



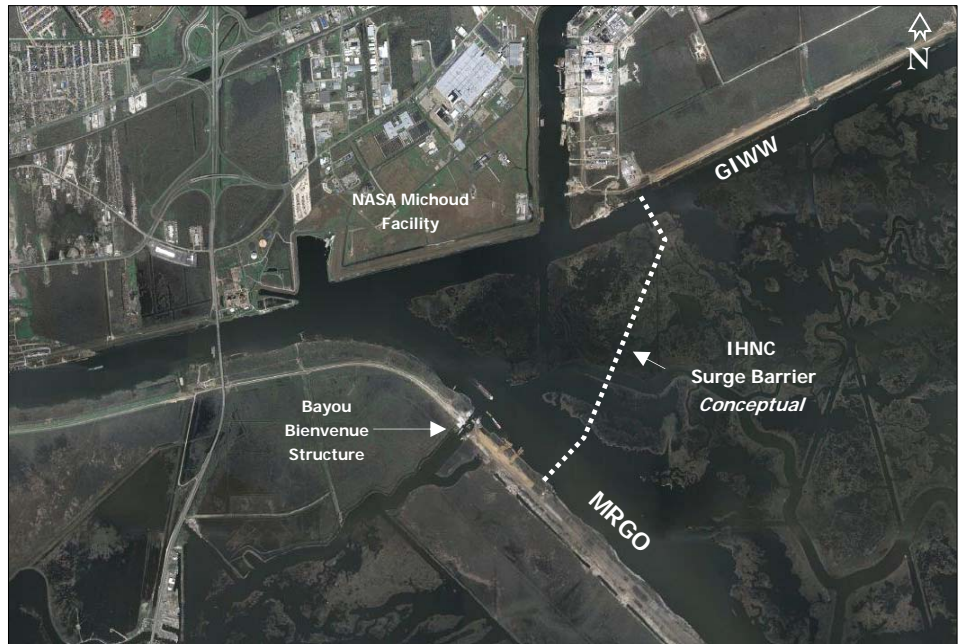
'Advance Measures' Will Reduce Risk at IHNC

Citizens of New Orleans, New Orleans East and St. Bernard Parish to get advanced level of protection before completion of 2011 IHNC permanent structure

By Susan Spaht

Several months ago, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced its plan to issue a design-build contract to provide storm surge protection for the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC)/Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). The Corps eventually selected the four most qualified companies to compete for the final contract award. At an estimated cost in excess of \$500 million, this contract will be the largest design-build civil works project in Corps of Engineers history. The IHNC surge protection barrier, part of the 100-year Hurricane Protection System, is planned for completion by June 2011.

Knowing that the massive barrier project would take several years to complete, local sponsors, community groups and elected officials asked the Corps to find a way to reduce risk to the area prior to completion of



This satellite photo shows a conceptual location of the 100-year surge protection barrier for the IHNC area. The permanent structure will be completed by 2011 with Advance Measures expected to provide interim protection for the area by the 2009 hurricane season. (USACE illustration by Erich Soraghan)

the 100-year protection barrier.

"The first responsibility of the Corps of Engineers is public safety and risk reduction," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope. "Simultaneous to planning the permanent surge protection structure for the IHNC, a special team of engineers began working to define a means of providing as much surge protection as possible in advance of completion of the 100-year storm surge barrier. We are pleased to announce that we have found a way to

do that. We have added an **Advance Measures requirement** to the original contract."

According to Ron Elmer, Branch Chief for Hurricane Protection on the IHNC, "Awarding a separate contract

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Looking east, this aerial photo shows the confluence of the GIWW (left) and MRGO (right) with Lake Borgne in the background. This is one of the anticipated locations of the IHNC 100-year barrier structure. (USACE Photo by Scott Riecke)

for interim protection for the area could have adversely affected the construction timeline and the physical ability of constructing the permanent solution because of the location of the structures and all the requirements inherent in the process.”

