

**Colonel Peter J. Rowan  
Mississippi River Commission  
Low Water Inspection  
August 23, 2002  
Houma, Louisiana**

*Final*

**SLIDE**

**PRINT**

1. Corps seal

2. Photo: aerial of  
Houma, LA  
Bullet: MRC Low  
Water Inspection,  
Houma, LA,  
August 23, 2002

Good morning, Gen. Arnold, members of the Mississippi River Commission and distinguished guests. As New Orleans district engineer, it is my pleasure to present the status of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project and associated programs in the New Orleans District.

3. Graphic: Topics:  
\*River Stages  
\*Funding Program  
\*MR&T Studies  
\*MR&T Projects  
\*Coastal Restoration

These are the topics I'll be covering this morning ...

4. Graphic: Topics:  
\***River Stages**  
\*Funding Program  
\*MR&T Studies  
\*MR&T Projects  
\*Coastal Restoration

5. Graphic: Total Latitude Flows

...and I'll begin with river stages in the New Orleans District since the high water inspection trip back in March.

At the latitude of Old River, total flows crested just above 1.5 million cfs on June 7. Since then, stages and flows have fallen rapidly; however, the forecast calls for a slight rise over the next week.

6. Graphic: Crest Stages

7 Jun 02	1935-2000		
<i>(last signi. crest)</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Avg.</i>	
RRL	54.9	60.3	35.8
BR	38.0	43.7	22.6
NO	15.5	17.6	9.2
Sim	35.4	48.3	5.8
MC	6.3	9.1	0.9

Shown here are the corresponding June crest stages at various locations on the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers. Today (August 23) the total combined discharge of the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers at the latitude of Old River is 313,000 cfs. The average discharge for this date is 366,000 cfs.

7. Graphic: Saltwater wedge

As is typical during low water periods, a saltwater wedge is progressing upstream from the Gulf of Mexico. It is currently located at Mile 45 above head of passes in the vicinity of Bohemia. We will continue to monitor its progress.

8. Photos (2): ORC,  
Auxiliary structure;  
Atch Basin back  
swamp, west side

In early May, Governor Foster requested an increase in flows through the Old River Complex to alleviate water quality problems and the potential for large crawfish and fish kills in the Atchafalaya Basin. General Arnold approved a deviation to the water control plan to increase flows through Old River by two percent to a rate of 32 percent beginning on May 10<sup>th</sup>. This deviation continued until June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Then on June 12<sup>th</sup> the flow was decreased by two percent to a rate of 28% in order to bring the cumulative percent back to 30. The deviation continued until July 17<sup>th</sup>. This regulation change increased Atchafalaya River stages by about 1.8 feet at Simmesport and 0.8 feet at the Butte (pron. beaut) LaRose gage.

9. Graphic: 70/30

We are currently maintaining the 70/30-flow distribution between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers as mandated by legislation. The cumulative percent since January 1 is 29.996.

10. Graphic: Topics:  
\*River Stages  
**\*Funding Program**  
\*MR&T Studies  
\*MR&T Projects  
\*Coastal Restoration

11. Graphic: NOD  
FY 2002 Program

Bullet:

\$370 M Regular  
Appropriations  
\$15 M Other Programs  
CAP, PAS, FCCE  
\$25 M Local Interests  
\$25 M Coastal Restoration  
\$1 M Support for Others

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\$436 M (Total)

Our plan in FY 2002 is to expend \$370 million dollars for regular appropriations and \$15 million on other programs, such as small construction projects. We estimate another \$25 million in local interests' non-federal funds, \$25 million in Breaux Act funds and \$1 million on projects we manage in cooperation with other agencies. This brings our anticipated total FY 2002 program to \$436 million. We anticipate expending \$365 million on regular appropriations and obligating 99 percent of available funds this fiscal year.

12. Graphic: Topics:

- \*River Stages
- \*Funding Program
- \***MR&T Studies**
- \*MR&T Projects
- \*Coastal Restoration

13. Graphic:  
Morganza to the Gulf  
Study map

And now for our MR&T study efforts. We are currently managing four studies. The boundaries of the first one, Morganza to the Gulf, are shown on this slide.

14. Graphic:  
Morganza to Gulf,  
Hwy. 57 Alignment

The purpose of the Morganza study is to provide hurricane protection to portions of Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes from Bayou DuLarge (pro. BY-you Due LARGE) to the Larose to Golden Meadow levee. A feasibility report recommending construction of a levee system was approved by the MRC in April 2002. The Chief of Engineers signed the report this morning. It will be forwarded to Congress for authorization in the upcoming Water Resources Development Act of 2002.

15. Map: Houma Canal  
(200'w, 1,200'l, 15'd)

A prominent feature of the Morganza to the Gulf study is the Houma Navigation Canal Lock. Detailed design is progressing with construction beginning in FY 05.

