



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Mississippi Valley Division



# Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report

May 19, 2009

## Eastern Tie-In *important link in HSDRRS*

**IER 13**  
*public comment*  
*period extended*  
*for two weeks,*  
*until June 1*

By Susan Spaht

**T**he Eastern Tie-In project is an important link in the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) being constructed by the Corps of Engineers. It is the section of the System that will connect the Hero Canal levee in the West Bank & Vicinity to the Mississippi River levee in Plaquemines Parish. Congress has authorized and funded the Corps to construct this portion of the HSDRRS.

The public comment period for the Eastern Tie-In project, also known as Individual Environmental Report 13 (IER 13), was set to close on May 4. It was extended to May 18, and **has now been extended to June 1.**



West Bank of the Mississippi River in portions of Jefferson, Orleans and Plaquemines Parishes, including areas east of the Algiers Canal in the vicinity of Hero Canal and Oakville. The reach from Hero Canal to the Mississippi River in the vicinity of Oakville is referred to as the **Eastern Tie-in.**

In its effort to construct the Eastern Tie-In

portion of the HSDRRS and bring it

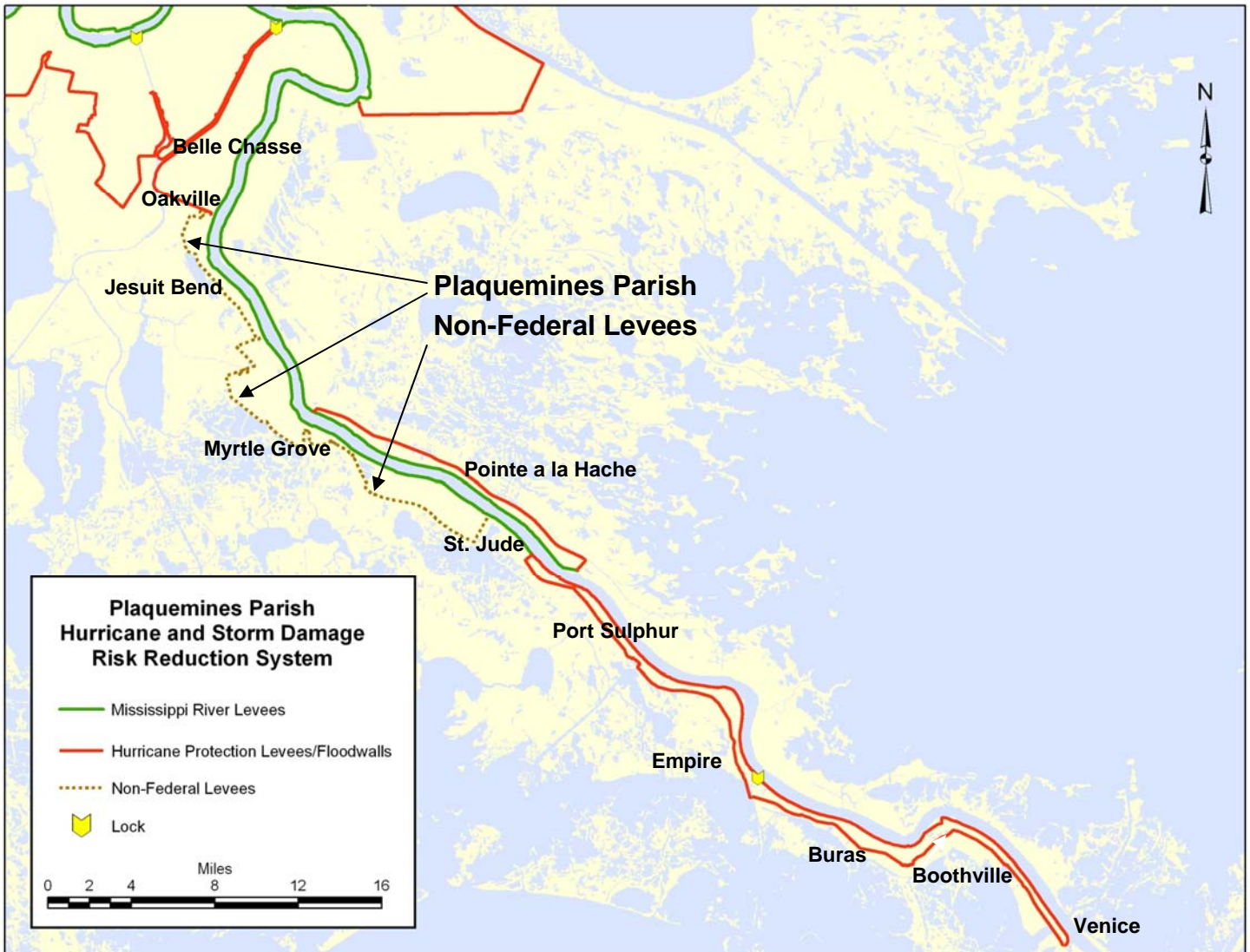
### A Chronology of the Eastern Tie-In

In 1996, Congress provided authorization, as well as the general location, for the Corps of Engineers to construct hurricane and storm damage risk reduction structures for the residents and businesses on the

