



Corps Awards \$85M for Design-Build Contract for 17th Street and London Avenue Canals

Construction of pump platforms and installation of pump systems to begin soon

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hurricane Protection Office, announces the award of a design-build contract of \$84,961,824 to Weston Solutions, Inc., for construction of pump platforms and installation of 19 new vertical flow pump systems at the 17th Street and London Avenue Canals.

The 19 pump systems, scheduled to be installed in phases as they are manufactured, are to be operational by late-July/mid-August.

Eleven of the 19 pumps will be installed at 17th Street Canal, raising pumping capacity at that site to at least 7,600 cubic feet per second (cfs). The remaining eight pumps will be installed on the London Avenue Canal, increasing capacity there to at least 5,000 cfs. Currently, 17th Street and London Avenue Canals can pump 4,060 and 2,800 cfs, respectively. (One cubic foot = approximately 7.5 gallons.)



This is an artist's rendering depicting what the 17th Street Canal closure gates and pumps will look like after the 11 new pumps (in red) are installed. The pumps will have the capacity to pump 7,600 cfs of water from the canal into Lake Pontchartrain when the gates are closed because of storm surge.

The construction of the platforms will begin shortly, and the vertical pumps will be installed as they arrive. Pumps will be delivered to London Avenue first, in mid-April; pumps should start arriving at 17th Street in May. (No new pumps are being added to Orleans Avenue Canal because that site is already at full capacity of 2,200 cfs.)

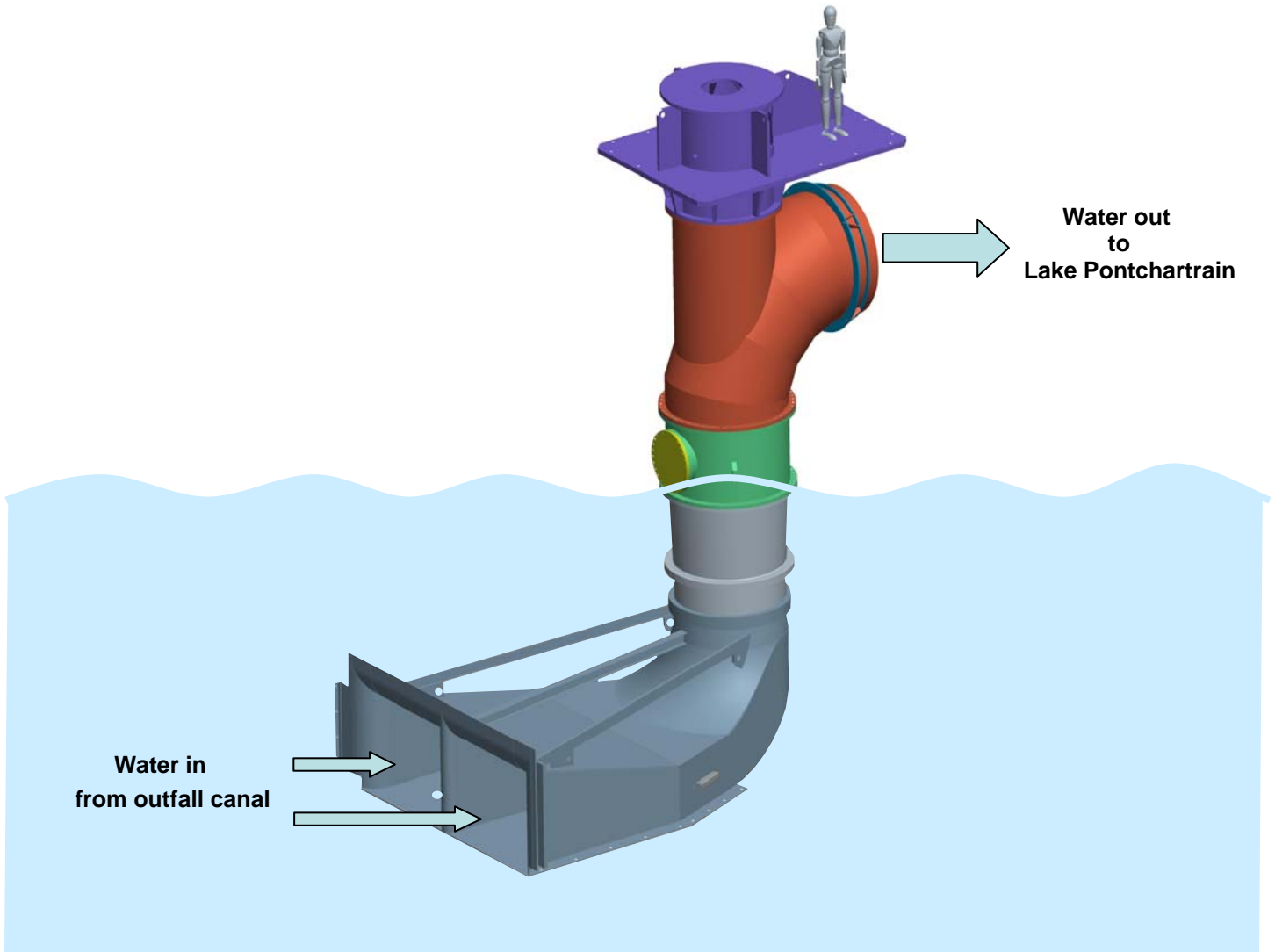
"The award of this contract allows us to move forward rapidly on two fronts," said Col. Jeff Bedey, Commander of the Hurricane Protection