Many considerations had to be taken into account by the Corps for the permanent surge barrier contract to go forward. Among those were: navigation, environmental requirements, real estate acquisition, project feasibility, time constraints and cost. If the Corps were to award a separate contract for an interim solution for storm surge protection for the IHNC, these considerations – which are required by law - could possibly take as long as the permanent protection structure to be completed. By including the Advance Measures requirement in the original contract, the Corps

has made it possible for one contract to be awarded for both interim protection and the permanent solution, meeting its goal of providing an advanced level of protection to the area before 2011.

The Advance Measures requirement to the original Request for Proposal (RFP) requires the company that receives the IHNC design/build contract to provide increased protection and reduced risk from storm surge by 2009.

Both the Advance Measures and permanent solution will protect the area by restricting or stopping storm surge from Lake Borgne during a hurricane event.

“There has already been a substantial amount of rehabilitation done to the IHNC area,” said Elmer. “We have reduced ‘stick-up’ of floodwalls

(which increases stability), raised all earthen levees and added scour protection for over-topping.”

A short list of firms has already been identified to receive the IHNC Permanent Protection RFP. They are:

- **Kiewit Federal Group, Inc.** of Arlington, VA;
- **Shaw Environmental & Infrastructure, Inc.** of New Orleans;
- **Tetra Tech EC, Inc.** of Morris Plains, NJ; and
- **Washington Group International, Inc./Interbeton, Inc.**, a Joint Venture, from Boise, ID.

The design-build construction contract for the 100-year level of protection is scheduled to be awarded by Spring 2008. Construction on the Advance Measures is expected to begin in Summer 2008.



Lake Pontchartrain & Vicinity Levee Projects will strengthen floodwalls, raise levees



This aerial photo shows levees and floodwalls along Lake Pontchartrain at London Ave. Canal. The Corps of Engineers recently awarded three contracts to improve structures along the lake. (USACE Photo by Paul Floro)

WHAT

The Corps of Engineers plans to raise levees and strengthen floodwalls for the Orleans Parish Lakefront from the 17th Street Canal Outfall Structure to the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC).

WHEN

The three Phase 1 contracts described below are scheduled to be completed prior to the peak of hurricane season 2008. Subsequent construction contracts to strengthen or replace floodwalls and floodgates and to raise road ramps to 100-year levels are scheduled to be completed by June 1, 2011.

WHERE

The following is a breakdown for each of the three Phase 1 construction contracts:

LPV102.01 - Topaz Street to Orleans Canal. Contract includes increasing the height of existing levees, removing the Topaz Street flood gate and permanently closing Topaz Street. A construction

contract was awarded on September 24 to Merrick Construction Company, in the amount of \$1,094,750.00 and construction is underway.

LPV103.01 - Orleans Canal to London Avenue Canal. Contract includes increasing the height of levees and reinforcing portions of existing floodwalls. A contract will be awarded at the end of November.

LPV104.01 - London Avenue Canal to IHNC. Contract includes increasing the height of existing levees. A construction contract was awarded on July 13 to Buck Town Contractors & Company in the total amount of \$1,286,060. Construction is approximately 30% complete.



For updates on all Corps of Engineers construction projects, go to: <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/> and click on Parish names to get details.

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Status Report Newsletter

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Corps puts MRGO Report on line

The Corps of Engineers has made the Integrated Final Report to Congress and Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS) for the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet Deep-Draft De-authorization (MRGO-3D) available on its Web site.

To view the report and LEIS, visit <http://mrgo.usace.army.mil/>.



Faces of Hope

Corps' Powell is Second Generation in Hydrology

It's a Matter of Pride

By Kimberly Powell

Nancy Powell, Chief of the New Orleans District Hydraulics and Hydrologic Branch, remains true to her roots.

When Powell and her family sat down to dinner in their Fairfax, Va., home, she often heard stories of her dad's interesting work. Her father was an engineer at the Corps of Engineers' Headquarters where he served as its Chief of Hydraulic Design during his decades-long career with the Corps. He made quite an impression on his daughter. Nancy Powell graduated with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Virginia Tech and, not long after, arrived at the New Orleans District and picked up a master's degree in civil engineering from Tulane University.

