



**BILLING CODE: 4910-81-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Maritime Administration**

**[Docket No. MARAD-2019-0011]**

**Deepwater Port License Application: SPOT Terminal Services LLC (SPOT).**

**AGENCY:** Maritime Administration, Department of Transportation.

**ACTION:** Notice of application.

**SUMMARY:** The Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) announce they have received an application for the licensing of a deepwater port and that the application contains information sufficient to commence processing. This notice summarizes the applicant's plans and the procedures that will be followed in considering the application.

**DATES:** The Deepwater Port Act of 1974, as amended, requires at least one public hearing on this application to be held in the designated Adjacent Coastal State(s) not later than 240 days after publication of this notice, and a decision on the application not later than 90 days after the final public hearing(s).

**ADDRESSES:** The public docket for the SPOT deepwater port license application is maintained by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Management Facility, West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590.

The license application is available for viewing at the Regulations.gov website:

<http://www.regulations.gov> under docket number MARAD-2019-0011.

We encourage you to submit comments electronically through the Federal

eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. If you submit your comments electronically, it is not necessary to also submit a hard copy. If you cannot submit material using <http://www.regulations.gov>, please contact either Mr. Efrain Lopez, USCG or Ms. Yvette M. Fields, MARAD, as listed in the following “FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT” section of this document. This section provides alternate instructions for submitting written comments. Additionally, if you go to the online docket and sign up for email alerts, you will be notified when comments are posted. Anonymous comments will be accepted. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided. The Federal Docket Management Facility’s telephone number is 202-366-9317 or 202-366-9826, the fax number is 202-493-2251.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Efrain Lopez, U.S. Coast Guard, telephone: 202-372-1437, email: *Efrain.Lopez1@uscg.mil*, or Ms. Yvette M. Fields, Maritime Administration, telephone: 202-366-0926, email: *Yvette.Fields@dot.gov*. For questions regarding viewing the Docket, call Docket Operations, telephone: 202-366-9317 or 202-366-9826.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Receipt of Application**

On January 31, 2019, MARAD and USCG received an application from SPOT Terminal Services LLC (SPOT) for Federal authorizations required for a license to own, construct, and operate a deepwater port for the export of oil as authorized by the Deepwater Port Act of 1974, as amended, 33 U.S.C. 1501 *et seq.* (the Act), and implemented under 33 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Parts 148, 149, and 150.

After a coordinated completeness review by MARAD, the USCG, and other cooperating Federal agencies, the application is deemed complete and contains information sufficient to initiate processing.

## **Background**

The Act defines a deepwater port as any fixed or floating manmade structure other than a vessel, or any group of such structures, that are located beyond State seaward boundaries and used or intended for use as a port or terminal for the transportation, storage, and further handling of oil or natural gas for transportation to, or from, any State. A deepwater port includes all components and equipment, including pipelines, pumping or compressor stations, service platforms, buoys, mooring lines, and similar facilities that are proposed as part of a deepwater port to the extent they are located seaward of the high-water mark.

The Secretary of Transportation delegated to the Maritime Administrator authorities related to licensing deepwater ports (49 CFR § 1.93(h)). Statutory and regulatory requirements for processing applications and licensing appear in 33 U.S.C. 1501 *et seq.* and 33 CFR Part 148. Under delegations from, and agreements between, the Secretary of Transportation and the Secretary of Homeland Security, applications are jointly processed by MARAD and USCG. Each application is considered on its merits.

In accordance with 33 U.S.C. 1504(f) for all applications, MARAD and the USCG, working in cooperation with other involved Federal agencies and departments, shall comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), among others, participate in the processing of deepwater port applications and assist in the NEPA process as described in 40 CFR § 1501.6. Each agency may participate in scoping and/or other public meeting(s) and may adopt the MARAD/USCG prepared environmental impact review for purposes of their jurisdictional permitting processes, to the extent applicable. Comments related to this deepwater port application addressed to the EPA, USACE, or other Federal agencies should note the Federal docket number, MARAD-2019-0011. Each comment will be incorporated into the Department of Transportation (DOT) docket and considered as the environmental impact analysis is developed to ensure consistency with the NEPA process.

All connected actions, permits, approvals and authorizations will be considered during the processing of SPOT's deepwater port license application.

MARAD, in issuing this Notice of Application pursuant to 33 U.S.C. 1504(c), must designate as an "Adjacent Coastal State" any coastal state which (A) would be directly connected by pipeline to a deepwater port as proposed in an application, or (B) would be located within 15 nautical miles of any such proposed deepwater port (see 33 U.S.C. 1508(a)(1)). Pursuant to the criteria provided in the Act, Texas is the designated Adjacent Coastal State for this application. Other states may request from the Maritime Administrator designation as an Adjacent Coastal State in accordance with 33 U.S.C. 1508(a)(2).