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to the 100-year level of risk reduction, the Corps evaluated seven alternatives for the project that were presented at eight public meetings over the past two years. These alternatives proposed differing alignments that would: enlarge the existing levee along the northern bankline of the Hero Canal, enlarge the current earthen levee on the protected side, connect the levee to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway – West Closure Complex to the west, and “tie-in” to the Mississippi River Levee to the east in Plaquemines Parish. One of these alternatives proposed a

floodwall and Hwy. 23 bridge to provide risk reduction across Hwy. 23.

*Note: In 2006, Congress provided authorization and funding (\$670 million) for a second project to incorporate 34 miles of Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levees, from Oakville to just north of St. Jude, La., into the Federal system as part of the existing New Orleans to Venice project.*

After considering comments and suggestions received from area residents, stakeholders and partners, the Corps proposed Alternative 1 (see illustration, page 3) and, on April 3, opened Alternative 1 to a one-month public comment period,

scheduled to end on May 4. That has now been extended to June 1.

**Public Comment**

The Corps’ commitment to stakeholder involvement is part of the national Environmental Policy Act compliance efforts to provide opportunities for the public to participate in development of the hurricane risk reduction system.

“Public involvement is critical to everything we do,” said Col. Alvin Lee, Commander of the New Orleans District. “We accept comments from the public on our District Web site and

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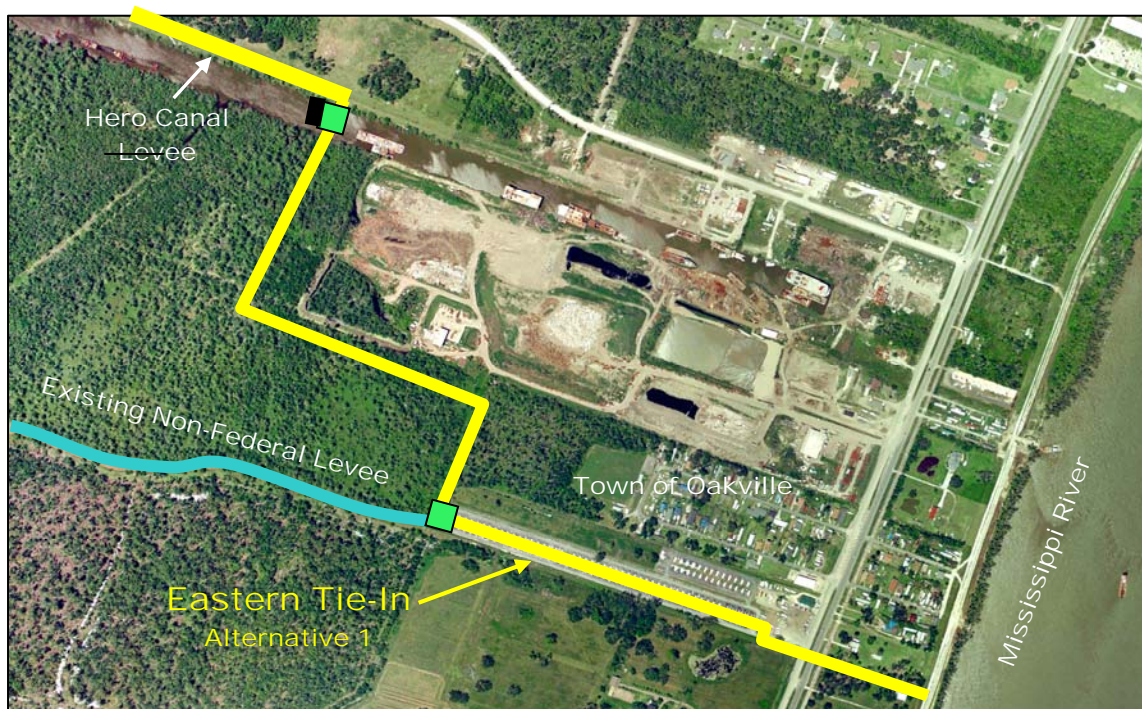
we hold public meetings to hear what the residents and stakeholders have to say about projects that affect their neighborhoods.”

