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HILL AND KNOWLTON, INC.

BFGoodrich Co.

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Coastal development plan both lauded, hit

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A draft plan that seeks to balance protection of the coastal environment with the need for industrial development has both praised and condemned at a public meeting here.

Spokesmen for industry, environmentalists and community leaders spoke for and against the plan, developed over a four-year period by the Texas General Land Office.

Land Commissioner Bob Armstrong, who conducted the Monday meeting, said Gov. Dolph Briscoe is to forward the plan to the U.S. secretary of commerce.

Supporters and opponents did not divide along pro-environment, pro-industry lines. Some representatives of each spoke in favor while others urged an overhaul of greater or lesser magnitude.

Drawing most of the opposition was a proposed method of evaluating a project's possible effect on air and water quality and the coastal ecology and its social and economic impact.

Some speakers, such as Bobette Higgins of Denton, representing the Texas League of Women Voters, endorsed this method as offering a means of tracing who and what agency made decisions for or against a permit and why.

John Landry of Dow Chemical Co. at Freeport termed the same section as being "too complex to be understood."

Ms. Higgins and Landry were members of the advisory committee that helped develop the overall management plan.

John F. Erdman of Union Carbide Co. in Texas City, perhaps summed up the confusion over the plan's merit when he said he "was not sure how all the various policies will fit together."

Erdman said he could not concur or disagree with the plan because "it's hard to say what procedures will be followed."

Col. Jon C. Vanden Bosch of the Army Corps of Engineers in Galveston expressed cautious concern, saying the plan "might be another layer of evaluation to be put on an already extensive process."

Spokesmen for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries also posed objections and questioned whether the program would meet federal requirements of the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Several spokesmen for coastal communities attacked the plan as undermining local control over industrial development.

Richard D. Rogan, a Seabrook alderman, labeled the plan as "a stamp across the Texas coastal zone saying 'reserved for industry.'"

However, Sharron Stewart of Lake Jackson said the plan, which she helped develop, will achieve economic growth for the coastal region without destroying it.

Planned plant may involve site change

B. F. Goodrich and Bechtel Corp., partners in a proposed chemical plant at Bayport, may relocate the \$200 million facility elsewhere in Texas or in Louisiana, a Goodrich spokesman says.

Robert Downey, manager of public affairs for Goodrich in Cleveland, Ohio, said a decision is due in September. The plant would employ 200.

The company is looking at one site in Texas and two in Louisiana, he said. The locations were not disclosed.

Downey said the Bayport project is behind schedule as a result of five weeks of hearings on a Texas Air Control Board construction permit, which area residents challenged.

A Galveston Bay Conservation and Preservation Association lawsuit also challenges the air board's refusal to consider land use in its determinations leading to the permit.

One part of the plant would make caustic soda and chlorine. Another portion would use the chlorine to make ethylene dichloride, a basic chemical used in the manufacture of polyvinylchloride, a common plastic.

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