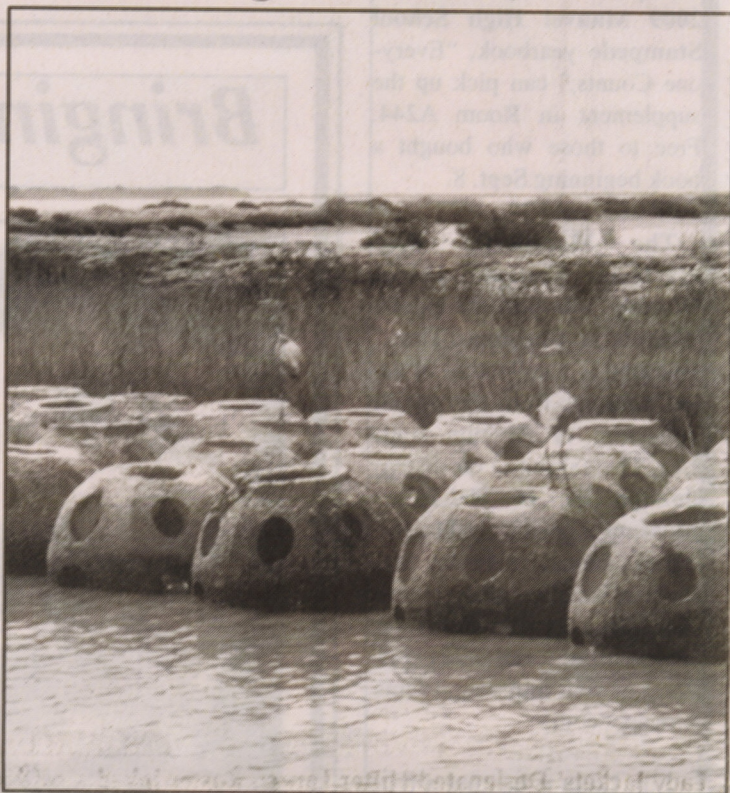


# Chocolate Bayou dredging ends; barges can now use it



*Reefballs were placed along the containment levees at one of the dredging sites in Chocolate Bayou. The reefballs allow water and wildlife to pass through the balls, while still protecting the levee from erosion.*

**By Judy Zavalla**  
Staff Reporter

The dredging of Chocolate Bayou is complete. This was a very important project because of the plants that call Chocolate Bayou home.

Hurricane Ike blew material and silt into the Bayou leaving it with less depth. With less depth, barges must carry less cargo so the bottom of the barges will not drag along the bottom of the Bayou. When the Bayou is at a deeper level, more cargo may be carried into the plants on each trip. This makes the transportation less expensive.

This project was spearheaded by the Corps of Engineers with the Brazoria County Conservation and Reclamation District #3 which acted as the local agent for the dredging.

There were approximately 712,000 cubic yards of shoaled material removed from the channel. When the material was

moved, the depth of the channel is approximately 14 feet. The material was used to raise the levees at key upland placement areas. It was also used to repair levees at two beneficial use sites along the project.

The contract value was more than \$6,290,910. Goodloe Marine, Inc. was awarded the contract. In turn, that company hired King Fisher Marine, Inc., Affolter Construction and Reef Innovations to help complete this job.

Reefballs were fabricated and placed along the containment levees at one of the most beneficial sites.

The design of the reefball allows water and wildlife to pass through the balls, while still protecting the levee from erosion.

This dredging should be sufficient for at least four years unless another hurricane makes landfall near the Galveston area. Following Hurricane Ike, the bayou's depth was left at only seven to nine feet.