



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Mississippi Valley Division



# Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter

November 9, 2009

## Gulf Intracoastal Waterway - West Closure Complex

# West Bank's largest project now underway

by Susan Spaht

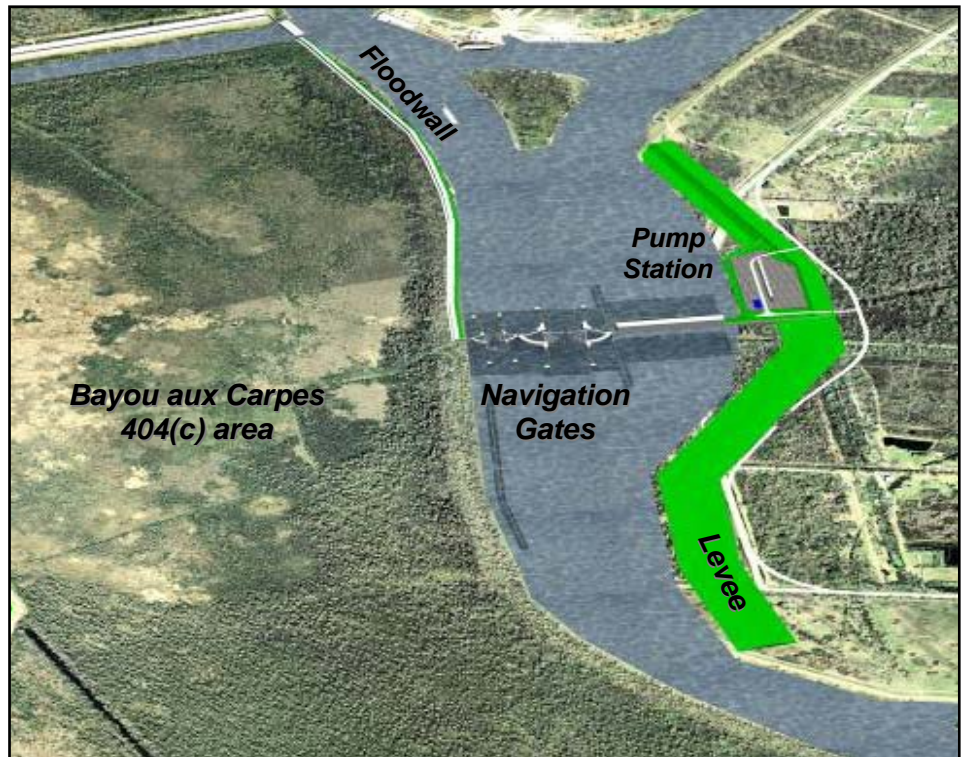
**“The** Gulf Intracoastal Waterway - West Closure Complex will significantly reduce the risk of storm surge to over 250,000 people living on the West Bank,” said Col. Al Lee, Commander of the New Orleans District, during groundbreaking ceremonies at the GIWW-WCC construction site on October 30.

This colossal project, being built at the confluence of the GIWW and the Harvey and Algiers Canals, will remove over 25 miles of levees, floodwalls, gates and pump stations along the Harvey and Algiers Canals from the direct impact of storm surges from the Gulf of Mexico.



Col. Al Lee

The West Closure Complex is an integral part of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) being designed and con-



This is a conceptual illustration of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway - West Closure Complex showing the two navigable gates and the pump station. The project is located at the confluence of the GIWW and the Harvey/Algiers Canals.

structed by the Corps of Engineers. The complex is expected to consist of floodwalls, foreshore protection, a navigable structure, an earthen levee, and a pump station that will possibly be the largest in the world – capable of pumping up to 20,000 cubic feet per second. The nearly \$1 billion complex will provide 100-year level risk reduction by hurricane season 2011.

### Collaborative Teamwork

“This enormous project is being developed though a collaborative team from the State and Federal govern-

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# Gulf Intracoastal Waterway West Closure Complex



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ments; Jefferson, Orleans and Plaquemines Parishes; the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority – West; the U.S. Coast Guard; the navigation industry; and local citizen organizations,” said Col. Lee. “And we continue to work closely with all of our partners.”