The Act directs that at least one public hearing take place in each Adjacent

Coastal State, in this case, Texas. Additional public meetings may be conducted to solicit comments for the environmental analysis to include public scoping meetings, or meetings to discuss the Draft and Final environmental impact documents prepared in accordance with NEPA.

MARAD, in coordination with the USCG, will publish additional Federal Register notices with information regarding these public meeting(s) and hearing(s) and other procedural milestones, including the NEPA environmental impact review. The Maritime Administrator's decision, and other key documents, will be filed in the public docket at docket number MARAD-2019-0011.

The Deepwater Port Act imposes a strict timeline for processing an application. When MARAD and USCG determine that an application is complete (i.e., contains information sufficient to commence processing), the Act directs that all public hearings on the application be concluded within 240 days from the date the Notice of Application is published.

Within 45 days after the final hearing, the Governor of the Adjacent Coastal State, in this case the Governor of Texas, may notify MARAD of his approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval of the application. If such approval, approval with conditions, or disapproval is not provided to the Maritime Administrator by that time, approval shall be conclusively presumed. MARAD may not issue a license without the explicit or presumptive approval of the Governor of the Adjacent Coastal State. During this 45-day period, the Governor may also notify MARAD of inconsistencies between the application and State programs relating to environmental protection, land and water use, and coastal zone management. In this case, MARAD may condition the license to make it consistent

with such state programs (33 U.S.C. 1508(b)(1)). MARAD will not consider written approvals or disapprovals of the application from the Governor of the Adjacent Coastal State until after the final public hearing is complete and the 45-day period commences.

The Maritime Administrator must render a decision on the application within 90 days after the final hearing.

In accordance with section 33 U.S.C. 1504(d), MARAD is required to designate an application area for a deepwater port application intended to transport oil. Section 1504(d)(2) provides MARAD the discretion to establish a reasonable application area constituting the geographic area in which only one deepwater port may be constructed and operated. MARAD has consulted with USCG in developing SPOT's application area and designates an application area encompassing the deepwater port that is a circle having a radius of no less than three-and-three-tenths (3.30) nautical miles centered at SPOT's proposed platform, latitude N28° 27' 59.22" and longitude W95° 07' 24.49", and 0.25 nautical miles on either side of SPOT's proposed pipeline route between the terminal and the shore. Any person interested in applying for the ownership, construction, and operation of a deepwater port within this designated application area must file with MARAD (see FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT) a notice of intent to file an application for the construction and operation of a deepwater port not later than 60 days after the date of publication of this notice, and shall submit a completed application no later than 90 days after publication of this notice.

Should a favorable record of decision be rendered and license be issued, MARAD may include specific conditions related to design, construction, operations, environmental permitting, monitoring and mitigations, and financial responsibilities. If a license is

issued, USCG in coordination with other agencies as appropriate, would review and approve the deepwater port's engineering, design, and construction; operations/security procedures; waterways management and regulated navigation areas; maritime safety and security requirements; risk assessment; and compliance with domestic and international laws and regulations for vessels that may call on the port. The deepwater port would be designed, constructed and operated in accordance with applicable codes and standards.

In addition, installation of pipelines and other structures may require permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, which are administered by the USACE.

Permits from the EPA may also be required pursuant to the provisions of the Clean Air Act, as amended, and the Clean Water Act, as amended.

### **Summary of the Application**

SPOT is proposing to construct, own, and operate a deepwater port terminal in the Gulf of Mexico to export domestically produced crude oil. Use of the deepwater port would include the loading of various grades of crude oil at flow rates of up to 85,000 barrels per hour (bph). The SPOT deepwater port would allow for up to two (2) Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs) or other crude oil carriers to moor at single point mooring (SPM) buoys and connect with the deepwater port via floating connecting crude oil hoses and a floating vapor recovery hose. The maximum frequency of loading VLCCs or other crude oil carriers would be 2 million barrels per day, 365 days per year.

The overall project would consist of offshore and marine components as well as onshore components as described below.

The SPOT deepwater port offshore and marine components would consist of the

following:

- One (1) fixed offshore platform with eight (8) piles in Galveston Area Outer Continental Shelf lease block 463, approximately 27.2 to 30.8 nautical miles off the coast of Brazoria County, Texas in a water depth of approximately 115 feet. The fixed offshore platform would be comprised of four (4) decks including: a sump deck with shut-down valves and open drain sump; a cellar deck with pig launchers and receivers, generators, and three (3) vapor combustion units; a main deck with a lease automatic custody transfer (LACT) unit, oil displacement prover loop, living quarters, electrical and instrument building, and other ancillary equipment; and a laydown deck with a crane laydown area.
- Two (2) single point mooring buoys (SPMs), each having: two (2) 24-inch inside diameter crude oil underbuoy hoses interconnecting with the crude oil pipeline end manifold (PLEM); two (2) 24-inch inside diameter floating crude oil hoses connecting the moored VLCC or other crude oil carrier for loading to the SPM buoy; one (1) 24-inch inside diameter vapor recovery underbuoy hose interconnecting with the vapor recovery PLEM; and one (1) 24-inch inside diameter floating vapor recovery hose to connect to the moored VLCC or other crude oil carrier for loading. The floating hoses would be approximately 800 feet in length and rated for 300 psig (21-bar). Each floating hose would contain an additional 200 feet of 16-inch “tail hose” that is designed to be lifted and robust enough for hanging over the edge railing of the VLCC or other crude oil carrier. The underbuoy hoses would be approximately 160 feet in length and rated for 300 psig (21-bar).

