

**Mississippi River Commission
Low Water Inspection
Comments for Colonel Peter J. Rowan
August 22, 2003
Morgan City, Louisiana**

Final

SLIDE

PRINT

1. Corps seal

2. Photo: Aerial,
Morgan City
Bullet: MRC Low
Water Inspection,
Morgan City, LA,
August 22, 2003

Good morning, Gen. Riley, 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. Photo: MV Miss
Topics:
***River Stages**
*Funding Program
*MR&T Studies
*MR&T Projects
*Coastal Restoration

I'll begin my presentation with river stages in the New Orleans District since the high water inspection trip back in April.

5. Graphic: Total Latitude Flows

At the latitude of Old River, total flows crested just below 1.5 million cfs on May 31. Since then, the Mississippi River has been falling steadily and a continued fall is expected over the next week.

6. Graphic: Crest Stages

31 May 03 1935-2002			
<i>(last signi. crest)</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>Avg.</i>	
RRL 51.3	60.4	37.8	
BR 34.7	43.8	24.3	
NO 13.9	17.2	10.0	
Sim 34.1	51.9	29.5	
MC 5.5	10.2	3.3	

Shown here are the corresponding May 2003 crest stages at various locations on the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers. Today (22 Aug 03), the total combined discharge of the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers at the latitude of Old River is _____ cfs. The average discharge for this date is 371,000 cfs. And the stage today at New Orleans is _____ ft.

7. Photo: water barges or Carrollton Gage w/low stages

I realize that it's around this time we begin to see a saltwater wedge. However, this low water trait doesn't usually appear until the 300,000 cfs stage. We haven't been that low since mid-February.

8. Graphic: 70/30

Currently, we are maintaining a 70/30-flow distribution between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers as mandated by legislation. The cumulative percent since January 1 is a little over 30 (30.306%), a surplus of about 110,000 cfs or 0.1% of the river's annual discharge.

9. Scenic, coastal Topics:

And now for our FY 03 program...

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

10. Graphic: NOD
FY 2003 Program
Bullet:
\$344 M Program
\$50 M Coastal
Restor.
\$2 M IIS
\$14 M Other
Programs
PAS, CAP, FCCE
\$25 M Local Interests

\$435 M (Total)

The Fiscal Year 2003 Program includes \$344 million for the New Orleans District. We received \$50 million for coastal restoration under the Breaux Act, \$2 million for our Interagency and Intergovernmental Service Program, formerly Support for Others, and \$14 million for the Continuing Authorities and Planning Assistance to States programs. We have additional funding requirements in our construction general program for the remainder of this fiscal year. The MR&T projects are funded and any minor funding requirements will be met.

11. Aerial of Houma
Topics:
*River Stages
*Funding Program
***MR&T Studies**
*MR&T Projects
*Coastal Restoration

Moving on to our MR&T study efforts.

12. Graphic: Three
study areas.

We are currently managing four studies. The three studies shown here are for hurricane protection and flood control projects ... Morganza to the Gulf, Alexandria to the Gulf, and Donaldsonville to the Gulf. Their commonality? All are sub-watershed studies focusing on water resource problems with impacts to ongoing coastal restoration projects.

13. Aerial,
Terrebonne Parish
flooding after
Hurricane Andrew

The Chief of Engineers signed the Morganza to the Gulf Report last August. Construction on the \$719 million dollar project will begin in early FY 2005 pending Congressional authorization.

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

In April of this year, we executed a feasibility cost-sharing agreement with Gravity Drainage District No. 1 of Rapides Parish for the first phase of the Alexandria to the Gulf Study. The first item of work is to revise the project management plan, which was prepared in 1999 for the entire study area. Data collection is underway.

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

We completed the value engineering study in July on our third study, Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico, and we're collecting field data for the engineering and economic analysis.

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

And we're addressing division's comments on the preliminary draft report of our fourth study, the Lower Atchafalaya Basin Reevaluation study. We'll resubmit the report next month.

17. MRL
Topics:
*River Stages
*Funding Program
*MR&T Studies
***MR&T Projects**
*Coastal Restoration

And now for construction progress on the Mississippi River levee system in the New Orleans District.

