



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter

January 19, 2010

Progress on HSDRRS ramps up going into 2010

2009

2010



by Susan Spaht

The Corps of Engineers - in partnership with the State of Louisiana, the levee authorities, the parishes, other Federal agencies and stakeholders - has made significant progress on the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) over the past four years, and progress is ramping up.

“Entering 2010,” said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope, “the citizens of the Greater New Orleans area are going to witness the burgeoning of the System

as we move into the final stretch of our goal: 100-year level of protection by June 2011.”

Execution of the HSDRRS is more than one-third complete, and the System is already stronger and more resilient than at any time in history. Extensive modeling, lessons learned, and risk-informed processes have enhanced the Corps’ design criteria and on-the-ground construction efforts.

Of a total 353 contracts, more than 230 contracts have been awarded through 2009, and more than \$6.6 billion obligated from the almost \$15 billion program. That includes more

than \$1.6 billion obligated directly to Small and Disadvantaged Businesses, mostly Louisiana-owned, representing close to 30% of all contract obligations. “We are very pleased that so many of the HSDRRS contracts have gone directly to small businesses, the majority of which are Louisiana-owned,” said Mrs. Durham-Aguilera. “This means that these Louisiana businesses are directly contributing to the recovery of the area.”

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2009 Was Eventful

In 2009 the Corps finished construction and automation on five new safe rooms so pump station operators can operate the interior drainage system during storm events; constructed additional storm proofing in Jefferson Parish totaling more than \$68 million in obligations; completed repairs to 47

pump stations in Jefferson, Orleans and St. Bernard parishes; and awarded contracts to repair 16 pump stations in

Plaquemines Parish. All repairs were completed in 2009, with the exception of Elaine Pump Station in Orleans Parish, which is scheduled to be completed in November 2010. The safe rooms and pump station repairs were all 100% federally-funded.



Col. Robert Sinkler

All five Harvey Canal floodwall contracts, totaling about \$340 million, are awarded. No federal protection previously existed along the east side of Harvey Canal. About three and a half miles of floodwalls and one mile of levee along the east side of the Harvey Canal will be completed in the fall of 2010.

IHNC Surge Barrier

One of the most notable signs of progress in 2009 was the start of construction on the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Surge Barrier at Lake Borgne; this will be the largest surge barrier of its kind in the world. This is also the Corps' largest-ever design-build civil works construction project. It includes a concrete pile-supported wall across the Gulf Intra-coastal Waterway to the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, more than one and a half miles long with three navigable gated structures. The IHNC Surge Barrier project is scheduled to provide 100-year level of protection in June 2011.

"The IHNC Surge Barrier construction is on schedule and 50% complete right now," said Col. Robert

Sinkler, Commander of the Hurricane Protection Office. "The barrier wall is standing from the GIWW to the MRGO."

Components of the surge barrier, updated as of Jan. 11: 1,271 66" spun-cast "soldier piles" (100% complete), 2,230 closure piles (88% complete), 376 batter piles (58% complete), 97 caps (28% complete), and 972 feet of parapet wall (13% complete).

The companion project in the IHNC corridor is the planned Seabrook Floodgate Complex at Lake Pontchartrain. These projects are designed to work in tandem to block storm surge from entering the GIWW and the Industrial Canal. The construction contract for Seabrook is currently under protest, but the design effort, the environmental process, and real estate acquisition are still moving forward. When completed, these important projects will provide storm surge risk reduction to the Ninth Ward, Gentilly, New Orleans East, Orleans Metro, and St. Bernard Parish.

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GIWW-WCC

In late 2009 the Corps began construction on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway West Closure Complex (GIWW-WCC). This is another major feature of the 100-year system which will reduce risk for west bank portions of Jefferson, Orleans and Plaquemines parishes by removing over 25 miles of levees, floodwalls, gates and pumping stations along the Harvey and Algiers Canals from exposure to storm surge.

This project includes construction of a surge barrier spanning the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway south of the intersection between the Harvey and

Algiers Canals, and will be configured with navigation structures for vessel traffic on the GIWW. It will also include one of the largest pump stations in the world for drainage of rainwater intercepted when the structure is closed during storm events. Risk reduction to the 100-year level is scheduled for completion in the 2011 hurricane season, and other project construction will continue.

Permanent Pumps at the Outfall Canals

Public safety is the Corps' first priority and it is committed to providing a solution for robust perimeter protection at the three Outfall Canals. Interim Closure Structures and Pump Stations at the Outfall Canals - 17th Street, Orleans Ave. and London

Ave.- currently provide 100-year level of protection, but these are temporary facilities. These interim structures were designed and built in 2006 with a projected project life of five to seven years.

The Decision Record for the footprints of the Permanent Canal Closures and Pump Stations has been signed, and the Corps is currently prepared to issue a request for pro-



GIWW West Closure Complex

posals for a design-build contract for the permanent replacements. However, before issuing the contract solicitation, the Army must execute an amendment to the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) with the State of Louisiana, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA).

Negotiation of terms of the agreement are ongoing at this time.