- Four (4) PLEMs would provide the interconnection between the pipelines and the SPM buoys. Each SPM buoy would have two (2) PLEMs - one (1) PLEM for crude oil and one (1) PLEM for vapor recovery. Each crude oil loading PLEM would be supplied with crude oil by two (2) 30-inch outside diameter pipelines, each approximately 0.66 nautical miles in length. Each vapor recovery PLEM would route recovered vapor from the VLCC or other crude oil carrier through the PLEM to the three (3) vapor combustion units located on the platform topside via two (2) 16-inch outside diameter vapor recovery pipelines, each approximately 0.66 nautical miles in length.
- Two (2) co-located 36-inch outside diameter, 40.8-nautical mile long crude oil pipelines would be constructed from the shoreline crossing in Brazoria County, Texas, to the SPOT deepwater port for crude oil delivery. These pipelines, in conjunction with 12.2 statute miles of new-build onshore pipelines (described below), would connect the onshore crude oil storage facility and pumping station (Oyster Creek Terminal) to the offshore SPOT deepwater port. The crude oil would be metered at the offshore platform. Pipelines would be bi-directional for the purposes of maintenance, pigging, changing crude oil grades, or evacuating the pipeline with water.

The SPOT deepwater port onshore storage and supply components would consist of the following:

- New equipment and piping at the existing Enterprise Crude Houston (ECHO) Terminal to provide interconnectivity with the crude oil supply network for the SPOT Project. This would include the installation of four (4) booster pumps,

one (1) measurement skid, and four (4) crude oil pumps.

- An interconnection between the existing Rancho II pipeline and the proposed ECHO to Oyster Creek pipeline consisting of a physical connection as well as ultrasonic measurement capability for pipeline volumetric balancing purposes.
- The proposed Oyster Creek Terminal located in Brazoria County, Texas, on approximately 140 acres of land consisting of seven (7) aboveground storage tanks, each with a total storage capacity of 685,000 barrels (600,000 barrels working storage capacity), for a total onshore storage capacity of approximately 4.8 million barrels (4.2 million barrels working storage) of crude oil. The Oyster Creek Terminal also would include: six (6) electric-driven mainline crude oil pumps; four (4) electric-driven booster crude oil pumps (two (2) per pipeline), working in parallel to move crude oil from the storage tanks through the measurement skids; two (2) crude oil pipeline pig launchers/receivers; one (1) crude oil pipeline pig receiver; two (2) measurement skids for measuring incoming crude oil - one (1) skid located at the incoming pipeline from the existing Enterprise Crude Houston (ECHO) Terminal, and one (1) skid installed and reserved for a future pipeline connection; two (2) measurement skids for measuring departing crude oil; three (3) vapor combustion units - two (2) permanent and one (1) portable; and ancillary facilities to include electrical substation, office, and warehouse buildings.
- Three onshore crude oil pipelines would be constructed onshore to support the SPOT deepwater port. These would include: one (1) 50.1 statute mile long 36-inch crude oil pipeline from the existing ECHO Terminal to the Oyster Creek

Terminal. This pipeline would be located in Harris County and Brazoria County, Texas; two (2) 12.2 statute mile long, co-located 36-inch crude oil export pipelines from the Oyster Creek Terminal to the shore crossing where these would join the above described subsea pipelines supplying the SPOT deepwater port. These pipelines would be located in Brazoria County, Texas.

### **Privacy Act**

DOT posts comments, without edit, to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), as described in the system of records notice, DOT/ALL-14 FDMS, accessible through [www.dot.gov/privacy](http://www.dot.gov/privacy). To facilitate comment tracking and response, we encourage commenters to provide their name, or the name of their organization; however, submission of names is completely optional. Whether or not commenters identify themselves, all timely comments will be fully considered. If you wish to provide comments containing proprietary or confidential information, please contact the agency for alternate submission instructions.

(Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1501, et seq.; 49 CFR section 1.93(h))

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Dated: February 27, 2019

By Order of the Maritime Administrator.

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**T. Mitchell Hudson, Jr.**

*Secretary, Maritime Administration*

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