18. Photo: Romeville
to Remy
Bullet: MR levee
mileage chart
Total: 512
Comp FY00: 495
Ongoing: 0
Remaining: 17

We are 97% complete and have 17 miles of work remaining. Currently, we have no ongoing construction projects.

19. Hohen Solms
Levee to Modeste
Levee

We'll award three contracts by the end of this calendar year to address gap closures along the east bank, and to enlarge the Alhambra (all HAHM bra) to Hohen Solms (HOE-en SEWMS) levee, and the Hohen Solms to Modeste (MOE dess tah) levee.

20. Photo: Angola
construction
w/dedication photo
insert

Above Baton Rouge, FY 03 funds were used to complete the final levee enlargement at the Louisiana State Penitentiary. The dedication ceremony was held in June. We completed the project ahead of schedule and under budget.

21. Photo: WABPL-
95
Bullet: Atch Basin
levees (mi)
Completed: 391
Under Constr: 10
Remaining: 48
Total: 449

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

22. Graphic: FY03,
Atch contracts
Awarded (4):
W-52 Levee; E-69/73
Levee; Wax Lake
West Drainage
Structure; and W85A
& B Levee
To be awarded (1):
Wax Lake Outlet
West Levee

This fiscal year, we've awarded four contracts in the basin and will award one more this September. No new contracts are scheduled in the coming fiscal year.

23. Photo (2):
Dredging in the Atch
River; tug
transporting an oil
industry related
structure

Of concern in the basin is the fluff situation in the Atchafalaya River bar channel. The Corps' Engineering Research and Development Center has completed a study on fluff and reported the results to the Port of Morgan City and the Atchafalaya Coalition members in June. The final report is scheduled for release at the end of August. The study results show that moving the disposal area to the west of the navigation channel was beneficial and that construction of the test sections marginally increased the period before fluff returned to the channel.

24. Photos (2):
Dredging and a
navigation/barge
photo

Recommendations from the study results include continuing disposal on the west side of the channel, investigating structural alternatives such as jetty systems, and developing a policy to address navigable depth. Unfortunately, neither the results of the study nor the recommendations provide a solution to the fluff issue at this time. The recommendations do provide additional areas to investigate and we have submitted a budget package for FY 2005 to model the feasibility of structural solutions.

25. Graphic: Map of
Bayous Chene, Boeuf
& Black

We're also addressing the feasibility of providing deeper access channels to facilities located along the Lower Atchafalaya River below Morgan City and along Bayous Chene, Boeuf and Black east of Morgan City. The existing waterways provide a 20- by 400-foot channel to major marine fabrication and repair facilities that build offshore oil and gas rigs and deck structures.

26. Photo: Atch R,
marine facilities/oil
wells/platforms in the
Gulf

Oil and gas exploration is moving into deeper waters world-wide and the rigs used to drill and produce wells in deeper water are becoming larger. The fabricators in the Morgan City area state that they cannot compete with overseas fabricators unless they have a 35-foot channel. A cost-sharing agreement for a three-year feasibility study was signed with the Morgan City Harbor and Terminal District in May 2002; however, the study is being delayed by federal funding constraints. Major problems being addressed include the high cost of maintenance, channel reliability and economic justification.

27. Super: Atch Basin
*Water Mgmt Units
*Recreation

I'll move on now to present the status of the planning and design of water management units and recreation features in the basin.

28. Photo: Buffalo
Cove

We received approval on June 24th to construct the Buffalo Cove Water Management Unit at 100% federal expenditure. We are currently in the public review phase of the Environmental Assessment.

29. Photo of Lake
End Park/Lake
Palourde

We're also coordinating activities with our local sponsor on the Lake End Park project in Morgan City. We will initiate planning, engineering and design in FY 04. And we're collaborating with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, St. Mary Parish, Morgan City and other stakeholders for an interpretive center across from the park. We're currently in the preliminary planning phase.

30. Lake Palourde

This is the Lake Palourde project, a 57-acre park area just north of Lake End that we completed back in October 2002. We're very proud of this innovative project. We finished it ahead of schedule and for less than the projected costs due to construction efficiencies, and by combining it with maintenance dredging on the Atchafalaya River and Berwick Bay. As a result, we were able to refund \$499,000 to St. Mary Parish officials. This was a great partnering effort and I want to thank those who made it happen.