"My early work was about balancing navigation needs with flood control," Powell explained. "I worked on projects for the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System, as well as the Mississippi River and its tributaries, which amounts to controlling three million cubic feet per second of water moving through the District."

She also was involved in projects for using the Mississippi River and the Atchafalaya Basin as resources for wetland growth. When hurricanes Andrew and Ivan roared through the

region, Powell supported the Corps' mission by assisting the Mississippi Valley Division office while she was evacuated.

On August 28, 2005, all of this experience was called for ... literally ... in advance of Hurricane Katrina's landfall. At Dr. John Greishaber's



Nancy Powell

request, Powell reported to the Emergency Operations Center in Vicksburg where she served as a liaison between the Vicksburg District Hydraulics and Hydrology Branch and New Orleans District Engineering Division Chief Walter Baumu.

During those intense days, Powell and a team worked on plans to unwater New Orleans. Water levels

were constantly monitored. There were calls to parishes to see which pumps were working and which ones weren't. This was quite a challenge because communication was difficult. "Very late at night I would be able to reach Joe Sullivan (superintendent of the New Orleans Sewerage & Water Board) to ask how we could help," Powell recalled. "Then I would call others at dawn to get vital information and plan the day's activities."

She facilitated all-important water-depth gauge readings, a challenge because most of the gauges did not survive the storm. She stayed in constant contact with George Arce-ment, an engineer with the U.S. Geological Survey, and Jimmy Chustz, a contractor who could obtain real-time readings. Vital to unwatering, these readings were also critical to the Army's 82nd Airborne Division which used the

numbers for planning their rescue operations.

"When I look back, this was a personally and professionally rewarding time. We had little data to work with and were making quick engineering decisions. We had one chance to get it right." Findings from the Inter-agency Performance Evaluation Task Force confirmed the work.

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They did get it right.

The worst, for Powell, was yet to come. "One of the most dispiriting days was less than a month later when surging waters from Hurricane Rita overtopped a repaired section of the levee along the Industrial Canal." Powell was again called upon to provide technical assistance during the unwatering.

Once the New Orleans District was reconstituted, Powell became the hydraulics and hydrology liaison with Task Force Hope (TFH). "As a precursor to the installation of the temporary pumps, we did inundation modeling to demonstrate potential flooding scenarios for metropolitan New Orleans and New Orleans East."

Like other New Orleans District offices that were focused on the Hurricane Protection System (HPS), the Hydraulics and Hydrologic Branch was contributing to the design efforts of the HPS, from hydraulic analysis of the outfall canals to completing the 100-year design elevations.

"A project like the design elevations usually takes years, yet we were able to get it done in six months," Powell added, "thanks to some very hard working engineers in the branch."

As she reflected on her career with the Corps, especially the past two years, Powell revealed that she is, after all, her father's daughter: "It's a matter of pride. I have faith in the Corps and want others to share my belief."



CORPS REACHES OUT TO PUBLIC, COMMUNITY GROUPS & ELECTED OFFICIALS



Nancy Powell, Chief of Hydraulics and Hydrologic Branch, goes over a map of Plaquemines Parish levees with Parish President Billy Nungesser at a November meeting at the Corps' New Orleans District.

Gib Owen (left), Chief, Ecological Planning & Restoration Section, fields questions from a citizen during a recent neighborhood public meeting.



During an early November public meeting, Project Manager John Ashley explains the proposed options and timelines being considered for permanent pumps at the Outfall Canals.

USACE Photos

SELA Projects Dedicated to Flood Control Improvements in Three Parishes

President committed to asking Congress for \$1.3 Billion for SELA in FY09 Budget



The SELA program enlarged and added concrete lining to the entire length of the Elmwood Canal, and recently completed improvements to Pump Station #3. SELA projects also include the bridges at Kawanee Ave. and W. Esplanade Ave. (USACE photo by Scott Riecke)

By Meg Sullivan

The Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Damage Reduction Program (SELA) could receive a federal funding boost of \$1.3 billion in 2009, as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is looking to award several contracts early in the new year.