After the first few public meetings with residents in the surrounding communities, the Corps’ project team made significant changes to the proposed risk reduction measures for the Eastern Tie-In project. “Our changes to the proposed action were based upon engineering requirements, avoidance of environmental and traffic impacts, and on the feedback offered by residents in the communities of Oakville and Belle Chasse, as well as other stakeholders,” said Ted Carr, Project Manager for the Eastern Tie-In project.

“In response to public comment, the proposal to construct a bridge along Highway 23 was reconsidered and changed to the construction of floodgates across the roadway which would be closed during a storm event.”

At public meetings on April 29 and May 4, residents of several communities below Oakville offered additional - and differing - comments to the proposed Alternative 1 actions. These residents and business owners voiced concerns about the height and location of the floodgate, and the possibility of induced surge and rainfall flooding south of Oakville. They

suggested the Corps consider inclusion and/or improvement of the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee into the 100-year program, and/or consider improved levees south of Oakville that provide 100-



year protection.

### “Not a done deal...”

Col. Lee attended and participated in both the April 29 and May 4 public meetings. He assured these parish residents that no final decision has yet been made on the Eastern Tie-In project and that he would consider their suggestions and concerns. “It’s not a done deal,” he said. Following the May 4 meeting, Col. Lee extended the comment period for the Eastern Tie-In project for two weeks, until May 18. He has now extended the comment period until **June 1**.

The Corps is still collecting comments from residents and stakeholders on IER 13, the Eastern Tie-In project, and Col. Lee is reviewing the comments and suggestions he

has received. The selected alternative, as well as any possible changes or additions, is not final until Col. Lee signs the Decision Record for IER 13.

### Learn More

To see a video on the seven original alternatives for the Eastern Tie-In, click on this link:

[http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps2/videos/easttiein/easttiein\\_video.asp](http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps2/videos/easttiein/easttiein_video.asp)

To view the New Orleans District home page, go to this link: <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/>

To learn more about IER 13, go to: <http://www.nolaenvironmental.gov>

### Questions & Answers on the Eastern Tie-In Project:

**Q. When will a decision be made on the preferred alignment for the Eastern Tie-In Levee (IER 13)?**

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**A.** IER 13 was released for public review on April 3, 2009. The public review period was for one month, or until May 4, 2009. After receiving requests for a time extension from residents of area communities, the Corps extended the review period by two weeks, to May 18, 2009. It is now extended until June 1. Review of the comments will include a decision on whether an addendum to IER 13 is necessary to address substantive comments. At the end of the public comment period, and after reviewing all comments, Col. Alvin Lee, the New Orleans District Commander, will make a decision on the proposed action.

**Q. What is the timeline for implementation of the selected alternative for IER 13?**

**A.** The Corps' number one priority is public safety. Their goal is to complete the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) for the greater New Orleans area in 2011. The Eastern Tie-In, IER 13, is an important link in the HSDRRS; the plan calls for IER 13 to be completed in that timeframe.

**Q. What other projects will the Eastern Tie-In levee connect with?**

**A.** The Eastern Tie-In levee project starts at the Hero Canal, connects to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway - West Closure Complex on the west, the Mississippi River levee on the east, and the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Project to the south.

