



# Corps Hurricane Response

## Task Force Hope Status Report

May 10, 2006

The US Army Corps of Engineers established Task Force Hope immediately after Hurricane Katrina hit the Louisiana and Mississippi coasts. Task Force Hope's mission is to manage the work on levees and floodwalls, debris removal and all emergency response efforts that Federal Emergency Management Agency requested the Corps to carry out. Task Force Hope oversees the efforts of Task Force Guardian and Recovery Field Offices in Louisiana and Mississippi. Task Force Guardian is repairing damages to the Greater New Orleans federal hurricane and flood protection system resulting from Hurricane Katrina, restoring the system to pre-storm levels of protection by June 1, 2006.

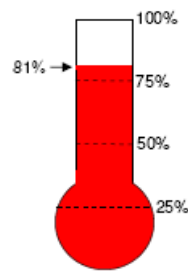
### Hurricane Protection System Restoration

#### Percent of Pre-Katrina Protection Restored

81 % complete

26 of 59 contracts complete

The Hurricane Response  
Web site is located at: <http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/hurricane/>



#### Task Force Hope Mission Timeline:

##### Recovery:

May 31, 2006 (tentative) – Debris removal complete in Mississippi.

March 23, 2007 (tentative) – Debris removal mission completion in Louisiana.

##### Repair:

June 1, 2006 – Pre-Katrina level of protection restored.

##### Restore:

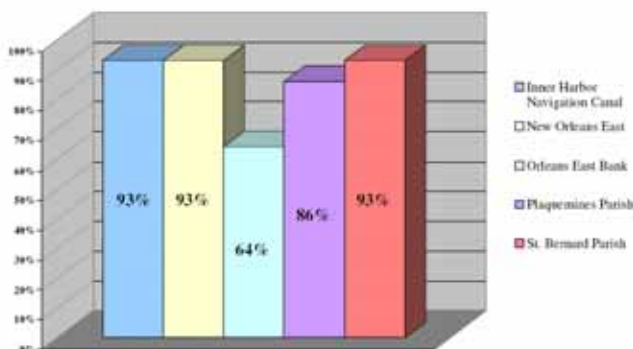
September 1, 2007 – All undamaged levees/floodwalls will be returned to original design heights (with the exception of the IHNC flood gate project areas, which will be protected once the flood gates are completed).

September 2007 – Construction of unfinished portions of projects will be completed.

##### Improve:

2010 – Other improvements, such as reinforcing levees, IHNC gates and flood proofing pumping stations will also be made to optimize performance of the existing system.

Hurricane Protection System Repair Status



The percent figures represent actual construction. The reason Orleans East Bank shows only 64% is that the construction there includes additional improvements (temporary gate closures and pumps).

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## The Faces of Hope:

### *Mississippi native makes a difference with youngest hurricane victims*

**By Alicia Embrey**

*TFH-MS Public Affairs Office*

When Elizabeth Ivy watched the weather channel the night before Katrina hit the Gulf coast, the question on her mind and many of those in the Vicksburg District- will it be a false alarm?

“Living in Vicksburg, we kept our eye on the weather channel, said Ivy, a project manager with Vicksburg District’s Planning, Programs, and Project Management Branch. “Assuming that Katrina would be the same old hurricane that does some minimal damage, people from the coast and New Orleans usually evacuate to Vicksburg, so we see this big influx of folks in town.”

The night of the 28<sup>th</sup> however, Ivy would wake up every hour on the hour to catch the latest. “Early the next morning, Katrina slammed into the Mississippi Gulf Coast and New Orleans with winds that were literally felt around the State of Mississippi,” she explained.

When Ivy went to work that morning the winds had already started to howl. “We were told to leave the office around 10 am. I drove home, winds were extremely high and we had torrential rains. I battened down hatches and watched the weather as Katrina moved further north through Mississippi,” she said. “The power went off at my house and was off for around one week. I remember at the time complaining of the heat and the inconvenience of not having

electricity.”

The feeling of inconvenience was replaced by shock and guilt when she saw the first pictures of destruction along the coast. “I felt terrible when I saw the first coverage of the storm. It looked as if a bomb had exploded all along the Mississippi Gulf Coast,” she said. “I was completely shocked at the total devastation and felt guilty about all the complaining I did regarding no electricity.”

Being a native Mississippian, I felt the pain, hurt, and hopelessness that all the people of Mississippi dealt with,” she said.

