



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report

January 20, 2009

MVD Commander approves

Notice To Proceed on IHNC project

Important step means path forward is clear for construction of largest design/build project in Corps history

By Susan Spaht

On Jan. 14, Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, approved a Notice to Proceed with construction of the 150-foot wide sector gate and 150-foot wide barge gate for the Inner Harbor Lake Borgne Navigation Canal (IHNC) Surge Barrier Project. This order came after the successful completion of many hydraulic analyses, engineering design analyses, public and stakeholder meetings, environmental studies, navigation simulation exercises, real estate issues and other necessary procedures.

Brig. Gen. Walsh previously approved a Notice to Proceed to begin dredging and pile driving.

"We are very excited to be where we



Shaw Environmental & Infrastructure crews drive piles for the IHNC Lake Borgne Surge Barrier.
(Photo courtesy of Shaw)

are today - this is another milestone for the entire Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope. "We can proceed to the next phase in construction as we provide Advance Measures in 2009 and complete this important project in 2011."

The director said the public can expect to see continual activity in the

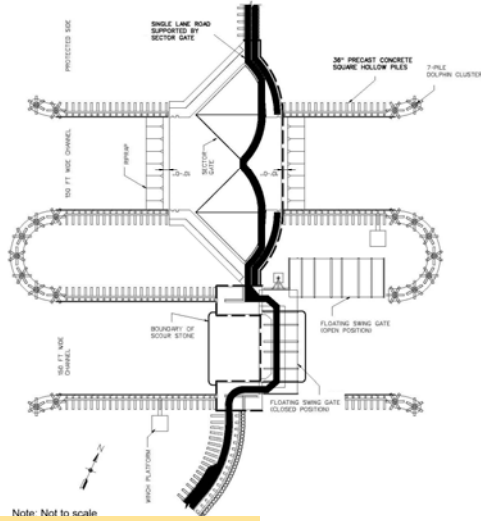
area as construction progresses forward from the north bank of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) to the western bank of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, a 2.4-mile stretch

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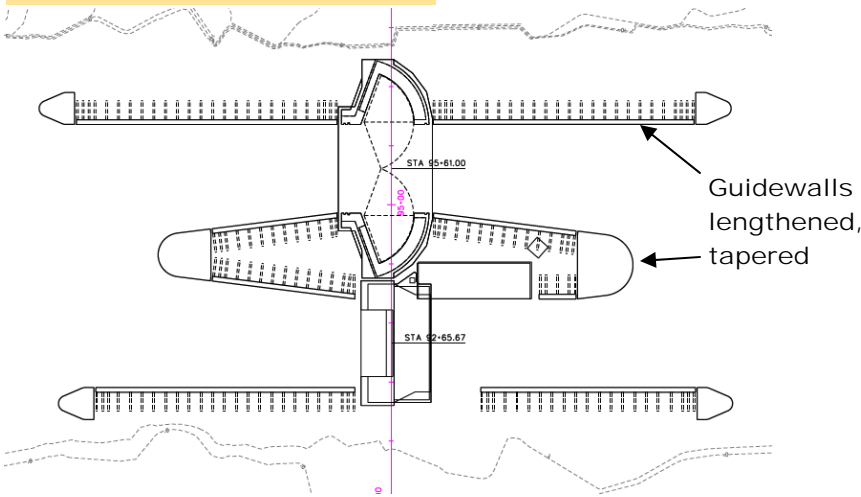
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Gates *Before* Navigation Safety Enhancements



Gates *After* Navigation Safety Enhancements



Evolution of Gate Design

After ERDC gate navigation simulations, professional tow boat captains were asked to suggest ways to make the IHNC gates safer and easier for navigation. The illustration at top left is the original design for the gates; the illustration at below left is the gates after the captains' enhancements were incorporated.

Navigation Enhancements include:

- Guidewalls re-designed as a "touch" system, lengthened and tapered on both ends for extra safety;
- Strengthened "dolphins", guidewalls and gates;
- Corps working with U.S. Coast Guard to design lighting, signage and other safety aids for navigation; and
- Researching use of new technology to feed "real time" wind and current information to tow captains.

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of waterway and marsh. This project is part of the IHNC surge barrier system; a second barrier will be constructed at Lake Pontchartrain (Seabrook) within the next two years.

The IHNC Surge Barrier at Lake Borgne, the largest design/build project in Corps history, will provide 100-year level storm surge protection to a large portion of Orleans and St. Bernard Parishes when completed. The Corps' main priorities for this \$695 million construction project are to

provide public safety, navigation safety and environmental stewardship.

Advance measures for the project, scheduled for completion this hurricane season, will consist of a 14- to 20-foot barrier wall. When completed in 2011, the project will stand between 24 and 26 feet above water.