Levees and Floodwalls in St. Bernard and Orleans

Reaching 100-year level of protection in 2011 means having all perimeter projects completed at that time. "We do have very good track record of completing projects on time if we can get them started on time,"

said Col. Robert Sinkler, whose Hurricane and Protection Office will oversee construction on the East Bank system in Orleans and St. Bernard parishes.

To provide the 100-year level of protection for St. Bernard, the Corps determined that T-walls on top of existing levees provided the best engineering solution. This method also reduces the amount of borrow

material needed by about 25 million cubic yards, and reduces the earthen levee footprint and impact on adjacent wetlands.

In 2009, the Corps awarded the first phase of construction contracts for two reaches of St. Bernard floodwalls, and three more are scheduled for the

first quarter of 2010.

Currently, more than 90% of the Orleans Metro perimeter meets the 100-year level of protection. The Corps has awarded three of five Phase Two contracts along the lakefront, and major construction is under way. Crews are in the process of demolishing a substantial amount of the existing floodwall to prepare for the new and more robust T-walls.

In New Orleans East, major construction along the lakefront is also progressing. The Corps recently awarded a contract to supply and deliver the earthen clay material needed to complete 100-year levee

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work on two reaches. The two projects will be the most massive levees constructed on the East Bank.

The Eastern Tie-In

The Eastern Tie-In project will tie the HSDRRS into the Mississippi River levee just south of Oakville on the eastern side of the system on the west bank. Following two extended public review periods for Individual Environmental Report 13 (the Eastern Tie-In), the Corps selected swing gates for storm surge risk reduction across Highway 23. Construction completion for this project is expected for May 2011.

Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Damage Reduction Project (SELA)

Since Katrina, the Corps has awarded 12 SELA contracts for interior drainage projects with a total value of more than \$170 million. These contracts include canal enlargements, bridge replacements, and pump station improvements. Five of the contracts are substantially complete, and two others are fully functional. Of the seven contracts still under construction, most will be completed by the spring of 2010. Two recently awarded contracts are scheduled to be finished by summer of 2010. Twenty-four construction contracts remain to be awarded in Orleans and Jefferson parishes, while potential projects in St. Tammany Parish are in the study phase.

Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO)

The MRGO channel was officially closed to all navigation in April 2009 and the physical construction (using



about 350,000 tons of rock) of the MRGO closure structure was completed in July 2009. A study to identify the best ways to restore wetlands affected by the MRGO is currently underway. Feasibility scoping meetings for this study have already taken place, and the Corps plans to complete the feasibility-level design and release a draft report for public comment and peer review in 2010.

Other Efforts

The Corps is also engaged on several other fronts, primarily under the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration (LACPR) authority and the several authorities that support the ongoing effort to restore the coastal ecosystem. The ecosystem restoration activities are conducted under multiple authorities, with funding from varying sources and an array of different cost-sharing formulas. They include: (1) the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA); (2) a Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) ecosystem restoration program; (3) a related effort to restore wetlands affected by the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet; and

(4) the science needed to support all of these related ecosystem restoration efforts.

The Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act established the authority to produce a list of priority projects and to construct these projects in Louisiana to provide for the long-term conservation of Louisiana's coastal wetlands. Cur-



rently, there are 146 active projects of which 76 have been constructed and 18 are under construction.

WRDA 2007 authorized the LCA program. Under this program, the Corps in partnership with the CPRA has initiated feasibility level analyses

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for 12 of the 15 features. The Corps anticipates initiating the remaining three features by FY2010. All 15 features are part of the LCA near-term plan. The Corps expects to complete final reports on six of these features in Dec. 2010. In addition, the Corps will submit the Barataria Basin Barrier Shoreline Restoration report and the Beneficial Use of Dredge Material Report by the second quarter of FY2010.

There are four other components of the program to further restore and reduce uncertainties and increase the effectiveness of restoration measures.



Karen Durham-Aguilera

Keeping the Schedule

“We are committed to completing the 100-year System in June 2011,” said Mrs. Durham-Aguilera. “As part of our management process, we are tracking more than 20,000 milestones for this program. At any given time, we know where we are in the design/construction process of each and every project.

“A year ago we had 27 projects that were projected to be completed after our June 2011 goal; today that number is only 13.

“It will take continued teamwork and dedication by the Corps and all our partners to deliver this System on schedule for the citizens of Louisiana.”



Upcoming Public Meetings

Thursday, Jan. 21, 2010

Permanent Closures and Pumps RFP Workshop

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1200 Robert E. Lee Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70122
Open House 6 to 6:30 p.m.
Presentation 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2010

New Orleans East Status
St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church
7300 Crowder Blvd.
New Orleans, LA 70127
Open House 6 to 6:30 p.m.
Presentation 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2010

IER 11 Tier 2 Pontchartrain- Seabrook Floodgate Complex

St. Gabriel the Archangel Church
Parish Hall
5010 Piety Dr.
New Orleans, LA 70126
Open House 6 to 6:30 p.m.
Presentation 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010

West Return Floodwall Construction

Kenner City Park Pavilion
3800 E. Loyola Dr.
Kenner, LA 70065
Open House 6 to 6:30 p.m.
Presentation 6:30 p.m.



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Comments and questions

may be sent to the

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of Engineers**

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Task Force Hope

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