

PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

Acc#4560.1

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MEMBER, CORPUS CHRISTI

J. WELDON WATSON

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 11, 1964



In approving your request it must be clearly understood and agreeable  
by you and your Institute. JOHN H. REAGAN BUILDING  
TAMU at Galveston-Library AUSTIN, TEXAS 78701  
Property of Galveston Bay Collection  
September 11, 1964  
certain data that may have been developed would not  
be the property of the Commission in all instances.

By sending a copy of this letter to our Regional Director, Mr. John K.  
Dr. Herbert C. McKee, in Fort Worth, Texas, I am authorizing him to  
Assistant to the Vice President when you contact him on the basis of  
Southwest Research Institute - Houston  
3600 South Yoakum Boulevard  
Houston, Texas 77006

Dear Dr. McKee:

In your letter of September 10, 1964, you stated that Southwest  
Research Institute is attempting to collect and evaluate available  
scientific information from various sources to see if better methods  
of dredging could be developed which would maintain adequate safe-  
guards for other beneficial uses of the Galveston Bay system, and  
that the Institute is a non-profit scientific research organization  
providing research services in the physical and biological sciences  
and engineering.

You also requested that since it was your understanding that this  
Department's staff in the Galveston Bay complex has collected data  
and made studies in connection with the present dredging operations  
that you would appreciate an opportunity to visit with these staff  
members for the purpose of obtaining data that might be available  
for use in your research study, as well as accompanying our personnel  
on one of our inspection tours of the Galveston Bay area.

This Department has a continuing evaluation inspection and study  
operation by trained personnel in the area concerned and as we are  
vitaly interested in all research data studies and information in  
connection with the operation in the area referred to, I believe  
that it would be beneficial, since your Institute is purely of a  
research, non-profit nature, that the purpose for which you  
requested permission can and is approved.

# PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT

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Dr. Herbert C. McKee

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September 11, 1964



In approving your request it must be clearly understood and agreeable by you and your Institute that such will not interfere with the staff's work, and that results of any study or research which you make and complete be made available to this office for our information. I am sure you realize that our program is a continuing study under varied conditions and certain data that may have been developed would not in its entirety be conclusive in all instances.

By sending a copy of this letter to our Regional Director, Mr. John R. Singleton, 105 San Jacinto, La Porte, Texas, I am authorizing him to make the necessary arrangements when you contact him on the basis of this letter.

Respectfully,  
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Sincerely yours,

Very truly,  
J. Weldon Watson

In your letter of September 10, 1964, you stated that Southwest Research Institute is attempting to J. Weldon Watson available scientific information from various sources to see if better methods JWW:am could be developed which would obtain adequate information for the better knowledge of the Galveston Bay system and its cc: John R. Singleton, non-profit scientific research organization, Director, Region IV, in the physical and biological sciences and engineering.

We also requested that since it was your understanding that this department's staff in the Galveston Bay complex has collected data and made studies in connection with the present dredging operations that you would appreciate an opportunity to visit with these staff members for the purpose of obtaining data that might be available for use in your research study, as well as accompanying our personnel on one of our inspection tours of the Galveston Bay area.

This Department has a continuing evaluation inspection and study operation by trained personnel in the area concerned and as we are vitally interested in all research data studies and information in connection with the operation in the area referred to, I believe that it would be beneficial, since your Institute is purely of a research, non profit nature, that the purpose for which you requested permission has been approved.

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# **SOUTHWEST RESEARCH INSTITUTE - HOUSTON**

3600 SOUTH YACUM BOULEVARD  
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77006

AREA CODE 713  
JACKSON 2 0726

October 9, 1964

PRINCIPAL OFFICE AND  
LABORATORY  
8900 CANTRELL ROAD  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78204

**Mr. J. Weldon Watson  
Executive Director  
State Parks and Wildlife Department  
John H. Reagan Building  
Austin, Texas 78701**

Dear Sir:

We appreciate your letter of September 11, 1964, granting us permission to visit the Parks and Wildlife Department laboratory at Seabrook to obtain information for use in our study of oyster reefs and other marine life in Galveston and Trinity Bays.

The conditions mentioned in your letter are quite acceptable, as follows:

1. We will schedule our visit at a time which will not interfere with the work of the laboratory staff.
2. We have been assured by the sponsor of our investigation, the Joint Organizations for Business Survival, that they will make copies of our report available to your office.