16. Graphic:  
Alexandria to the Gulf of Mexico map  
(19 miles of channel;  
2 control structures)

In our second study, we are addressing flooding in a 1,700-square-mile area extending through nine parishes from Alexandria to the Gulf of Mexico. When funding is available we will execute a feasibility cost sharing agreement with DOTD and Gravity Drainage District No. 1 of Rapides (pron. rah PEEDS) Parish.

17. Graphic:  
Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico map  
Photo: aerial, Luling

Our third study area, Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico, is now underway. Its main feature is a hurricane protection levee extending from Larose in Lafourche Parish to the vicinity of Luling in St. Charles Parish. Other features include a structure in Bayou Des Allemands (pro. BY-you Des ALLAH muns), interior drainage improvements and environmental enhancements.

18. Graphic: Lower Atchafalaya Basin Study map  
Photo: aerial, Atch levee system

We expect to submit a draft report to division on a fourth study, Reevaluation of the Lower Atchafalaya, next month. The study looks at continued raising of the levees in the Atchafalaya, a barrier plan to prevent backwater flooding, and recommendations for an additional study under an environmental authority for a jetty system in Cote Blanche Bay.

19. Graphic: Topics:

- \*River Stages
- \*Funding Program
- \*MR&T Studies
- \***MR&T Projects**
- \*Coastal Restoration

20. Graphic: MR  
levee mileage chart

Total: 512  
Comp FY00: 495  
Ongoing: 0  
Remaining: 17

And now for construction progress on the Mississippi River levee system in the New Orleans District. We are 97% complete and have 17 miles of work remaining. Currently, we have no ongoing construction projects.

21. Photo: Baton  
Rouge Front, Phase II  
Bullet: FY03 contract  
to be awarded

Pending the identification of an appropriate borrow area, we will award a contract on the Baton Rouge Riverfront next fiscal year.

22. Alhambra/Hohen  
Solms Levee

And plans are underway to relocate a cemetery discovered during a cultural resources survey on the Alhambra-Hohen Solms (pro. Al HAHM bra – HOE-en SEWMS) levee project, located south of Baton Rouge.

23. Photo: Angola  
construction

Above Baton Rouge, FY 03 funds will be used to complete the final levee enlargement at the Louisiana State Penitentiary.

24. Photo: WABPL-  
95

Bullet: Atch Basin  
levees (mi)  
Completed: 388  
Remaining: 61  
Total: 449

These numbers show our levee progress in the Atchafalaya Basin, where we're about 93% physically complete.

25. Graphic: FY02

Atch contracts

**Completed (3):** W46/64, MC/B#1 & Wax Lake East Drainage Structure

**Ongoing (3):** East Bayou Sale-Gordy, West Bayou Sale-Maryland, and Todd Levee and Pump Station

Here are the locations of our work in the basin in FY 02. Three contracts were completed earlier this fiscal year and are shown in red. We have ongoing contracts on the East and West Bayou Sale (pro. BY-you Sally) levees and at the Todd Levee and Pump Station.

26. Graphic: FY03,

Atch contracts

**To be awarded (8):**

Melville Front & Ring Levee; Krotz Springs Front & Ring Levee; W-52 Levee; E-69/73 Levee; Wax Lake Outlet West Levee; Wax Lake West Drainage Structure; Simmesport Boat Launch; and West Bayou Sale North Bend Levee

Next fiscal year we plan to award eight contracts at these locations.

27. Photo (2):

Dredging in the Atch River; tug transporting an oil industry related structure

As many of you are aware, we have a problem with fluff in the Atchafalaya River Bar Channel. The district has contracted with the Corps' Waterways Experiment Station to evaluate the effects of fluff on the channel and to find ways to improve its long-term operability. In addition to other measures and in conjunction with the study, the district began placing material on the west side of the channel with the start of dredging activities begun on August 21. This is a demonstration project that will be monitored and applied to the study.

28. Graphic, map

Hwy 70, Lake

Palourde, LA

and

Photo: completed

Phase 1 work

Also in the basin, we are nearing completion on shoreline protection work along LA Hwy 70 at Lake Palourde. We have created a 46-acre zone between the lake and the highway, the only major hurricane evacuation route from Morgan City north.

29. Super: Atch Basin  
Bullet:  
\*Water Mgmt Units  
\*Recreation

We continue to advance in our planning and design of water management units and recreation features in the Atchafalaya.

30. Photo: Buffalo  
Cove

Our goals in FY 03 are to begin construction on the Buffalo Cove Water Management Unit and initiate planning on the Flat Lake Water Management Unit.

31. Photo of Lake  
End Park

Another effort is focused on Lake End Park at Morgan City. We have completed a site layout in preparation for the engineering and design phase.

32. Photo of master  
plan

And preliminary planning is underway for an interpretive center across from the park. We are collaborating with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, St. Mary Parish, Morgan City and other stakeholders.

33. Photo: generic  
boating activity in  
Atch...

Additionally, we are in the planning and design phase for boat landings and associated improvements at the five sites shown.

