



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report

November 15, 2006

Corps sets next Industry Forum for Nov. 29 - 30

Corps of Engineers hosting industry event to explain upcoming construction contracts

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District is hosting its second two-day Industry Forum Nov. 29 and 30, at the New Orleans Sheraton Hotel located at 500 Canal Street.

Purpose:

This two-day forum has been organized to discuss construction contracts and Architect and Engineering (A&E) projects to be potentially advertised and awarded within the next three to four months.

Projects include levee construction and repair, pump station renovation and repair, floodwall construction, and other hurricane protection type work in general.

Nov. 29:

The first day's meetings will provide information on the overall hurricane protection system in southeast Louisiana being developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District and the Hurricane Protection Office.

There will be presentations during the afternoon session by senior project managers who will discuss specific information such as upcoming project schedules, features, locations, etc. These presentations will focus on levee and floodwall



A significant number of construction contracts will be awarded in the next three to four months by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The work will involve levee construction and repair, pump station renovation and repair, floodwall construction, and other hurricane protection work. (USACE Photo)

projects for St. Charles, Jefferson, St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parishes. There will also be information presented regarding projects relating to interior drainage improvements (SELA) in all New Orleans area parishes.

There will be a separate breakout session after the general session to discuss issues relating to the supply of construction materials such as levee borrow and foundation piles.

Nov. 30:

The morning session on the second day will provide information on the current status of A&E contracts; teaming or partnering agreements such as the Mentor Protégé program, Joint Ventures Agreements and Prime/Sub relationships; as

well as an update on the upcoming Recovery Field Office (RFO) contracts such as debris.

The afternoon session will follow the same format as the first day with discussions of project specific information by the senior project managers. The presentations on the second afternoon will be focused on levee and floodwall projects

Continued on page 2

Also in this issue:

- . **Communications Improvements.....Page 2**
- . **Faces of Hope.....Page 3**
- . **Pump Capacity..... Page 4**


Forum, continued from page 1

for Orleans Parish; larger more complex projects pertaining to permanent pumping stations, major floodgates, and concrete floodwalls; as well as discussions of non-hurricane protection related projects routinely handled by the New Orleans District.

There will be a separate breakout session during the afternoon to discuss Joint Ventures Agreements/Mentor Protégé program and issues relating to the design and construction of major structures.

The Corps of Engineers has not blocked any rooms for this event but the hotel has agreed to offer the government rate of \$148.00/night to anyone wishing overnight accommodations. Simply reference the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Industry Day Forum when making a reservation.

This announcement may also be viewed and printed from the New Orleans District website at <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/> You can then click on the "Contracts" tab and then the paragraph at the top that starts, "Attention: The New Orleans District will be hosting..."

Registration forms, obtainable on the New Orleans District website, can be e-mailed to the New Orleans District Office of Small Business Programs at mvdindustryday@yahoo.com Questions concerning the Industry Day Forum can be directed to the same e-mail address. 



New construction contracts will involve collection and transportation of needed borrow material. (USACE Photo)

Communications improvements top priority with Corps of Engineers

By Susan Spaht

When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast with a vengeance in 2005, the New Orleans District Corps of Engineers, like other local emergency operations service providers, found its communications systems were not as reliable as it thought. After the storm, the Corps of Engineers made it a top priority to correct the inadequacies in their system.

"Prior to Hurricane Katrina we had redundancies (back-ups) set up in our emergency operations," said Mike Lowe, the Corps' Emergency Manager, "but each system had its limitations." Although the Corps is using many of the same systems to communicate, "we've added more reliability to them."

During the emergency period after the storm, Lowe said he noticed that people who had out-of-area cell phones continued to have service while 504 area code subscribers lost their connections. "All of our emergency personnel now have out-of-area cell phones."

More Corps workers are equipped with Blackberrys now too. And they are practicing with the new Pin-to-Pin communication process which doesn't rely on a local server. Additionally, the Blackberrys are equipped with SMS text messaging to communicate with non-Blackberry cell phones.

The Corps of Engineers has reconfigured its generators to power certain areas of its buildings. So if power is lost, the Corps' strategic areas will retain power and AC as well as computers and communication.

The Corps is also in the process of installing VoIP telephones which work through the internet in a seamless manner. This is another major improvement.



Mike Lowe

CORPS OF ENGINEERS' COMMUNICATIONS IMPROVEMENTS

	<u>Pre-Katrina</u>	<u>Post-Katrina</u>
Land lines	limited	limited
Cell phones	local area code	out-of-area code
Blackberry	limited number in use	more in use plus Pin-to-Pin capability, and SMS text messaging added
Internet	Single points of failure	Re-designed network for redundant paths, added COOP*
Radio	limited 700 MHz	700-800 MHz, now at multiple locations throughout the District
Satellite phones	very limited quantity	many more in use throughout the District

**duplicates all server data at off-site location*

Faces of Hope

By Susan Spaht

Michelle Marceaux has been with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for 26 years, 16 of those in New Orleans. Even though Marceaux had worked her way up the ladder of government service for 10 years in Washington, D.C. – including one year with an Assistant Secretary of the Army at the Pentagon - “I had to start over at the bottom when I moved to New Orleans,” she said.

She started as Division Secretary in the Real Estate Division of the New Orleans District and worked her way up to Realty Specialist in the Appraisal and Planning Branch. For 12 years Marceaux worked in Planning...until Hurricane Katrina struck.