“The West Closure Complex demonstrates what we can accomplish when we all work together,” said Maj. Gen. Merdith “Bo” Temple, Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who was the ceremony’s keynote speaker.

The Corps has held more than 30

public meetings on this project and continues to engage the public at every level.

The Corps spent months of negotiations and thorough planning with the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Park Service to minimize impacts to the Bayou aux Carpes 404c area of the project. This is the first time the EPA approved a modification to a Clean Water Act-designated 404c area which is a wetland area of national significance. “We are reminded daily of the balance that must be maintained between providing risk reduction to people and property, and protecting and maintaining our natural resources,” Col. Lee said.

### ECI Contract Awarded

In April, the Corps awarded the base portion of an Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) contract to Gulf Intracoastal Constructors for pile load testing and pre-construction services. This contract method allows for pre-construction work to proceed while the Corps, the design team and the contractor work hand-in-hand on the final design revisions and construction sequencing.

“Even though construction is now under way,” said Col. Lee, “there is a long road ahead with many challenges to complete this project in a timely manner.” One of these chal-

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Above are conceptual illustrations of the West Closure Complex pump station. At left is the protected side, and at right is the GIWW side. (The illustrated pick-up trucks parked on the ramp provide scale.) (USACE Illustrations)

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allenges is to maintain navigation traffic on the GIWW which is a Federal waterway with heavy commercial barge traffic. "We have worked closely with the navigation industry to understand their needs and find ways to minimize the construction impacts to daily commercial traffic."

#### Complicated Project

The West Closure Complex project is expected to include these major features:

- A **floodwall or levee** constructed on the eastern edge of the wetlands area on the bank of the GIWW that ties in to the navigable structure on the GIWW;
- **Foreshore protection** along the GIWW adjacent to, but not within, the Bayou aux Carpes 404c area;
- A **navigable structure** to ensure safe navigation on the highly-trafficked GIWW that ties in to the pump station. The navigable structure is being designed in collaboration with the navigation industry and the U.S. Coast Guard;



MG "Bo" Temple with Karen Durham-Aguilera at the WCC ceremonies. (USACE Photo by Anne Marino)

- Approximately 4.8 miles of the **Algiers Canal will be dredged**. Some 400,000 cubic yards of material will be excavated and used beneficially in a marsh restoration project in the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve;
- A **new earthen levee** will be constructed east of the West Closure Complex and tie in to the existing levee;
- Bayou Road has been **realigned** and connects Walker Road and Buccaneer Road; and
- A **pump station** will evacuate storm water when the navigable

structure is closed, which will occur only during tropical storms. It is expected to be capable of pumping up to 20,000 cfs – which would make it one of the largest pump stations in the world.

#### Reaching Out

To complete this massive project, the Corps is using resources from other Corps districts across the Mississippi Valley Division. "We are employing a regional approach for the design and construction of the West Closure Complex," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope. "We are maximizing the expertise of other districts and the Corps' Engineer Research and Development Center. We are also embracing the experience and resources of private industry.

"Both internally and externally, we are seeking ways to implement cost-efficient and innovative methods for designing and constructing the safest and most reliable System possible. The West Closure Complex is the largest project on the West Bank and a significant part of this System."





# Steel warehousing project saves Corps time & money

By Susan Spaht

**B**uy in bulk. Buy when the prices are low.

“That’s the way private industry works,” said Sami Mosrie, Senior Project Manager, Pile Test Team. “Companies buy large quantities of materials that they know will be needed in the future, buy them when the prices are low, and warehouse those materials until needed. It saves time and it saves money.



**Sami Mosrie**

“We thought: *why doesn’t the Corps do the same thing?* So, we did.”

The Corps of Engineers is constructing approximately 50 miles of floodwalls to build the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction Sys-

tem. These floodwalls will require over 100,000 tons of steel sheet piles. Taking a tip from private industry, the Corps of Engineers has been buying steel sheet piles in bulk – when the market price is low – and storing the steel at a large warehouse until authorized construction contractors pick it up for Corps jobs.

