



# KINGWOOD SERVICE ASSOCIATION

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January 18, 2019

Evaluation Branch, North Unit  
Regulatory Division, CESWG-RD-E  
Galveston District  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 1229  
Galveston, Texas 77553-1229

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
401 Coordinator  
MSC-150  
P.O. Box 13087  
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

Re: Permit Application No. SWG-2016-00384, Romerica Investments, LLC

Dear Corps and TCEQ,

Enclosed are the comments of the Kingwood Service Association, regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Galveston District, Section 10/404 proposed Permit Application No. SWG-2016-00384, Romerica Investments, LLC, located in waters of the United States (U.S.) and wetlands adjacent to the West Fork of the San Jacinto River, Kingwood, Harris County, Texas.

The Kingwood Service Association (KSA) is a Kingwood-wide homeowners association representing thirty-two (32) residential and commercial associations in the Kingwood area. The following comments are being made on behalf of Kingwood residents concerned about the impact of the proposed development on the Kingwood community.

KSA owns and operates two parks adjacent to the proposed permit area, River Grove Park and Deer Ridge Park. During Hurricane Harvey, both of these parks flooded with 10 to 20 feet of water. River Grove Park is located on the West Fork of the San Jacinto River between the river and the proposed commercial and residential areas. This park was covered by 20 feet of water. As the flood waters receded, it left 6 feet of sand covering half of the park area. River Grove Park has flooded at least 6 times in the past 12 months. This experience raises serious concerns about the environmental impact of a development that calls for adding fill material to approximately 330 acres located north and east of River Grove Park, and which would raise the grade level of the area 12 feet from 45 feet to 57 feet.

We are very concerned about the overall impact of this development on the community because it would be built where Hurricane Harvey created some of the worst flooding in 100-year or greater floodplains/floodways; will fill and displace about 200 acres of 100-

year floodplain/floodway, which will raise water levels and increase the possibility of flooding for others; will fill in wetlands that are crucial for soaking up water and reduced flows, velocities, and increased sedimentation of the West Fork of the San Jacinto River in its 100-year floodplain/floodway; is subject to further flooding in the future; and destroys more of the natural beauty, water quality, and wildlife habitat of the West Fork of the San Jacinto River.

In the review of this permit application, we ask the Corps to consider all relevant public interest review factors in 33 CFR 320-332 including conservation, economics, aesthetics, air quality, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, and the needs and general welfare of the people.

We think that, at a minimum, the following areas should be addressed by USACE and TCEQ during the permitting process.

1. This proposal will fill 42.35 acres of wetlands with 68,323 cubic yards of fill material on 331.45 acres and fill 771 linear feet of streams with 285 cubic yards of fill material. There are significant concerns about the environmental impact of the elimination of 42.35 acres of wetlands. These concerns fall into the following areas:
  - a. Elimination of a natural area inhabited by eagles, deer, and other animals native to the area without sufficient mitigation in the same watershed.
  - b. Decrease in the quality of the water supply for the City of Houston, which is downstream of the development, as a result of the increase in erosion and increase in deposition of sediment caused by the elimination of wetlands and the increase in infrastructure.
  - c. Decrease in the quality of the water supply for the City of Houston caused by the contamination of water run-off by the addition of parking spaces for 8,000 plus vehicles that could increase contaminants, such as motor oil, being washed into the San Jacinto River.
  - d. Increase of erosion and acceleration of deposition of sediment due to an increase in the speed of water run-off caused by the additional infrastructure, elimination of wetlands, and increase in grade level of the area.
  - e. Determine the impact of filling in 42.35 acres of wetlands on eagles nesting in that area. Eagle nests have been spotted in the vicinity by Kingwood residents.
2. Impact on the ability for residents to use the recreational facilities as a result of the increase in flooding caused by the increase of grade level from 45 feet to 57 feet that would inhibit the flow of water during significant rain events and cause the acceleration of water run-off potentially increasing erosion and accelerating the deposition of sediment in the San Jacinto River.

3. Economic impact on the villages immediately surrounding the development area as a result of the potential increase in flooding caused by the development. This could cause a significant decrease in the value of the homes located in these villages.
4. Economic impact on the community that would be caused by adding 8,000 plus vehicles to the traffic patterns of the community without a plan to mitigate this impact. The increase of this much traffic in a single area would have a negative impact on the attractiveness of purchasing a home in Kingwood, which has a reputation for being the "Liveable Forest".
5. Completion of an environmental impact study before further consideration of this permit application. This study should include a full hydrological study of the project's impact, an environmental impact to the large wetlands habitat without mitigation in the same watershed, and socioeconomic impact of such a huge development on an existing master planned community.
6. Impact on boat navigation on the West Fork of the San Jacinto River caused by the potential addition of 640 boats. Navigation on the West Fork has been impaired for decades and getting worse due to the acceleration of sediment deposition caused, in part, by sand mines upstream of the project area. This development has the potential to add to that sediment deposition.
7. Require the applicant to provide documentation about how it will provide for operation and maintenance dredging of the site so that Section 10 navigation will continue over the lifetime of the development and after floods.

We are requesting that the Corps schedule a public hearing on this application to allow residents to gather additional information on the proposed development and provide further comments. In addition, considering the potential significant negative impact of this development on the community, we request that the Corps and TCEQ seriously consider denying this permit application.

We appreciate this opportunity to provide public comment on this proposed permit application.

Sincerely,  
Dee M. Price, President  
Kingwood Service Association