Let me again express our appreciation for your action and express the hope that our work will be beneficial to all who are concerned with some aspect of the Galveston Bay system. Our work to date has indicated that there are several possibilities for utilizing up-to-date scientific information to aid the various activities in the Galveston Bay system, and at the same time provide adequate safeguards for all of these activities. Our visit to the Parks and Wildlife laboratory should provide additional information that will be useful in evaluating these possibilities.

Very truly yours,

**Herbert C. McKee  
Assistant to the Vice President**

HCMc:ilw

October 28, 1964

Mr. J. Weldon Watson  
Executive Director  
Reagan State Building  
Austin, Texas

Dear Mr. Watson:

Dr. Herbert G. McKee and Mr. Lee Hiser of Southwest Research Institute met with us yesterday morning in Seabrook then accompanied Fred Murray and myself to Galveston Bay by boat. I would say that their visit was characterized primarily by an effort to determine our opinions regarding the importance of shell reefs and/or live oysters in Galveston Bay rather than detailed information as to procedures and techniques being employed. This group is doing no original or investigational work in the bay proper. Dr. McKee stated that their sponsor might have them get in this field at a later date. They were interested in determining the importance of exposed shell reefs to commercial as well as sports fishing. They wanted to know whether or not we have any information concerning relative food abundance on a shell reef as compared to the mud bottom. Generally, it is felt that the reef does support a more abundant and wider variety of marine creatures, but we have no field data to substantiate this. They also wanted to know what the results might be if all exposed reefs in Galveston Bay were removed. I doubt that we gave them a complete or thorough answer to this question. The removal of all reefs would have an immediate impact upon oyster harvest, possibly upon the shrimp harvest and would probably tend to temporarily reduce the sports fishing effort. The removal of all reefs would not likely result in the total and continued absence of live oysters. There will be some scattering of live oyster populations on mud bottoms, with no underlying deposit of shell, which would continue to grow and serve as a seed stock in the bay. Live oyster growth would most likely reoccur, over a period of time, in other areas in the bay where conditions <sup>are</sup> to their growth and reproduction is conducive. Examples of this would be along spoil banks, oil well sites and favorable mud-sand bottoms.

Mr. Watson  
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Prior to meeting in the bay, I told Dr. McKee and Mr. Hiser that we were well aware of the fact that our techniques in the silt study were not as refined and as intensive as they might be. We are limited by the number of men available to work on this problem in relation to the various types of works which must be performed. In addition to checking upon siltation, our field crew is responsible for reef surveying, determining oyster population levels and oyster depletion procedures as well as various other field procedures. I may be incorrect, but I sometimes feel that individuals who are not thoroughly familiar with the problem and the necessary field activities, have a tendency to mentally belittle the techniques which we must employ. However, an organization such as this may well be able to design a technique which will give us better results in keeping with the effort being expended. If this is possible, then I assure you that we would be more than glad to receive any such information or technique.

Yours sincerely,

J. R. Singleton  
Director  
Region IV

JRS/bw



**SOUTHWEST RESEARCH INSTITUTE - HOUSTON**

3600 SOUTH YOAKUM BOULEVARD

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77006

AREA CODE 713  
JACKSON 2-0726

PRINCIPAL OFFICES AND  
LABORATORIES:  
8500 CULEBRA ROAD  
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78206

October 28, 1964

Mr. J. Weldon Watson  
Executive Director  
State Parks and Wildlife Department  
John H. Reagan Building  
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Sir:

Let me again express our appreciation for the privilege of visiting the Parks and Wildlife Department laboratory at Seabrook to obtain information on oyster reefs, as discussed in our previous correspondence. This visit took place yesterday, when Mr. Lee Hiser and I visited the laboratory and also accompanied laboratory personnel on an inspection trip in Galveston Bay.

Mr. Singleton and the other members of his staff were most helpful in outlining for us the activities of their laboratory, and in demonstrating the various techniques used to study siltation and other factors in the bay. This information will be very valuable to us in completing our study of oyster reef ecology and the factors which affect it.

We expect to complete our report in the near future, and will be in touch with you to furnish copies of the report and to answer any questions which you may have at that time.

Very truly yours,

Herbert C. McKee  
Assistant to the Vice President

HCMc:ilw

cc: Mr. J. R. Singleton