Corps employees are known for their giving nature, like Ivy the best-of-the-best stepped up to the plate. “I wanted to offer my assistance and help in any way that I could. I realize that people who work for the Corps and volunteer their time to work a disaster are generally the “best-of-the-best” and want to make a difference,” she said.

“This is my home state and I was so thankful that the Corps was here to help, I also wanted to make a difference.”



**Elizabeth Ivy**

*(‘Faces,’ continued on page 3)*

The mission of the **Status Report Newsletter** is to support the information program for Task Force Hope and its stakeholders. It also serves as one of the Task Force Hope’s primary communication tools for accurately transmitting the work of not only Task Force Hope, but the efforts of Task Force Guardian and the Recovery Field Offices in Louisiana and Mississippi to the Gulf Coast community and its citizens. This is an online publication and open to public distribution. This issue and past issues can be found at: <http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/hurricane>. Comments and questions may be sent to the Status Report Newsletter editor at: [b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil](mailto:b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil).

The **Status Report Newsletter**  
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## 'Faces,' *continued from page 2*

Wanting to join the team Ivy called on Task Force Hope-Mississippi Resident Engineer Jimmy Waddle for advice.

"I wanted to help but didn't know where my talents would best fit in, so I called Jimmy Waddle and he had the perfect opportunity - Mission Manager of Temporary Public Structures," Ivy said. "I felt that as Mission Manager of Temporary Public Structures (TPS) my experience as a Project Manager would be extremely useful. I am used to managing a team of professionals in my everyday job."

"Upon my arrival, the TPS mission was moving along and proceeding pretty much as planned. So, I was extremely pleased to see the mission in good shape for the change in management.

Getting the local governments and emergency services affected by Katrina back into operation was critical. The Temporary Public Structures Mission not only helped the governing bodies and emergency services, it brought a sense of normalcy to the communities.

"The Corps was tasked by FEMA with the Temporary Public Structures Mission - September 9<sup>th</sup>, the first structure was turned over to the applicant -September 28<sup>th</sup> and 5 months later the last structure was turned over on February 14<sup>th</sup>," she said.

"As Mission Manager, I found this



**Thankful students from Jackson County, St. Martin School display their gratefulness to the Corps. The Temporary Public Structures Mission installed 84 temporary classrooms there. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Photo)**

mission to be tremendously rewarding and very fulfilling. The TPS team was the greatest, most professional group of people that I have had the pleasure of working with and I am grateful to know each and every one of them."

At the peak of the mission, approximately 40 Corps employees were on the team. On the order of 75 Corps personnel worked over the 5-month lifetime of the TPS mission.

"Being able to help the youngest survivors of Hurricane Katrina get back into a normal routine by providing classrooms has been very close to the hearts of those involved with this mission and in hurricane recovery here on the Gulf Coast. A total of 726 classrooms or offices were provided to Gulf Coast Communities," she said.

Although the TPS mission was

complete, Task Force Hope wasn't finished with her yet. "When I originally deployed I was planning on staying down here for up to 60 days.

However, TFH lost the Congressional Mission Liaison that had been on the Coast since around the first of December and I was asked if I would be interested in assuming the role. I felt it would be a good fit, so once again I said I would extend for 30 days," she said.

Once this type of work gets in your blood, it is hard to let go until you see the job completed. "Now I'm here to stay here until the end of the mission. I will not get a promotion based on this experience, but I have gained much more self-confidence and that will help me in all my future endeavors with the Corps," she said.

# Corps studying options with Plaquemines Parish

On April 12, in a joint announcement by the Gulf Coast Rebuilding (GCR) Office, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), presented the advisory base flood elevations (ABFEs) for Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, and the uppermost portion of Plaquemines parish. (St. Charles Parish ABFE had previously been released.)

This announcement was made possible by a commitment from GCR Chairman Powell and the White House that the \$2.5 billion in additional funding would be sought to provide a 100 year level of flood protection in these areas.

