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DUE DILIGENCE FOR PROPOSED FLOOD CONTROL ACQUISITION

[Harris County](#)

PROJECT OVERVIEW

ESE conducted a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for an approximately 28-acre tract in Harris County to support potential acquisition for future flood control infrastructure. The assessment was performed in accordance with ASTM E1527-21 and included records review, site reconnaissance, regulatory database evaluation, and agency coordination. The objective was to identify any recognized environmental conditions that could affect redevelopment planning, liability protections, or long-term land management.

CHALLENGES

The property consists of undeveloped and agricultural land that has remained largely unchanged since at least the late 1930s. While historical agricultural use can present concerns related to storage tanks, pesticide application, debris disposal, or undocumented releases, the absence of visible improvements required careful investigation through historical documentation and regulatory research. In addition, nearby commercial and industrial operations required evaluation to determine whether off-site conditions could present risk through migration pathways such as soil, groundwater, or vapor intrusion. Establishing environmental clarity was essential prior to advancing flood control planning and potential property transfer.

ESE'S APPROACH

ESE completed a comprehensive review of federal, state, and local environmental databases within ASTM-specified search radii and evaluated historical aerial photography spanning more than nine decades. Topographic mapping, soil data, hydrogeologic conditions, and FEMA flood mapping were reviewed to understand site context. A walk-through reconnaissance of the property and drive-by observations of adjoining parcels were performed to identify visually observable conditions such as staining, distressed vegetation, debris, storage containers, or evidence of hazardous materials handling. Agency coordination included outreach to local fire, pollution control, and engineering departments. Vapor screening analysis was also conducted to evaluate the potential for vapor encroachment conditions.

KEY FINDINGS

- No recognized environmental conditions, historical recognized environmental conditions, or controlled recognized environmental conditions were identified
- The property is not listed in federal or state environmental regulatory databases
- No evidence of pipelines, oil and gas activity, landfilling, or storage tank releases was identified
- Vapor encroachment conditions are not expected to affect the property

PROJECT IMPACT

By completing a thorough ASTM-compliant Phase I ESA and identifying no environmental concerns, ESE provided the project team with confidence to proceed with acquisition and planning activities. The assessment supports landowner liability protections, reduces uncertainty associated with long-term flood control development, and enables strategic decision-making without environmental delay. This project reflects ESE's Texas First approach by delivering clear, defensible environmental due diligence that supports responsible infrastructure investment across the state.