“The Corps took advantage of a lull in the steel market,” said Joe Hendrix, Contracting Officer Representative. “We knew we would need huge quantities of steel sheet piles for the HSDRRS floodwalls, so we jumped at the opportunity to buy the steel at low prices, stock piled the materials, and now we have them available for



**Joe Hendrix**

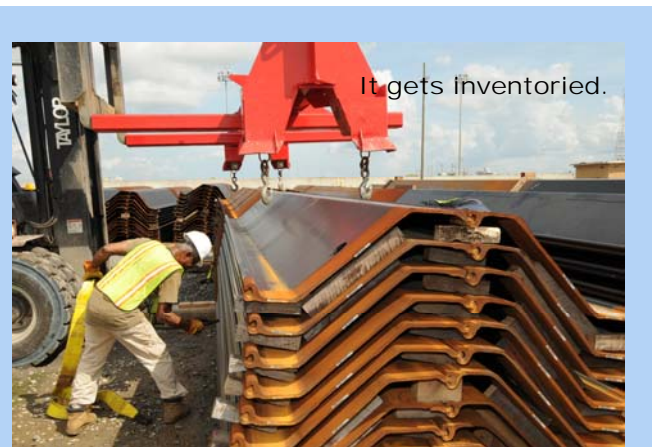
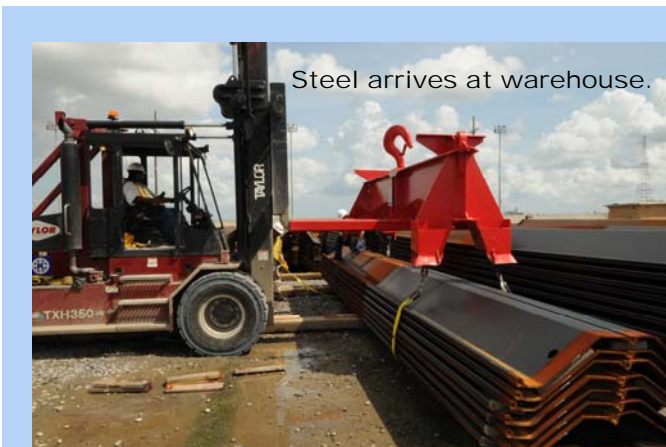
construction contractors to pick up as the HSDRRS contracts are awarded.” This is how the Corps’ Government – Furnished Steel Supply Contract was created.

The team also developed a high tech database system, called the Materials Inventory Management System (MIMS), to track the comings and goings of the steel sheet piles. This system provides strict check-in and check-out monitoring, ordering, delivery, warehouse management and operations, and inventory tracking.

The steel sheet piles are trucked directly from the mill to the Corps’ warehouse already marked with government bar codes. Upon arrival, a Quality Assurance inspector inspects the steel for product quality using a number of specifications; any defective pieces will be rejected at that time. Handheld barcode scanners are used on the spot to scan the barcodes and document the supply contractor, size, shape and length of the load for inventory tracking purposes. These devices can also provide printed receipts for transactions on the spot.

Similarly, a construction contractor will make arrangements for picking

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**Ali Aljaberi, Steel Supply Program Manager, demonstrates the MIMS database system. The new system tracks incoming and outgoing deliveries of steel sheet piles.** (USACE Photos)



**Handheld Barcode Scanner**

“The initial Government - Furnished steel contract will save approximately \$25 million for the overall HSDRRS program,” said Hendrix, “and the program has the potential to save over three times that much.” The contracting/warehousing project has been so successful that the

Corps is already planning to purchase more steel sheet piles and acquire additional warehouse space.

“The Corps’ responsibility is to deliver the 100-year Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System by June 2011,” said Karen

Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope. “This responsibility also requires the Corps and its partners to continually look at the most effective and efficient ways to deliver that system.

“This innovative contracting and warehousing program is an excellent example of how we can meet our responsibility and achieve our goals while remaining good stewards of the taxpayers’ dollars.”



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up a load of steel sheet piles from the warehouse for his authorized Corps project. This information is conveyed wirelessly to all handheld devices to ensure the order is filled for the correct amount and type of steel piles. The first contractor pickup of steel sheet piles left the Corps’ warehouse on Oct. 9.

**Here are the advantages of the Corps’ bulk buying and warehousing:**

- Lower prices for steel

- Reduces construction duration
- Corps contractors do not have to compete for steel prices and mill time
- Reduces bonding costs/ requirements for construction contractors
- Saves waiting time on steel orders, i.e., not dependent on market demand
- State-of-the-art check in/check out and inventory tracking of materials
- Quality is assured via Corps on-site Quality Assurance inspectors



Loaded on contractor’s truck .