Editor's Note: These days, most people on the Gulf Coast, when discussing their lives and their work, use the terms “Pre-Katrina” and “Post-Katrina” because everything was changed in some way by the gigantic storm.

When asked to describe her work with the Corps of Engineers, Marceaux explained, “Pre-Katrina, I prepared real estate planning reports to accompany feasibility study reports.” Then she added, “Post-Katrina my job evolved into something very different.”

Pre-Katrina: Working directly with project managers, Marceaux was responsible for researching and compiling information and preparing the real estate planning documents required for the Corps of Engineers to lease or buy land for planned Corps projects.

Her job was to gather information on a piece of property such as: location of land, amount of acreage, number of land owners, cost estimate, description of property, types of easements, environ-

“ Post - Katrina my job evolved into something very different....” - Michelle Marceaux



Michelle Marceaux, who is with the Corps of Engineers' Real Estate Division, measures a house on Mirabeau Ave. near the London Ave. Canal. The house was badly damaged by Hurricane Katrina. (USACE Photo)

mental investigation, oyster leases, facility or utility involved, etc.

“There is a lot of information needed before the Corps can lease or buy a plot of land that is needed for Corps work,” said Marceaux, “a lot of research is involved, and it must be accurate.”

It also takes time....sometimes a long time.

Post-Katrina: “My family was very fortunate....our house had only minor wind damage after the storm, nothing serious. So I was one of the first ones in the Real Estate Division to report back to work after the storm,” she said.

Marceaux was assigned to Task Force Guardian, the Corps' immediate hurricane repair team. Her assigned area: St. Bernard Parish. “We were all answering the phones trying to help hurricane victims, and working with the Project Managers who were running things in the

field” she explained.

“My job had switched from planning to acquisition, and I was getting a lot of on-the-job training. That was the first time I assisted in commandeering a piece of property.”

But it wouldn't be the last time, as Marceaux was to find out.

Immediately following the hurricane, the Corps of Engineers was under emergency conditions. Crews were unwatering the city, bringing ice and water to stranded people and, of course, restoring the levees. “We had to get our equipment on to private property quite often at that time,” Marceaux explained, “and we didn't have time to find evacuated property owners to get permission to use their property. We were in a state of emergency.”

Since Marceaux is the Real Estate repre-

Continued on page 4

Marceaux, continued from page 3

sentative assigned to St. Bernard Parish, she was – and still is – assisting with commandeering of property in that parish. It is often difficult to locate property documentation in St. Bernard Parish since the courthouse was badly damaged during the hurricane, and many records were damaged or destroyed.



Michelle Marceaux

“Verifying property ownership for commandeered properties in St. Bernard Parish can be very difficult,” said Marceaux. “All the property records were damaged prior to 1986. Some are just not available. And this is the main hold-up in getting compensation to landowners in a timely manner, but we are doing everything we can to expedite the process.”

Marceaux is currently working with St. Bernard elected officials and willing property owners to collect borrow material (clay needed for building levees), and also to secure properties to stock pile construction equipment and materials, and to gain access to private property for future levee work.

“The elected officials in St. Bernard have been working very closely with us,” said Marceaux, “because everyone knows the necessity and urgency of getting the levee system re-built as fast as possible.”



Michelle Marceaux discusses property boundaries with two St. Bernard Parish property owners. (USACE Photo)

Pump Capacity Report



17th Street Canal.....4,060 cfs
 London Ave. Canal....2,800 cfs
 Orleans Ave. Canal... 2,200 cfs

As of Nov. 15, 2006

Note: The Status Report Newsletter will give weekly reports on the pump capacity of the three temporary outfall canals under construction.

For more details, please visit this website:

<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/pumpcomp.htm>

Corps of Engineers to make appearances on local TV

Corps representatives will appear on upcoming episodes of “A Greater New Orleans—Road to Recovery” on WLAE-TV, a PBS affiliate seen on Cox channel 14 and local channel 32.

NOV. 21

Greg Breerwood,
 Chief of Project Management

NOV. 28

Col. Richard Wagenaar,
 Commander, New Orleans District,
 Corps of Engineers.

DEC. 12

Dan Hitchings,
 Director of Task Force Hope.

Corps of Engineers awards three contracts to local businesses

1. Emergency generator installations at Pump Station No. 6, to Reeves Electrical Services, Pierre Part, La. for \$2,594,000.
2. Repairs to five different Pump Stations, to Crown Roofing Services, Kenner, La., for \$84,013.
3. Repairs at Elmwood Pump Station, to Crown Roofing Services, Kenner, La., for \$67,938.

Contact Information

Topic	Phone	Organization
New Orleans District work	(504) 862-2201	New Orleans District Public Affairs
Task Force Hope - Overall hurricane protection system restoration, repair and improvement	(504) 862-1836	Task Force Hope Public Affairs
Debris Removal in Louisiana	(504) 681-2317	Louisiana Recovery Field Office

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 hurricane recovery work to stakeholders. This is an online publication and open to public distribution. This issue and past issues can be found at: www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps

Comments and questions may be sent to the Status Report Newsletter editor at: b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil

Status Report Newsletter
 Task Force Hope
 Public Affairs Office MVD-FWD
 7400 Leake Ave., Room #388
 New Orleans, LA 70118
 (504) 862-1688

The Status Report Newsletter is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers or the Department of the Army.