**Q. What is the current plan for**

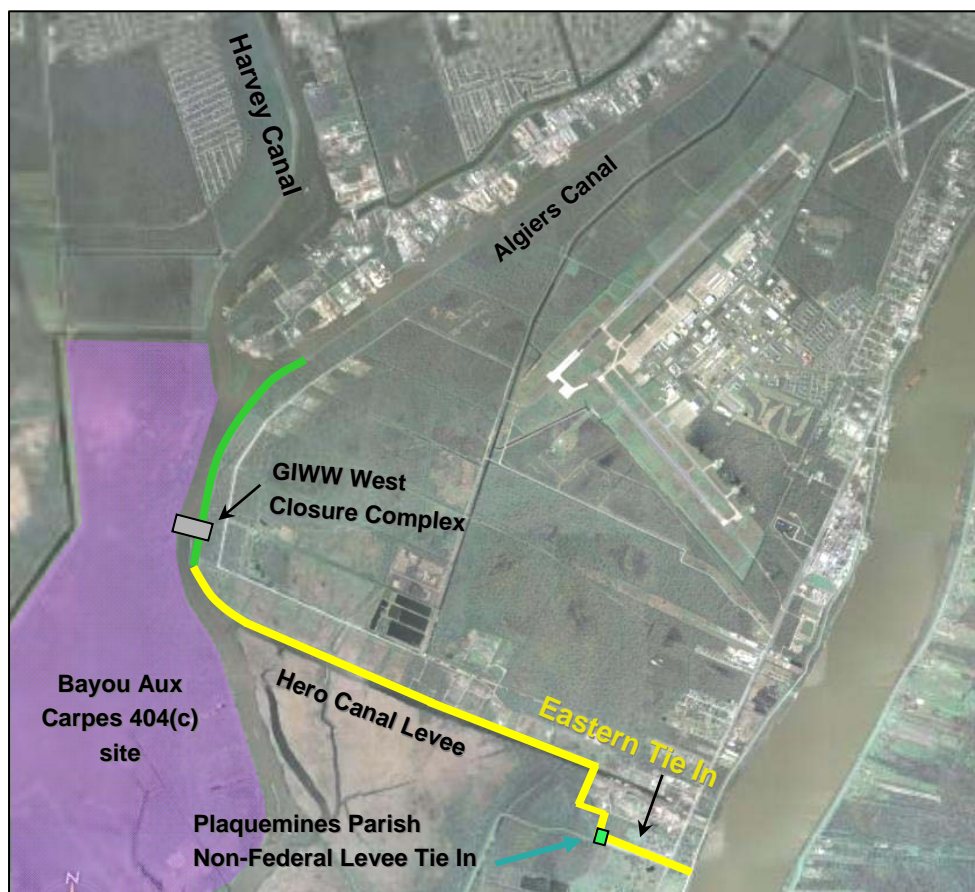
**providing a levee system below Oakville in Plaquemines Parish?**

**A.** Communities in Plaquemines Parish south of Oakville will have their risk reduced by construction of the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Project. This 100% Federally-funded project is currently undergoing a design study to determine the levee heights. The study is expected to be completed this summer. Construction is expected to be com-

pleted in 2013. funding from Congress. At this time, the Corps has neither the authorization nor the funding to do that.

**Q. What is the process for obtaining authorization to study the feasibility of constructing 100-year level risk reduction to the areas south of Oakville?**

**A.** Congress would have to authorize and provide funding for the Corps to study the feasibility of constructing



pleted in 2013.

**Q. Can the Corps include the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee into the Eastern Tie-In Levee project?**

**A.** Adding 34 miles of levees into to the existing project and bringing them up to the 100-year level would involve additional authorization and

100-year level risk reduction for that area.

To learn more about how this process works, click on this link: <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/Status%20Report%20Newsletters/September28.pdf>