The SELA program is dedicated to providing improvements to rainfall drainage systems in Jefferson, Orleans and St. Tammany Parishes. It was authorized by the 1996 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act and the Water Resources Development Act of 1996.

SELA Senior Project Manager Stan Green said that of 50 contracts that have been awarded under SELA, 39 have been completed, while 11 are under con-

struction. Twenty-four additional contracts are yet to be awarded, he said.

Under the SELA program, the channel and pumping station improvements in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes support the parishes' master drainage plans and provide flood protection on a level associated with a 10-year rainfall event. (A 10-year event constitutes an event that has a level of severity which occurs just once in ten years.)

"Prior to Hurricane Katrina," said Lori

Wingate, SELA Project Manager for Orleans Parish, "the SELA program constructed a new pump station in the Hollygrove neighborhood, and improved the capacity of Drainage Pump Station No. 1 on Broad Street.

"In Orleans Parish," she added, "12 major drainage lines have been or will be improved."

Furthermore, the Dwyer Road pump station in Orleans Parish is now under construction. The Dwyer Road pump station intake culvert project, which went out to bid in October, will most likely be awarded to a contractor before the end of the year.

In early 2008, the Corps expects the



Stan Green

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SELA Projects Support Parishes' Master Drainage Plans



This October photo shows the SELA project at Soniat Canal from Veterans' Memorial Blvd. to Canal #3. (USACE photo by Scott Riecke)

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completion of final design plans in the first of four phases of work planned for the Florida Avenue Canal. This work aims to improve drainage in a 7,800-acre basin bounded by the Mississippi River, the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, Lake Pontchartrain and the London Avenue Canal. The first Florida Avenue contract is expected to be awarded in early May.

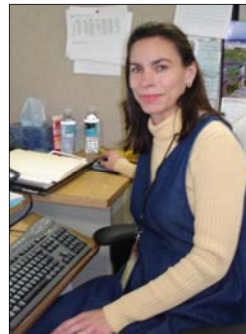


Rachel Calico

"In Jefferson Parish," said Rachel Calico, SELA Project Manager for Jefferson and St. Tammany Parishes, "24 drainage canals have been or will be improved along with the addition of two new pump stations and added capacity for four pump stations." There are currently 31

completed contracts, 10 under construction and approximately 12 remaining to be awarded in Jefferson.

Projects in St. Tammany Parish are currently in the study phase. Engineers are planning to make improvements such as channel enlargements, retention ponds, levees and elevation of structures in that parish.



Lori Wingate

According to Green, the Senate version of the Appropriations Bill (fiscal year 2008) would provide an additional \$18.3 million for the continuation of the SELA program. However, both the Appropriations Bill and the \$1.3 billion appropriation for 2009 must first be approved by Congress and signed by the President.

CORPS WORKSHOP

Providing Scientific and Environmental Information to Non-Government Organizations

By Cheryn Robles

The Corps of Engineers hosted the first of its quarterly public meetings for non-government organizations (NGO) earlier this month. The meeting provided NGOs, such as environmental groups and contractors, the opportunity to interact with project managers, assistant project managers and environmental managers on each of the Corps' 17 Individual Environmental Reports (IER) and other issues of interest.

The Corps managers, representing Task Force Hope, the Hurricane Protection Office and the Protection and Restoration Office, provided the public one venue to ask the Corps about projects that impact them.

The November NGO workshop is part of a two-year series of public meetings the Corps is hosting to meet requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The meeting, designed specifically to satisfy the scientific and environmental interests of the attendees, included an open house with details of each of the IERs. Project and assistant project managers were available to address hot issues such as: mitigation, borrow, tree removal, the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO), Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control Project (SELA) and environmental justice issues.



Future meetings and locations will be advertised in local newspapers as well as in this Newsletter. To obtain information on the IER meetings, go to this Web site: www.nolaenvironmental.gov

TO FIND INFORMATION ON THE HURRICANE PROTECTION SYSTEM PROJECTS AND PROGRESS

Go to this Web site: <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/>