Office. "In December, we awarded a \$52M contract to M.R. Pittman Company to manufacture the pumps, and that process is well underway. Meanwhile, Weston and its partners will begin construction of the platforms and infrastructure so the site is ready for delivery of the first pumps during

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A contract for the construction of 19 new vertical pumps was let earlier this month. This illustration shows what the new pumps will look like. Eleven of the pumps will go to 17th Street Canal while eight are planned for London Avenue Canal. The pumps stand approximately 25 feet high (see figure atop pump for scale). When the outfall canal gates are closed to block storm surge, these pumps will be able to expel canal water into Lake Pontchartrain at approximately 7,600 cfs at 17th Street Canal and 5,000 cfs at London Avenue Canal. (Illustration courtesy Fairbanks Morse)

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the next 60 to 90 days.”

Prior to the award of the two contracts for these 19 pumps, approximately \$213M was spent on construction of the gates and pumps at the 17th Street Canal, London Avenue Canal and Orleans Avenue Canal sites.

Projects at the outfall canals are 100% federally funded with no local cost share.



Corps representatives to appear on WLAE-TV

New Orleans District Corps of Engineers experts will appear on local television station WLAE-TV, channel 32/local 14, at 7:00 and 11:00 p.m., to discuss issues involving the Hurricane Protection System.

Feb. 27 - Randy Marchiafava, Deputy of Small Business, will discuss the Corps' increasing reliance on and support of small businesses.

March 13, 20, 27 - Col. Richard Wagenaar, Commander of the New Orleans District, and show host Tom Bagwill will discuss a variety of issues concerning the Hurricane Protection System and continuing efforts to protect the citizens of southeastern Louisiana.



RFO Begins Final Push on Debris Mission

By Michael Logue, LaRFO

Eighteen months into its historic effort to help south Louisiana recovery from the record devastation of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Louisiana Recovery Field Office (LaRFO) has completed all its current FEMA-assigned missions, except debris removal and demolition.

The debris mission hit a milestone last month when the total debris remaining in Orleans Parish dropped below 1 million cubic yards from an estimated mission of 12 million.

Debris and demolition missions in areas outside New Orleans are either essentially complete or are moving into the final phase. Several communities are using local authorities to allow the Corps to remove debris where property owners have been unable to move debris to the curb for a variety of reasons.

“Debris removal operations are progressing toward completion,” said Michael Park, Director of the USACE LaRFO. “Of an estimated 12.6 million cubic yards assigned to us by FEMA, we’ve removed

11.7 million. This is an incredible accomplishment of a strong federal, state and local partnership.”

At peak, October 2005, the Corps contractors were removing about 80,000 cubic yards per day in Orleans Parish.



A LaRFO employee sprays water on a house demolition to reduce the risk of asbestos dust. (USACE Photo by Patty Mixon)

Current collection figures for curbside and private property debris removal are averaging 10,000 cubic yards per day. A large percentage of the remaining vol-

ume will come from an estimated 4,200 houses remaining to be gutted.

March will be a month of important milestones.

The RFO will help coordinate the activity of 12 volunteer groups and an expected 25,000 spring-break volunteers in gutting the nearly 4200 homes of those who cannot do it themselves.

Also, the City of New Orleans recently passed an ordinance which will streamline and shorten the process and allow the RFO to begin demolition of the estimated 12,000 abandoned or uninhabitable structures.

As a result of the ordinance and intensified partner efforts, March-April could see demolitions climb

sharply toward the 500 mark. By summer, the RFO plans to be ramped up to remove about twice that many per month, keeping pace with the requirements of the current FEMA mission.

Pump Capacity Report

17th Street Canal.....4,060 cfs
London Avenue Canal....2,800 cfs
Orleans Avenue Canal... 2,200 cfs

As of Feb. 21, 2007

Note: The Status Report Newsletter will give weekly reports on the pump capacity of the three temporary outfall canals under construction.

For more details, please visit this Web site:

www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/pumpcomp.htm

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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 hurricane recovery work to stakeholders. This is an online publication and open to public distribution. This issue and past issues can be found at: www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps

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Faces of Hope

By Susan Spaht

URGENT Career Opportunities!!

The Corps of Engineers is currently working to design and construct Hurricane Protection System (HPS) structures in an expedited manner.

