

# METRO EAST UPDATE

Covering the Levee Systems of Metropolitan East Sanitary District, Wood River, Chain of Rocks, Prairie du Pont/Fish Lake

May 11, 2012

## EVENTS & ACTIVITY

### RECENT ACTIVITIES

April 18 - Flood Prevention District Council Meeting

April 18 - MESD Levee Board meeting

May 1 - First 408 Permission delivered for construction to begin.

May 2 - Prairie du Pont D&LD meeting

May 7 - Wood River D&LD meeting

May 9 - MESD D&LD meeting

### CURRENT CONSTRUCTION

**Wood River Levee:** pump station, gravity drain, and closure structure reconstruction

**Chain of Rocks Levee:** First nine relief wells complete; pump station construction under way (see page 2)

**MESD Levee:** North pump station

### FUTURE EVENTS

Aug. 2012 Planned approval of study identifying measures to correct underseepage of Prairie du Pont & Fish Lake Levees.

Aug. 2012 Planned approval of study identifying measures to correct underseepage of Wood River Levee adjacent to Mel Price Locks & Dam.

## From the St. Louis District Commander

### On Metro East levees, long-term safety is our top priority

Reducing flood risk in the Metro East is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District's top priority. In recent months, some leaders in the Metro East community have expressed frustration with the processes inherent in rehabilitating the Metro East levees and protecting public interest.

Permission for the first phase of construction to begin was delivered to our partners in the Metro East Sanitary District May 1, ahead of schedule. As the Commander and District Engineer, I want to express my commitment to the Metro East, and the Corps' commitment to helping the Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District (FPD) Council achieve their goals of reducing flood risk quickly and establishing conditions that promote economic development in the Metro East.

I recognize and support the FPD's goal of getting FEMA Accreditation for the Metro East Levees by 2015. The delivery of the first 408 permission ahead of the FPD's schedule is a result of tremendous efforts by our engineers and regulators to meet the needs of our partners. We understand their sense of urgency, and continue to make every effort within our authority to

ensure their construction schedule can be met.

As we work with the FPD Council and their engineering firm, the safety of the people living and working behind the levees must remain our top priority. The

Corps of Engineers has a long term commitment to the lives, economy and communities behind the levees, and a responsibility to make sure any work on the levees will meet that commitment.

To date, the Corps of Engineers has met the FPD's schedule requirements and in the future we will meet our obligations for both safety and timeliness. This is Corps of Engineers' commitment to the Metro East.

For more than 80 years, the Corps of Engineers has worked in partnership with the citi-



Col. Chris Hall

**Continued on page 2**

## Metro East 100-year levee project gets green light for first phase of construction

The St. Louis District issued permission for the first phase of construction to begin on the local effort to restore the Metro East levees.

The first 408 Permission for the alteration of the levees was delivered May 2 to the Metro East Sanitary District ahead of the local sponsor's construction schedule.

Modifications of the levee system are being pursued by the Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District Council in their pursuit of FEMA accreditation. Proposed modifications by the Council will bring the levees to the 100-year level of protection, which is required for FEMA accreditation.

Currently, the Metro East levees do not meet their authorized level of protection of 54' on the St. Louis gage, roughly a 0.2% (500-year) level of flood protection. A separate Federal effort is restoring the levees to their original authorized level of protection. As part of the rehabilitation process, the Flood Prevention District Council is required by law to obtain 408 Permissions for any modifications made

to federal levees. The process (under USC 33, Section 408) ensures modifications do not harm the levee, the public or the economic interest of Metro East. The Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District Council submitted their first 408 Permission package to the Corps February 6.

A total of eight 408 review packages are scheduled to be submitted over the course of the year.

"We are working closely with and communicating regularly with the Southwest Illinois Flood Prevention District Council as they prepare to reconstruct the levees. We understand the Council's construction schedule and we're prepared to meet our commitments to support that schedule," Hall said.

"We also must uphold our commitment to the public to ensure all modifications are safe and will not harm the levee or cause catastrophic failure," he added. "The long-term safety of the lives, communities, and industry behind these levees is always our top priority?"

## Pump station construction begins on Chain of Rocks levee

By Mary Markos  
St. Louis District Public Affairs

Seven grueling hours in the sun, 32 trucks of material, and 265-cubic yards of concrete marked the start of construction on the Chain of Rocks Pump Station April 18 along the Chain of Rocks Levee near Granite City, Ill.

The pump station is one feature of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District's project to correct design deficiencies and provide the Chain of Rocks levee with the authorized level of protection of 54-feet on the St. Louis gage.

Located in Madison County, the federally owned and operated levee is one segment of the Metro East Sanitary District Levee System.

The construction of the pump station marks another milestone in the completion of the Corps' project to reduce risk to those living and working in the Metro East.

The project includes the construction of North and South seepage berms, as well as 37 relief wells.

Project features became necessary after the 1993 flood when sand boils developed along large portions of the levee. Sand boils form when water traveling under the levee



**The foundation is poured for a pump station on the Chain of Rocks levee April 18. The pump station is part of the federal project to restore the Metro East levees to their original authorized level of protection.**

carries with it sediments necessary for the longevity and stability of the levee.

This project highlights the Corps' commitment to reduce risk to the more than 250,000 residents and workers, and \$4.5

billion in property assets behind the Metro East Sanitary District Levee System.

In total, the Corps has allocated more than \$45.8M in construction to the Chain of Rocks Levee.

### From the District Commander (continued from page 1)

zens of the Metro East to manage flood risks. Our shared efforts include constructing the levee systems, working in tandem during flood events, repairing system damages from those floods, and rehabilitating the systems as they showed signs of age and wear.

In total, more than \$120 million has been allocated toward projects rehabilitating the levees in the Metro East in recent years.

I would like to personally affirm that we are working through our required permitting and review processes in advance of the FPD's final design submission to help our partners meet their aggressive construction schedule. We are also working with the FPD's designers to maximize how their modifications can be integrated into the larger federal effort to restore the levees. This integration will save time and reduce cost to the taxpayer as we continue the federal projects toward the full, Congressionally-authorized level of protection – greater than the level required for FEMA Accreditation.

By Federal law, the Corps of Engineers must ensure that levee

system alterations will not be injurious to the public interest and will not impair the usefulness of such work. Our review processes ensure the safety of residents behind the levees.

The Corps of Engineers and our Metro East partners have been vigilant in reducing flood risks to the Metro East, and that vigilance has paid great dividends by keeping the people of the Metro East safe through all of the flood events of the last 50 years, including the Great Flood of 1993. We continue to share the responsibility and common goal to reduce flood risk, and we feel they remain strong partners today.

The St. Louis District is committed to and will continue working closely as partners to the levee districts, FPD Council and communities in rehabilitating the Metro East Levee System and improving the quality of life of those we serve. We understand their construction schedule, and will continue to meet our commitments in support of that schedule. Through all we do as engineers, regulators and levee owners, the safety of the Metro East remains our first concern.

*Col. Chris Hall*  
St. Louis District Commander