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

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

*Simmesport in Avoyelles Parish

*Millet Point in St. Mary Parish

Additionally, we are in the planning phase for boat landings and associated improvements at the six sites shown, with construction scheduled for Simmesport and Millet (pron. mee yet) Point in early FY 04.

32. Graphic: Pie chart 50K/338K

This slide reflects the current status of acquisition in the basin. To date, the Corps has purchased more than 47,000 acres and negotiated perpetual rights on about 150,000 acres of the authorized project.

33. 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 maintaining existing revetments.

34. Photo: Stone foreshore protection

Miles Auth 160

Miles Compl: 142

Total Remaining: 18

Foreshore protection, part of the channel improvement program, continues with a little over half a mile scheduled for construction on the left descending bank at 81-Mile Point (Mile 176).

35. Photo: generic revetment work on Atch R.

Revetment figures on the Atchafalaya haven't changed since the high water trip. We'll construct a total of .6 miles of revetment on the right descending bank of Crooked Bayou at Mile 18.4.

36. Graphic: Atch Basin Bank Stabilization (Miles)

Completed: 56.8

Schl'd this Year: .6

Remaining: 4.6

Total: 62

Completion of this work will leave a little more than 4.6 miles of the presently authorized 62 miles of required Atchafalaya revetment to be constructed.

37. Generic coastal land loss

Topics:

*River Stages

*Funding Program

*MR&T Studies

*MR&T

Projects

*Coastal

Restoration

We couldn't come to Morgan City without addressing coastal land loss, one of the state's most pressing ecological events.

38. LCA: Impacts This problem is impacting the state’s fisheries, oil and gas infrastructure, hurricane protection and port facilities, signaling dire consequences for the state and nation if nothing is done to address it.
39. Background photo, LCA title slide The Corps and the state are engaged in a comprehensive ecosystem restoration effort entitled the Louisiana Coastal Area, or LCA, study.
40. LCA Timeline We are committed to submitting a programmatic project recommendation to Congress for authorization under WRDA 04. This slide indicates some of the key meetings, and submission, review and comment periods we must address before June 30th when the Chief’s report is submitted to Congress.
41. Shot of people at meeting, small group around a table ... The preliminary draft is currently under review, the planning development team is addressing comments from HQ, MVD and our sponsors, and we’re finalizing the draft report and programmatic environmental impact statement.
42. Photo: (aerial) Morgan City Floodwalls That wraps up the current status of projects in the New Orleans District.

43. Map of Iraq

Bullet:

- *Restoring Oil Infrastructure
- *Managing Contracts
- *Rebuilding Country
- *Environmental Restoration

However, I'd like to finish my presentation this morning by briefly addressing the Corps' presence in another river delta – that of the Mesopotamian, home to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and the country of Iraq. The Corps has been tasked with restoring the oil infrastructure and oil production in Iraq to pre-war conditions. We're also helping the US Agency for International Development manage contract awards and for environmental restoration.

44. Graphic:

Deployed: 22 employees participating in Operation Enduring Freedom (12 are activated military)
Locations: Mosul, Baghdad and Basrah
Duties: Supervise reconstruction of humanitarian facilities damaged or destroyed in battle & Military assistance with equipment & supplies (logistics)
Facilities: Drinking Water Treatment Plants, Wastewater Treatment Plants, Electrical Power Production, Schools, Hospitals, Communications

New Orleans District is proud of the number of its men and women who have deployed to Iraq to support our country's post-war efforts. This slide shows the number of people deployed, where they've been deployed, and what they're doing. Some have returned stateside and we look to the day when this country's latest mission is accomplished and all our soldiers and deployed civilians are united with their families and friends.

45. Photo: MV/Miss

In closing, I'd like to recognize and thank the levee districts, state and local representatives, district employees and the Mississippi River Commissioners, who, working together, ensure the continued safety and economic benefits to the citizens and businesses flourishing alongside the Mighty Mississippi.

46. Seal Obverse

Thank you.

47. NOD mission map

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