# Getting Stronger!


## East and West Walls of Industrial Canal get improvements

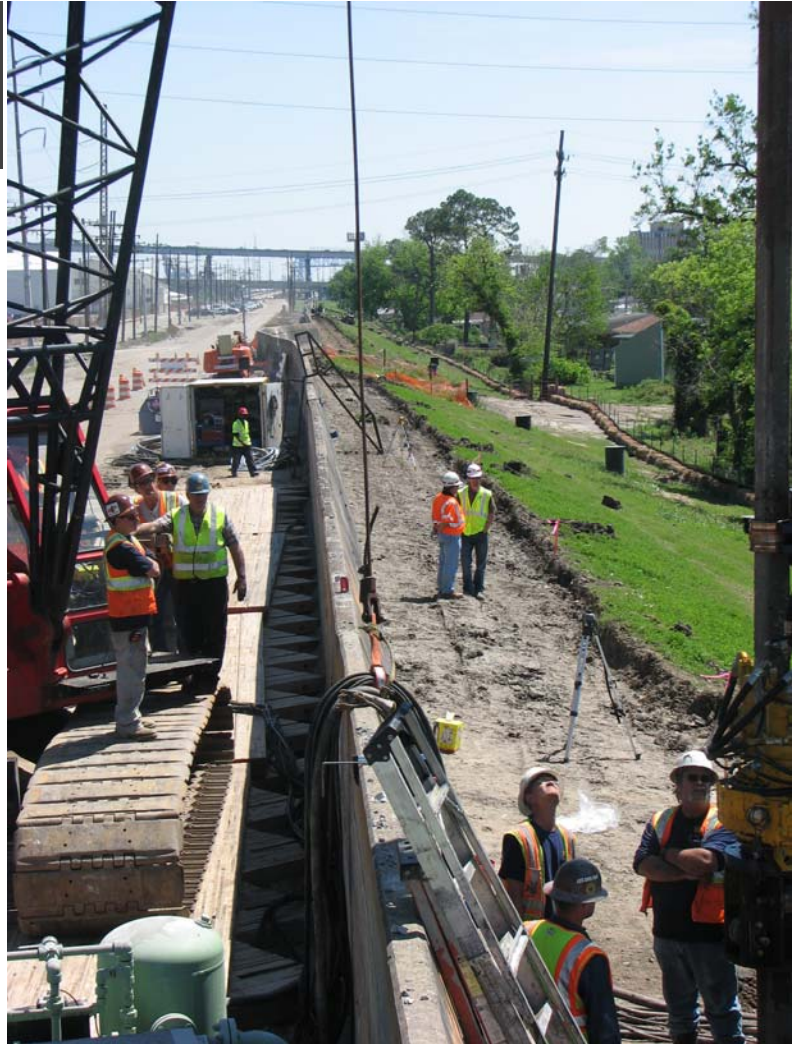
By Nancy Allen

**T**he U.S. Army Corps of Engineers awarded a \$2.19 million contract on May 5 to strengthen a 3,000-foot section on the East Wall of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) which will mitigate potential seepage and reduce the risk of storm damage to New Orleans East, metro New Orleans, the Ninth Ward and St. Bernard Parish.

The Corps awarded the contract to Progressive Construction Co., Inc, a Louisiana firm based in Lafayette. The 60-day contract calls for installing additional relief wells on the East Wall between Almonaster Boulevard and the Lakefront to prevent seepage by draining excess water from the subsurface sand layer.

In February, the Corps awarded a contract to bolster an 1,800-foot section of floodwall along the West Wall of the IHNC, the permanent solution for the temporary protection measures used during Hurricane Gustav. Deep soil mixing, a process in which cement and soil are combined to create columns, is under way and will be complete next month.

The Corps will issue a notice to proceed for the East Wall work within a few days, and construction will be complete in mid-July. 



IHNC West Wall deep soil mixing to strengthen levees





Corps releases document  
with proposed locations for

## *Permanent Pumps at the Outfall Canals*

Public comment period open  
for 30 days, until June 3



**On** May 4, the Corps of Engineers released a report detailing locations for permanent canal closures and pumps at the three outfall canals for a 30-day public review.

Individual Environmental Report (IER) 5, titled "Outfall Canal Closure Structures, Orleans and Jefferson Parishes," evaluates the potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed locations for the new permanent pump stations and closure structures at or near the mouths of the 17th Street, Orleans Avenue and London Avenue Canals.

The proposed action is to build three permanent gates and pump stations at the three outfall canals, as authorized and funded by Congress. The new pumps will operate in series

with the existing the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board pump stations.

Demolition and removal of the existing Interim Closure Structures would be required once construction of the new pump stations and closures structures is completed. The interim structures provide 100-year level risk reduction, but these structures have a limited project life. The new, permanent pump structures are planned for completion in 2013, coinciding with the obsolescence of the temporary structures.