Contractor hauls it off.

# Upcoming Public Meetings



**Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2009**

*New Orleans to Venice scoring*

Plaquemines Parish  
District 1 Office  
15535 Highway 15  
Davant, LA 70040

*Open house: 6:00 p.m.*

*Presentation: 6:30 p.m.*



**Monday, Nov. 16, 2009**

*IER 3 Supplemental/Causeway*

Congregation Gates of Prayer

4000 West Esplanade Ave

Metairie, Louisiana 70002

*Open house: 6:00 p.m.*

*Presentation: 6:30 p.m.*

**Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2009**

*IER 3 Supplemental/Causeway*

Church of the King

22205 Little Creek Rd.

Mandeville, LA 70471

*Open house: 6:00 p.m.*

*Presentation: 6:30 p.m.*



**Thursday, Nov. 19, 2009**

*Permanent Canal Closures and  
Pumps - Outfall Canals*

St. Louis King of France School

1600 Lake Ave.

Metairie, LA 70005

*Open house: 6:00 p.m.*

*Presentation: 6:30 p.m.*



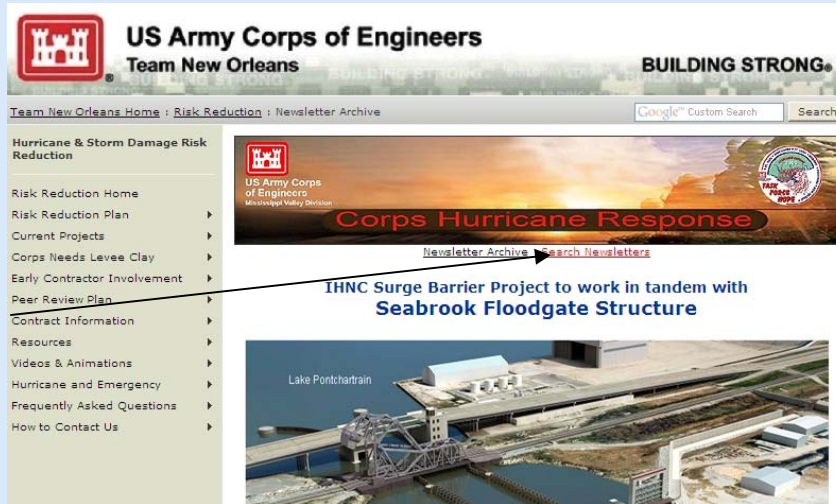
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*It's as simple as 1, 2, 3*

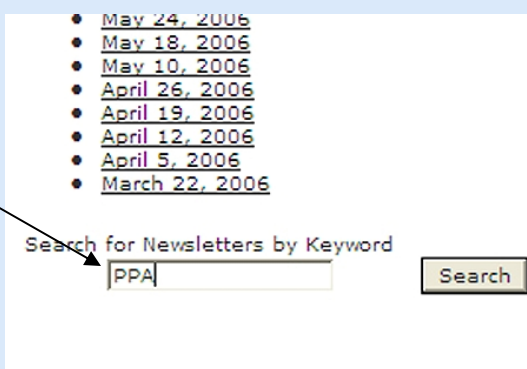
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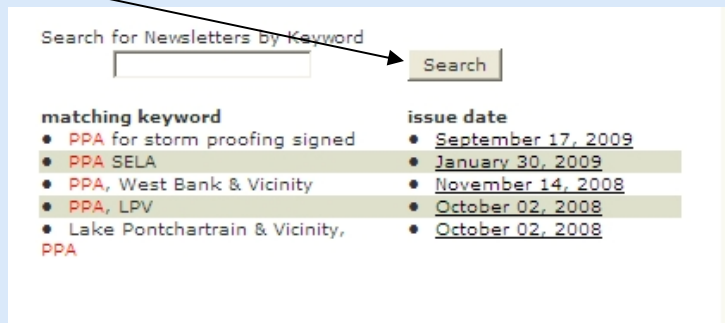


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Here are your articles

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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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