health concern in our community and to satisfy a Texas Water Commission mandate to take immediate abatement measures. This mandate from the Texas Water Commission gives the City of Laredo only 45 days to submit a written response to the Commission that adequately addresses the completion of the restoration program at Laredo. See the attached letter from the Texas Water Commission dated October 9, 1990.

During the past few months the City of Laredo has become acutely aware of a serious problem regarding ground water fuel contamination at the Laredo International Airport, formerly Laredo Air Force Base.

The fuel contamination is located at the Airport's Fuel Farm area, previously the Air Force Base Fuel Farm. In active use by the Department of Defense since the early 1940s, the Air Force storage capacity at one time exceeded 1.7 million gallons of aviation fuels. Presently, the City and its Fixed Base Operators are only utilizing six each 25,000 gallon underground fuel storage tanks. These six tanks and piping were recently tested by the City and were found to be tight, i.e., not leaking. Thus, the Laredo project involves the restoration of contaminated ground water caused by the Air Force during the time the Air Force Base was active.

My Staff met with representatives of the Army Corps of Engineers on September 26, 1990, in Fort Worth, Texas, to discuss the environmental problems and concerns at the former Laredo Air Force Base. It is our understanding from our discussions with Army Corps representatives that Laredo is an eligible project for federal funding under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program that addresses restoration efforts at Former Use Defense Site (FUDS).

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The Corps has assigned the following identification code for Laredo K06TX021301. Please reference this code in your communications with the Corps.

In this regard, the City of Laredo urges and requests that the Laredo project which is deemed eligible by representatives of the Army Corps of Engineers for federal funding be given a higher priority by the Army Corps. It is also our understanding that federal funding is available.

The City of Laredo does not have the funding necessary to implement the Texas Water Commission mandate. Thus, the need to impress on the Army Corps of Engineers' urgency of Laredo's dilemma.

Your assistance in contacting the Army Corps and intervening on the City's behalf will be greatly appreciated. Please advise if you need additional information.

Sincerely,



Peter H. Vargas
City Manager

xc: City Council Members
Airport Advisory Board Members
Mr. Carlos Villarreal, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Hank Domeracki, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Joe Aranda, Transportation Director
Mr. Jose L. Flores, Airport Director

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