The Corps is utilizing the design-build process for the permanent pump structures. During the design phase of the project, the Corps will engage the public for input and comment for each pump station. Written

or verbal comments on IER 5 must be submitted to the Corps by midnight Wednesday, June 3, 2009. Comments received during the public review period will become part of the official record.

The Corps is holding a public meeting on the proposed locations within IER 5:

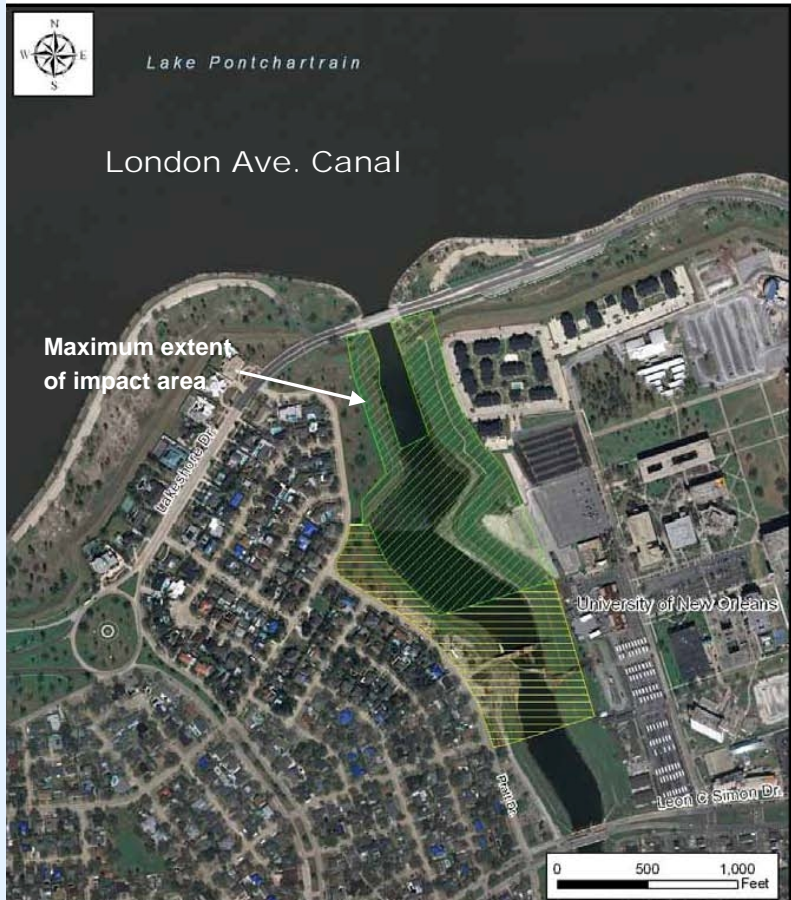
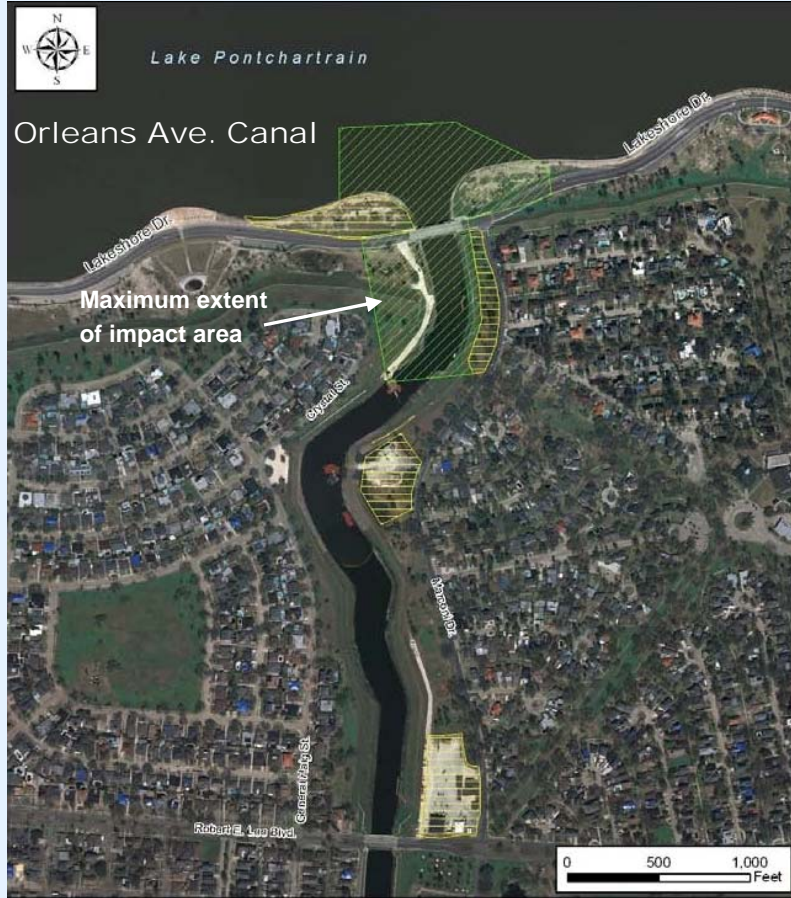
**Wednesday, May 20, 2009**

