

**Louisiana Sand Management Working Group Meeting
Tuesday, April 25, 2006**

**Louisiana Room - Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
2000 Quail Drive
Baton Rouge, Louisiana**

8:30 AM to 9:30 AM Opening Discussion

General discussion of impact of hurricane damage on use of Federal sand/what can MMS do to facilitate usage of resource: Moderators: Drucker/Michel/Redding

10:30 AM to 11:30 AM Project Updates and Status of MMS Leases for Use of Sand for These Projects

Pelican Island

Whiskey West Flank

Open discussion of projects which might require the use of Federal sand

11:45 AM to 2:30 PM Resource Assessment/Environmental Efforts Updates

Progress report for MMS/LDNR Cooperative Resource Assessment Effort: [Syed Khalil](#), LDNR

(LUNCH: 12:15 PM to 1:15 PM)

1:15 PM to 2:15 PM

Updates on ongoing Ship Shoal environmental studies (20 minutes each):

- Long-term impact study: [Stone/Condrey/Fleeeger](#), LSU
- Shrimp/Seatrout study: [Condrey](#), LSU
- Ship Shoal/Sabine Bank Finfish Studies: [Brooks](#)

2:15 PM to 2:30 PM

New MMS/LSU/LDNR Cooperative Agreement/Environmental Study for Trinity and Tiger Shoals: Drucker/Stone/Condrey/Fleeeger/Khalil

Break: 2:30 to 2:45PM

2:45 to 3:30 PM Lease and Stipulation Issues

Baird sediment stability study and discussion of setback issue: [Rob Nairn](#), Baird

3:30-4:00 PM Wrap-Up and Adjourn

Meeting Minutes

LOCATION

Louisiana Room - Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Note: All presentations at the meeting are on the La SMWG website:
http://www.mms.gov/sandandgravel/LA_SMW_Group.htm

OPENING DISCUSSIONS

MMS Marine Minerals Program ITM

Barry Drucker announced the 1st Minerals Management Service Marine Minerals Program Information Transfer Meeting to be held June 20-22, 2006 in Melbourne, Florida. He encouraged everyone to attend this informative meeting. Registration is free. To register and review information about the meeting, go the website:

<http://www.signup4.net/Public/ap.aspx?EID=MARI10E>

Hurricane Impacts

There was a general discussion of the impact of hurricane damage on use of Federal sand and what MMS can do to facilitate usage of resource. Greg Stone asked about three topics: 1) Are there any restoration plans for the Chandeleur Islands? DNR mentioned that such a project might be part of the state's Coastal Impact Assistance Plan (CIAP). 2) Will LIDAR be obtained for the coastal nearshore? 3) Will there be new bathymetry data? DNR reported that LIDAR will be obtained next year as part of the Barrier Island Comprehensive Monitoring Program being conducted by USGS and UNO. This program will cover the barrier islands from Sandy Point to Raccoon Point and the Chandeleur Islands. It will include physical monitoring using LIDAR to 15 ft water depth and bathymetric surveys to wading depths at 1,500 ft spacing. There will be sediment sampling and topographic surveys if the LIDAR is not sufficient. There will also be vegetation surveys.

There had been plans for studies of Tiger and Trinity Shoals, but the MMS funds that were to pay for these studies were cut. LDNR is still waiting for a formal letter from MMS stating that these funds are not forthcoming.

Pipeline Issues

There was much discussion about the issue of location of pipelines in potential sand borrow areas. How much do pipelines move during storms and, specifically, how much did they move during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita? What is the locational accuracy of the pipeline data in the

MMS databases? Does MMS get new information after storms from the operators on the amount of movement?

The issue of requiring removal of pipelines when they are abandoned was discussed. It was asked whether or not MMS could require removal of abandoned pipelines.

MMS does require a shallow hazards/cultural resource survey as a part of the lease agreement. They are considering updating the current requirements, which were based on oil and gas leases, based on a recent study. DNR encouraged MMS to update their requirements; DNR uses 50 m spacing and 100% overlap. These data could be used to further delineate actual pipeline locations. There was discussion about the timing of the hazards/cultural resources survey. It is needed as part of the NEPA process, so a preliminary survey is needed. But, it would be valuable to conduct the surveys shortly before actual dredging so that the true locations of identified targets are most current. This is an issue for OCS dredging projects that completed their hazards/cultural resources surveys prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Do they have to repeat these surveys because of the risk of shifts in positions of identified targets?

It was agreed that the MMS pipeline group need to become very involved in sand issues. They were requested to attend the next La SMWG meeting and make presentations on these issues.

Ancil Taylor of Bean said that dredgers do their own magnetometer surveys, for safety of their own people, prior to dredging in areas with known pipelines. They try to have a representative of the pipeline operator onboard. The actual locations of the pipelines are plotted on the onboard computers during dredging.

One possibility is having an "OCS One Call" system where the pipeline operators stake out their pipelines and have a representative onboard when dredging close to a pipeline.