There are hundreds of designs that will be generated from these efforts. Most of these projects require Value Engineering Studies, and we are in need of additional engineering professionals to staff these Value Engineering teams.

That was the message sent out in October to all districts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in an effort to recruit additional engineers to New Orleans.

"We need engineers in the disciplines of electrical, mechanical, civil, geotechnical and structural," said Wayne Urbine, Technical Coordinator for the Corps' Value Engineering study.

The Corps wants these engineers for short term participation, one to two weeks, as part of their Value Engineering team studies. The idea is two-fold: 1.) the local engineering staff wants to utilize all its available talent to design and build a Hurricane Protection System for the New Orleans area; and 2.) the Corps sees this as an opportunity to give their new, young engineers valuable experience working with their more seasoned peers.

And the idea is working quite well.

One young civil engineer who answered the call was Elizabeth "Lizz" Newell, P.E.

Newell is a 2002 graduate of the University of Michigan. Her degree is in Civil and Environmental Engineering. She has

YOUNG ENGINEERS VOLUNTEER

for Value Engineering Studies to help build a better Hurricane Protection System

worked for the Detroit District of the Corps of Engineers for four years.

Newell's expertise is in Construction and Contract Management. Her job is to provide District support to construction management operations in field offices. "I am responsible for updating construction contract management operating procedures to encourage efficient execution by using the ever-changing technology available to us," Newell explained.

"I wanted to go down to New Orleans and volunteer ever since the Hurricane," Newell said. "This was the opportunity I was waiting for."

The New Orleans District put Newell on a Value Engineering team with older, more experienced engineers. "They told me they were looking for fresh ideas," Newell explained. "It was a group-oriented study in the beginning, but by the end of my stay I had specific tasks to complete."

The last task Newell performed was to present her engineering ideas to the Value Engineering oversight committee. "She gave a slide show at her de-briefing to the District leadership," said Urbine,

"and she did an outstanding job."

Value Engineering is just what its name implies. The purpose is to find the best, most valuable way to design and build structures for the money available.

"There are going to be hundreds of millions of dollars spent on this system," said Newell, "and the Corps wants to spend that money to get the most value and the best product they can.

"The purpose of the New Orleans Value Engineering studies is to think of the hurricane protection system as *one whole system*," said Newell, "to make it more comprehensive, more integrated."



Lizz Newell

Her New Orleans experience, according to Newell, was "pretty amazing, fascinating."

Newell pointed out that re-building the Hurricane Protection System in New Orleans is "one of our country's biggest civil works projects ever. The social implications and impact of this project will affect so many people's lives.

"I really like the idea of contributing to that."



VALUE ENGINEERING PAYS OFF FOR CORPS OF ENGINEERS

To date the Corps of Engineers has conducted 11 Value Engineering Workshops for projects Corps-wide with an estimated value of \$2.4 billion and with an identified savings of \$500 million.

The Corps has just finished writing a Value Engineering report for the Hurricane Protection System as a whole, and anticipates the savings will be extensive.

At the end of this year, Value Engineering studies will be completed on projects Corps-wide worth a projected \$16.8 billion.

Value Engineering studies for the New Orleans area have engaged voluntary Corps engineers from around the country. Nineteen employees from six Districts are currently participating in these studies.

NEPA compliance through Alternative Arrangements proposed

Plan includes extensive opportunity for public involvement

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers co-hosted a series of public meetings Feb. 12 and 13. The purpose of the meetings was to gain public input on proposed National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance using alternative arrangements for the Lake Pontchartrain and West Bank hurricane protection system projects.

The Corps considers improvements to levees, floodwalls and other hurricane protection system features to be an emergency, critical to the future of New Orleans. Given this emergency situation and the need to protect the public safety and restore the economic vitality, the Corps is proposing an alternative process as part of the overall plan for NEPA compliance.

NEPA requires all federal agencies to consider the impacts of their projects to the human environment prior to starting construction of any proposed project. The impacts of large and complex civil works projects are traditionally analyzed in a process that can take several years to complete.

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- Karen Durham-Aguilera
Incoming Director, Task Force Hope

people of the greater New Orleans area," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Incoming Director of Task Force Hope. "Our responsibility is to design and build a system that is good for people and good for the environment."

Under a traditional NEPA process, all of the proposed actions for the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Project, from St. Charles Parish to New Orleans East, would

have to undergo a single impact analysis before any 100-year hurricane protection construction project could start. The same would hold true for the West Bank and Vicinity 100-year hurricane protection project.

The alternative arrangements to ensure compliance by the Corps proposes examining the impact on groups of projects to be included as part of the cumulative impact of all the proposed actions in the region. This allows smaller groups of projects to move forward to construction. An in-depth analysis and consideration of potential environmental impacts would be completed for each group and any unavoidable impacts to the environment would be mitigated.

The Corps' proposed process will include extensive opportunity for public involvement in project planning, including monthly public meetings and the solicitation of public comment via nationally distributed newspapers.