**St. Dominic's Church  
6363 Memphis Street  
New Orleans, LA 70124**

**Open house begins at 6:00 p.m.  
Presentation begins at 7:00 p.m.**

For more information on IER 5, visit this Web site: <http://www.nolaenvironmental.gov>

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The Status Report Newsletter supports the information program for Task Force Hope and its stakeholders.

It also serves as the primary tool for accurately transmitting the Corps' hurricane recovery work to stakeholders.

This is an online publication that is open to public distribution.

This issue and past issues can be found at: <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps>

Comments and questions may be sent to the

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[b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil](mailto:b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil)

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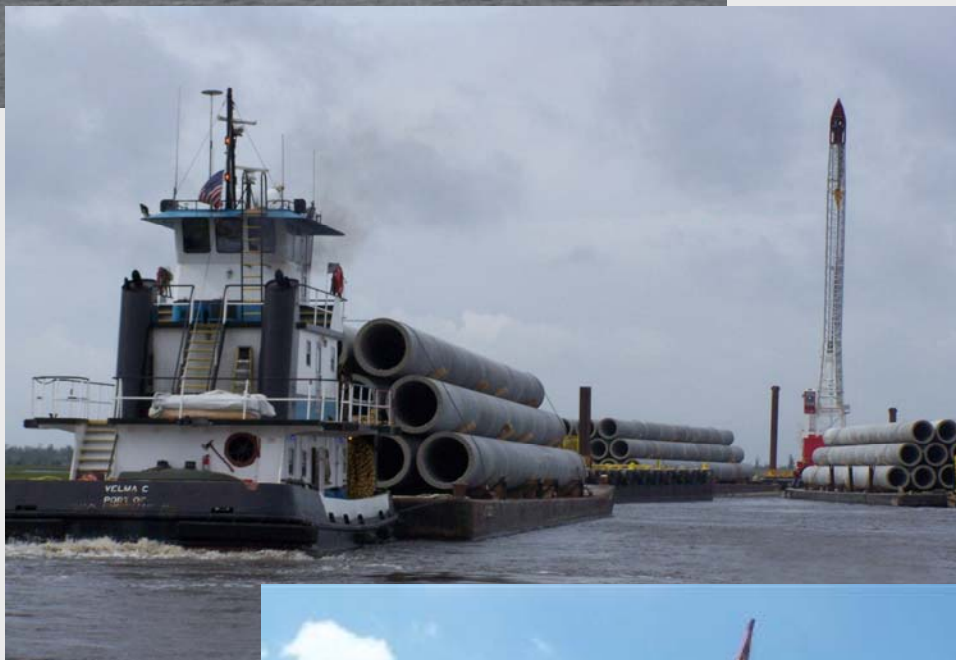
(504) 862-1949





*Gigantic spun-cast  
concrete piles  
make their way to*  
**IHNC Surge Barrier  
construction site**

**Strung-together  
spun-cast concrete piles  
being barged down the  
Mississippi River**



**Then heading  
out to the  
IHNC site**

***An Historic Moment:***

**The first spun-cast concrete  
pile is driven into place.**

**The 66" diameter pile,  
140 feet long, marks a very  
important construction  
milestone for the  
IHNC surge barrier project.**

Photos: USACE and Shaw