PROJECT UPDATES

Pelican Island: NOAA Project Manager (Rachel Sweeney) could not attend, but MMS reported that once NOAA updated their Environmental Assessment, they would be ready to sign the lease. NOAA will still have to conduct a final feasibility assessment. No date was given for when the project might start.

[Whiskey West Flank](#): Chris Williams of DNR reported that they have completed all of their studies. MMS has a draft of a lease agreement ready for review and could be completed within about 60 days after notification to proceed. DNR is hoping that this project will be in the first tier of the CIAP projects. The best estimates now are that Whiskey Island project would start in 2008 or 2009 and use sand from Ship Shoal Block 88.

Barataria Basin Shoreline: Jennifer Beall, DNR, described the initial planning efforts to create a natural barrier shoreline in the Barataria Basin. They are doing the alternatives analysis for the Cominada Headland Reach to Shell Island Reach. They are looking at low/wide dunes, high/narrow dunes, hard structures, breakwaters, and terminal groins. River sand is a potential

source of sand for Shell Island. The schedule is a draft feasibility study by June 2006 and a final feasibility study by September 2006. Sand for the Cominada headland restoration would likely come from blocks 12/13 with WRDA funding in 2008.

Louisiana Coastal Area Comprehensive Plan: Tim Axtman, USACE, reported that the highest priority project was the Caminada Headland restoration, which was waiting for congressional funding, and they expect it to be part of the WRDA budget for funding in 2008. The rest of LCA projects will have to be evaluated in terms of the priorities of the near-term plan in light of the impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He said that sediment is at a premium, considering the needs of sand for levees. However, there are some concerns about the stability of a sand core in a levee that is overtopped by a surge. They are looking for higher levels of protection provided by surge reduction of any feature. They are improving the ability to predict storm surge reductions associated with different landscape features.

MMS asked for an update on projects considering the use of OCS and, including estimates of the amount of Federal OCS sand resources needed for restoration projects in Louisiana. Please send these data to jmichel@researchplanning.com.

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT/ENVIRONMENTAL EFFORTS UPDATES

Syed Khalil, LDNR, gave a progress report for MMS/LDNR Cooperative Resource Assessment Effort. This presentation is on the La SMWG website. He reviewed the data collected at blocks 12 and 13 which are candidate sites for sand needs at Cominada and Shell Island, and for Ship Shoal Blocks 88 and 89 which are candidate sites for sand for Whiskey Island. There are future plans for surveys of potential sand source areas west of the known Ship Shoal Blocks 88/89 sites. The plan calls for side-scan sonar at 0.25 mi spacing, for a total of 200 linear survey miles. (His presentation is on the La SMWG website.)

[DeWitt Braud](#) of LSU gave a presentation on the GIS data management tasks. They have made great progress in data automation and management. There is a need to have a standard data format for all data to be collected in the future. (His presentation is on the La SMWG website.)

The USGS announced that they have just launched a website where spatial data on nearshore sediments can be accessed at: <http://coastal.er.usgs.gov/lased/>. LASED contains as a layer the usSEABED data release for the GOM. usSEABED is a national seafloor-sediments database which is also accessible by IMS at: http://coastalmap.marine.usgs.gov/ArcIms/Website/usa/eastcoast/ecst_usseabed_2005/viewer.htm. A report on this GIS will be posted on the USGS website soon (DS-146). Also, UNO's Digital Coast website is available at: <http://www.ladigitalcoast.uno.edu>.

Greg Stone, LSU, gave a presentation on the physical long-term impact studies of Ship Shoal. Richard Condrey, LSU, gave a presentation on the biological studies of Ship Shoal. Preliminary results showed that blue crabs in berry have been found on Ship Shoal, indicating that the shoal may well be a spawning area for blue crabs, a fact not known before the study took place. Also, during periods of hypoxia, the shoal seems to serve as an area where shrimp take refuge. The

study plan had called for completion of pre-dredging studies, to be followed by post-dredging studies of the impact and recovery. However, there are no planned dredging actions on Ship Shoal in 2006 or 2007. The cruise schedule is being modified to reflect this situation and more pre-dredging seasonal samples will be collected. (Both of these presentations are on the La SMWG website.)

Allen Brooks, USGS/ENSR, gave a presentation of their studies of food web and stable isotopes of Ship Shoal. (His presentation is on the La SMWG website.)

Rob Nairn, Baird & Associates, Inc., gave a presentation of the results of their study on seafloor stability and setbacks for dredging adjacent to pipelines. There was discussion on how much these setback guidelines affect proposed projects, and the need for continued data evaluation as projects in the Gulf of Mexico are dredged. (His presentation is on the La SMWG website.)

SUMMARY/ACTION ITEMS

Project managers are requested to identify projects and provide estimates for the amount of OCS sand needed for planned projects.

MMS will request that the GOM office prepare a brief paper that would address the location of pipelines. The paper would cover routine MMS procedures for keeping track of pipelines, special procedures relating to storms and potential movements (e.g., NTL's requiring resurveying), a general description of experiences to date (e.g., pipelines have been observed to move as much as x miles in certain conditions) and suggestions for tailoring this information to be most useful for future decisionmaking on sand and gravel leasing and dredging.

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