Bullet: Future boat  
landings and  
improvements  
\*Bayou Pigeon in  
Iberville Parish  
\*Bayou Sorrell in  
Iberville Parish  
\*Krotz Springs in St.  
Landry  
\*Butte LaRose in St.  
Martin Parish  
\*Myette Point in St.  
Mary Parish



34. Graphic: Pie chart  
50K/338K

Progress on our acquisition work in the basin is ongoing. To date, the Corps has purchased more than 47,000 acres and negotiated perpetual rights on about 144,000 acres.

35. Super: Channel  
Improvement  
Bullet:  
381 authorized  
362 completed  
19 remaining

As for the district's channel improvement program, we've constructed just over 362 miles, making revetment work about 95% complete on the Mississippi River. No new revetment work is planned this year; however, we are scheduled to maintain existing revetments.

36. Photo: Stone  
foreshore protection  
Miles Auth 160  
Miles compl: 142  
Total remaining: 18

Foreshore protection, part of the channel improvement program, continues with .3 miles underway on the right descending bank at Willswood.

37. Photo: generic  
revetment work on  
Atch R.

On the Atchafalaya, we'll construct a total of 1.5 miles of revetment on the left descending bank of Jacoby (pro. Jah CO bee); on the left bank of an upstream and downstream extension of the Mercier (pro. MUR sir) revetment; and on the right bank at Berwick.

38. Graphic: Atch  
Basin Bank  
Stabilization (Miles)  
Completed: 55  
Schl'd this Year: 1.5  
Remaining: 5.5  
Total: 62

Completion of this work will leave a little more than 5.5 miles of the presently authorized 62 miles of required Atchafalaya revetment to be constructed.

39. Graphic: Topics:

\*River Stages

\*Funding Program

\*MR&T Studies

\*MR&T Projects

\***Coastal**

**Restoration**

40. Photo:

scenic/generic of  
coastal land loss

My final topic this morning addresses the district's current efforts, together with the state and other federal agencies, in combating Louisiana's coastal land loss.

41. Davis Pond FWD  
Project

A major step forward in coastal restoration took place on July 18 when the gates of the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion structure were opened allowing Mississippi River flows into the Barataria Basin. Diverting fresh water is considered a critical element and an important tool in restoring the coast.

42. Photo: Channel  
Armor Gap Crevasse  
Bullet:

100 cost share agmts

50 proj completed

12 proj under const

2 proj schld FY 02

18 proj schld FY 03

The district is also working closely with our partners on restoring Louisiana's coast through the Breaux Act. This slide gives you the current status of projects. When all of these Breaux Act projects are built, they will restore, create or protect more than 102,000 acres of coastal wetlands.

43. Photo: Beneficial dredge disposal in Barataria Bay Waterway at Dupre Cut  
Bullet:  
\*La Coastal Area (LCA) Feasibility Study  
\*Barataria Basin Eco-system Restoration—Marsh Creation Report

Unfortunately, there is still a large disparity between the acres gained under present efforts and the trends of loss. Therefore, the Corps and the state are engaged in a significant ecosystem restoration effort entitled the Louisiana Coastal Area, or LCA, study. There are three on-going feasibility studies. The first, Marsh Creation for the Barataria Basin, is in review and will be completed next year.

44. Photo: Timbalier Island Barrier shoreline restoration proj.  
Bullet:  
\*Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) Feasibility Study  
\*Barataria Basin Eco-system Restoration—Shoreline Restoration Report

The second is the Barrier Shoreline study, also in the Barataria Basin. It, too, is scheduled for completion next year.

45. Map: LCA Comprehensive Study area

The third, the Comprehensive Study, was initiated this spring and will address restoration coast-wide. The current project is estimated at \$14 billion dollars. Studies are being accomplished at an accelerated rate by a multi-agency collocated team. In addition, a Framework Development Team has been formed to involve stakeholders in formulating a final plan. A programmatic project recommendation will be presented to Congress for authorization under WRDA 04.

46. West Vermilion Bay  
Bullet: LCA  
Advisory Task Force & Gov's Commission on Coastal Restoration

Because of the magnitude of Louisiana's coastal restoration efforts and its national significance, action is being taken to form a Federal Advisory Task Force. This Task Force would include representatives of federal agencies at the Washington level as well as state representatives. The Governor announced this month that Mr. King Milling would chair the Governor's Commission on the Future of Coastal Louisiana. The commission would work closely with the Corps and Task Force.

47. Photo: (aerial)  
N.O. CBD

That about wraps up the current status of projects in the New Orleans District.

48. Photo: aerial,  
Houma

As always, I'd like to recognize and thank the levee districts and state and local representatives who work closely with us to ensure the continued safety and prosperity for the citizens of south Louisiana.

49. Seal Obverse

Thank you.

50. NOD mission map

*Used for reference by the public in the follow-up statements.*