Chairman Powell also announced that a study will be undertaken for lower Plaquemines Parish because of the \$1.6 billion estimated cost for providing protection to the area which contains only 2% of the popula-

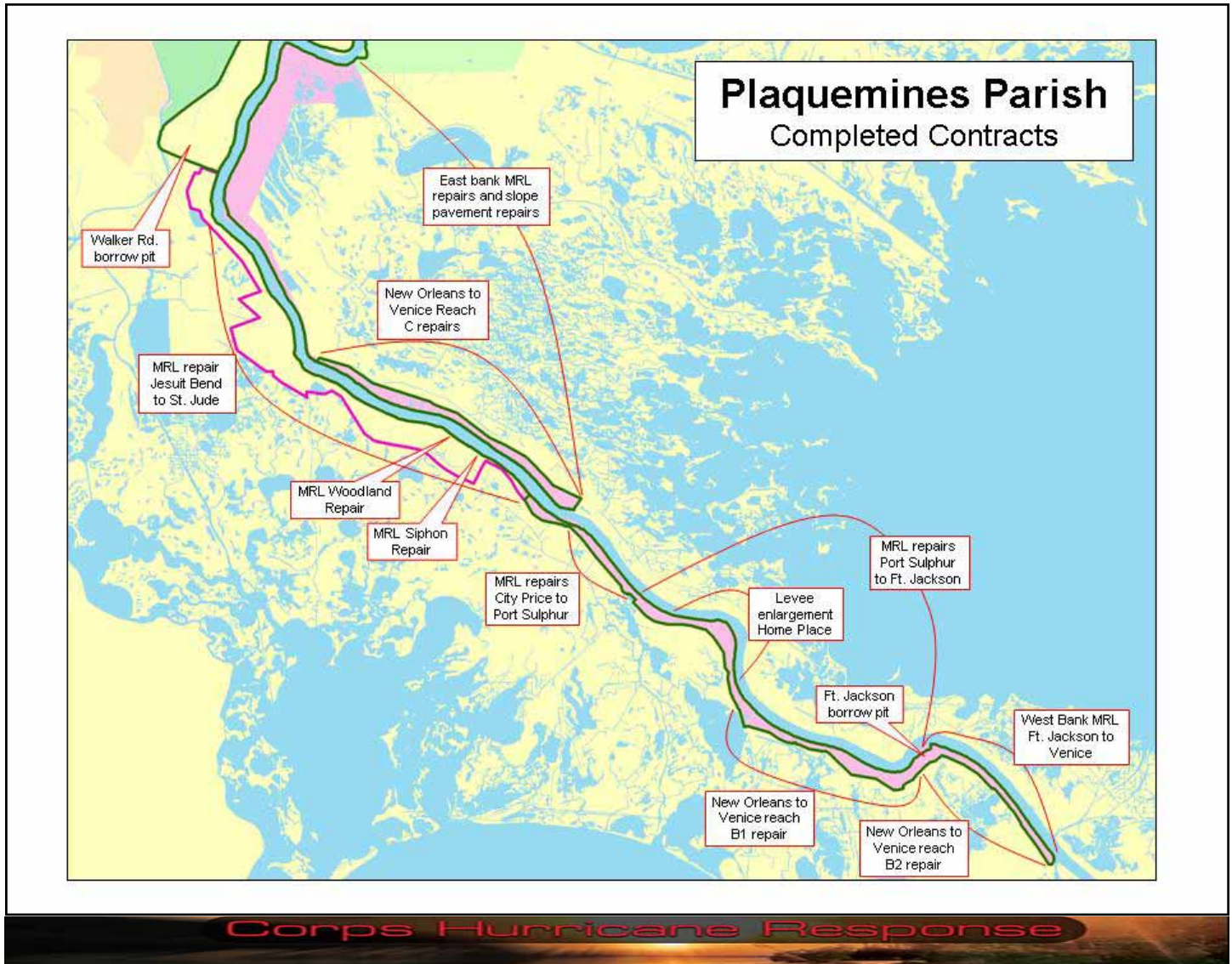
tion of the 5 parish area.

On April 19<sup>th</sup>, USACE New Orleans District and Task Force Hope personnel met with Plaquemines Parish President Benny Rousselle and other Parish officials to discuss the scope and possible options that can or should be considered in this study.

The Parish is interested in working with the Corps to develop viable options and offered some ideas on reducing the overall scope of the project. Parish officials hosted a tour for USACE personnel on April 24<sup>th</sup> to continue the sharing of ideas and information.

The Corps and Plaquemines Parish will continue working together to meet the June deadline for providing options.

Parish officials left the meeting with the understanding that the Corps of Engineers has not abandoned them.



# Coastal Update

## Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA),

The Coastal Restoration Branch now has four additional Project Management Plans under development at various stages for the LCA: St. Bernard and Vicinity (MRGO Environmental); the Chenier Plain (water and sediment management); Myrtle Grove (fresh water and sediment diversion) and Mississippi River Hydro Study and Delta Management.

They have a scheduled delivery date of 17 May to the local sponsor for signature.

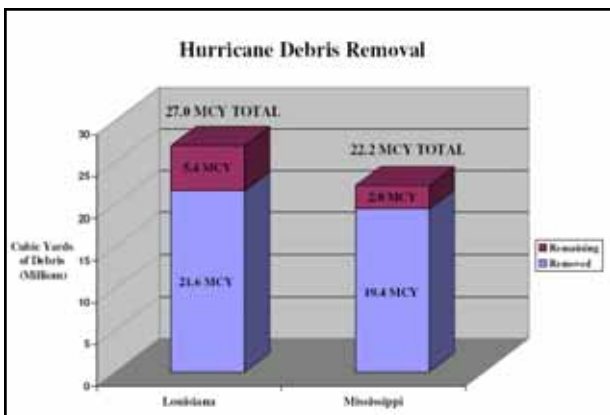
## LA– Ecosystem Restoration Study

The LaCPR team will hold public meetings on May 11 in Houma and May 18 in Larose to present the currently considered alternatives for Category 5 hurricane alignments and related coastal restoration features, and to solicit comments from the public on the full scope of issues to be considered.

A study team will visit a home in St. Bernard that survived Hurricane Katrina's wrath intact – con-

sidered a non-structural success story. (The Corps labels structural alternatives as earthen levees, concrete walls, floodgates and other devices.) Scientists are interested in the construction methods used on the home as a consideration when rebuilding.

The second review draft of the preliminary technical report has been sent to the Independent Technical Review team. Their comments will be incorporated into the Final Technical Report due to Congress by June 30.



For public information on Debris Removal Operations, please contact the respective state offices: Mississippi Recovery Field Office at (601) 631-5065 or the Louisiana Recovery Field Office at (225) 218-9325.



Contact us with your comments and questions:

[b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil](mailto:b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil)

The Hurricane Response Web site is located at:

<http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/hurricane/>

## What's New!: Your Hurricane Protection System

### Permanent Pump Stations

Preliminary work has begun on preparing a conceptual plan of canal closures and pump installations at the Lake Pontchartrain end of outfall canals (17<sup>th</sup> Street, Orleans Avenue and London Avenue in Orleans Parish). This project is one of the improvements to the New Orleans Hurricane Protection System (HPS). Partnering sessions will be conducted with local sponsor as well as other interested.

### Levees and Floodwalls

Two projects reached "protection restored" status along the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal on May 5th. All remaining projects are being intensively managed to restore pre-Katrina protection by the June 1 target date.

Even as this restoration work is finished, future work is planned to complete previously unconstructed portions of authorized projects to their authorized design height. Of the \$465 million committed to construction contracts to date, \$350 million is required to restore protection at pre-Katrina levels, and the remainder will be applied toward enhanced protection as previously authorized.

# Around the Task Force....



**Corps reaches out to all areas of the community...**

Clockwise: Task Force Hope Director Dan Hitchings (right) meets with New Orleans Mayor C. Ray Nagin recently. Hitchings, along with of a team of Corps and Gulf Coast Rebuilding representatives, briefed the mayor on the status of the restoration of the hurricane protection system. (Photo by Casondra Brewster)

**A VISIT FROM THE FAR EAST:** Task Force Guardian Commander Col. Lewis Setliff (center) answers questions from Vice Consul Kenji Inoue on the Corps' progress on the restoration of the hurricane protection system while Senior Vice Foreign Minister Katsutoshi Kaneda listens. The delegation was from the Japanese Foreign Ministry. (Photo by David Deshotels)



**THE BLESSING OF THE FLEET:** Father Colby and Father Dennis from Pass Christian, Miss. walked out on the partially damaged finger piers to sprinkle holy water on each boat. US Army Corps of Engineers public affairs specialists, Denise Cuevas and Dee Flower, were asked to toss the blessing wreath into the water as the priests concluded the ceremony.

Points of Contact for Information		
Topic	Phone	Organization
Overall information about work being performed by the Corps of Engineers in the New Orleans District	504-862-2126	New Orleans District Public Affairs
Levee construction being performed to restore the hurricane and flood protection system to pre-Katrina condition by June 1, 2006	504-862-2076	Task Force Guardian Public Affairs
Debris Removal in Louisiana	225-218-9325	Louisiana Recovery Field Office
Debris Removal in Mississippi	601-631-5065	Mississippi Recovery Field Office
Overall Task Force Hope Information	504-862-1836	Task Force Hope Public Affairs