"We have a long and productive relationship with the people who use the nation's waterways," said Col. Michael McCormick, Commander of the Hurricane Protection Office. "We

will continue to work together to meet the needs of navigation and the environment while staying focused on reducing the risk of storm surge to the people of New Orleans."

The Corps and its contractor, Shaw Environmental & Infrastructure Inc. of New Orleans, hosted a "ground-breaking" ceremony on Dec. 4 to signal the start of pile driving and dredging work as the gate design continued on this important design/build project.

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IHNC Surge Barrier construction moving forward



On a recent inspection of the IHNC Surge Barrier construction are, from left, Chip DeSonier, Vice President, Shaw; Col. Michael McCormick (back), Commander, Hurricane Protection Office; Con Murphy, Senior Vice President, Shaw; Charlie Hess, Senior Vice President, Shaw; Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director, Task Force Hope; Rick Kendrick, Chief of Execution, Hurricane Protection Office. (Photo courtesy of Shaw)

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The Corps conducted exhaustive navigational gate modeling simulations at its Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) in Vicksburg, Miss. to assure the navigational safety and the environmental stewardship of the GIWW gate structures. The exercises were attended by representatives of the navigation industry, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Southeast Louisiana Levee Authority – East, the State of Louisiana, the Flood Protection Alliance, elected officials, Corps engineers and leadership, and other stakeholders.

During these simulation runs, profes-

sional tug boat captains “drove” loaded and unloaded barges through the simulated gates in different weather, wind and water conditions. More than 280 simulations were performed. After the simulation runs, the captains were asked to offer suggestions to make the gates safer and easier to navigate. Their suggestions have been incorporated into the new gate designs (see illustration on page 2).

“We value the help and will continue to work with our partners and stakeholders as we strive to deliver this monumental project and reduce the risk of hurricane surges to the communities in the IHNC area,” said Ms. Durham-Aguilera.



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Comments and questions may be sent to the

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Status Report Newsletter

Task Force Hope

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Corps leveraging its expertise from throughout region and nation
Serving the people of Louisiana

By Susan Spaht

“We have made a commitment to New Orleans area communities... to provide 100-year level of protection in 2011 or break our backs trying.”

- Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp
 Commander, Corps of Engineers

With that declaration, the Corps’ Chief of Engineers reiterated that the number one domestic priority of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the completion of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) within the next three years.

Recognizing that a tremendous amount of work must be completed in a very short timeframe, Mississippi Valley Division* leadership developed a path forward that would leverage the expertise in all six districts in the Division.

In true military fashion, one team will step up to join another team with a large and time-sensitive mission. In this case, all districts in a division will unite to share the responsibilities of delivering the HSDRRS in the greater New Orleans area.

The call went out to several other divisions and districts that have certain areas of professional and technical expertise that will help ensure



timely project completion.

That additional support includes the Northwestern Division, the Chicago District, the Huntsville District, the Corps’ Engineer Research and Development Center, Corps of Engineers Headquarters, and many Corps offices



Brig. Gen. Walsh

and other professional sources.

Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division, has assigned specific portions of the HSDRRS to each of the districts under his command. Brig. Gen. Walsh described his division’s joint mission this way: “We will get there through regional culture, regional program development and delivery, regional workforce management and regional acquisition strategy.” All six

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districts in the Mississippi Valley Division – the New Orleans District and the *Upper Five* districts - are now fully engaged in the HSDRRS mission as their number one regional priority, although each district will continue with their ongoing civil works projects.

While the senior program managers in New Orleans will retain overall responsibility for their areas, the other Corps districts will provide technical management for completing the designs of the various project features.

Here are the assignments for each district:

Vicksburg District – Plaquemines Parish

Memphis District – New Orleans East

St. Paul District – St. Bernard Parish

St. Louis District – Metro New Orleans and Terrebonne Parish

Rock Island District – engineering support for specific projects or parts of projects for the Protection and Restoration Office (PRO).

Northwestern Division – support to the Hurricane Protection Office (HPO) on Permanent Pumps

Chicago District – storm proofing

“This combination of Corps districts and divisions working together toward a common goal has become a true *team of teams*,” said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope.

“I want to thank our *team of teams*, all the districts and divisions that are involved with our mission here in New Orleans,” said Ms. Durham-



From left, St. Louis District employees Deanne Strauser (seated), Deputy Program Manager; Brad Strauser, Liaison for the Upper Five Districts; and Capt. Elizabeth Wannstedt, Project Manager/Team Leader; review a Terrebonne Parish project map while on a recent site visit in New Orleans. (USACE Photo)

Team of Teams working to meet 2011 timeline for HSDRRS



Karen Durham-Aguilera

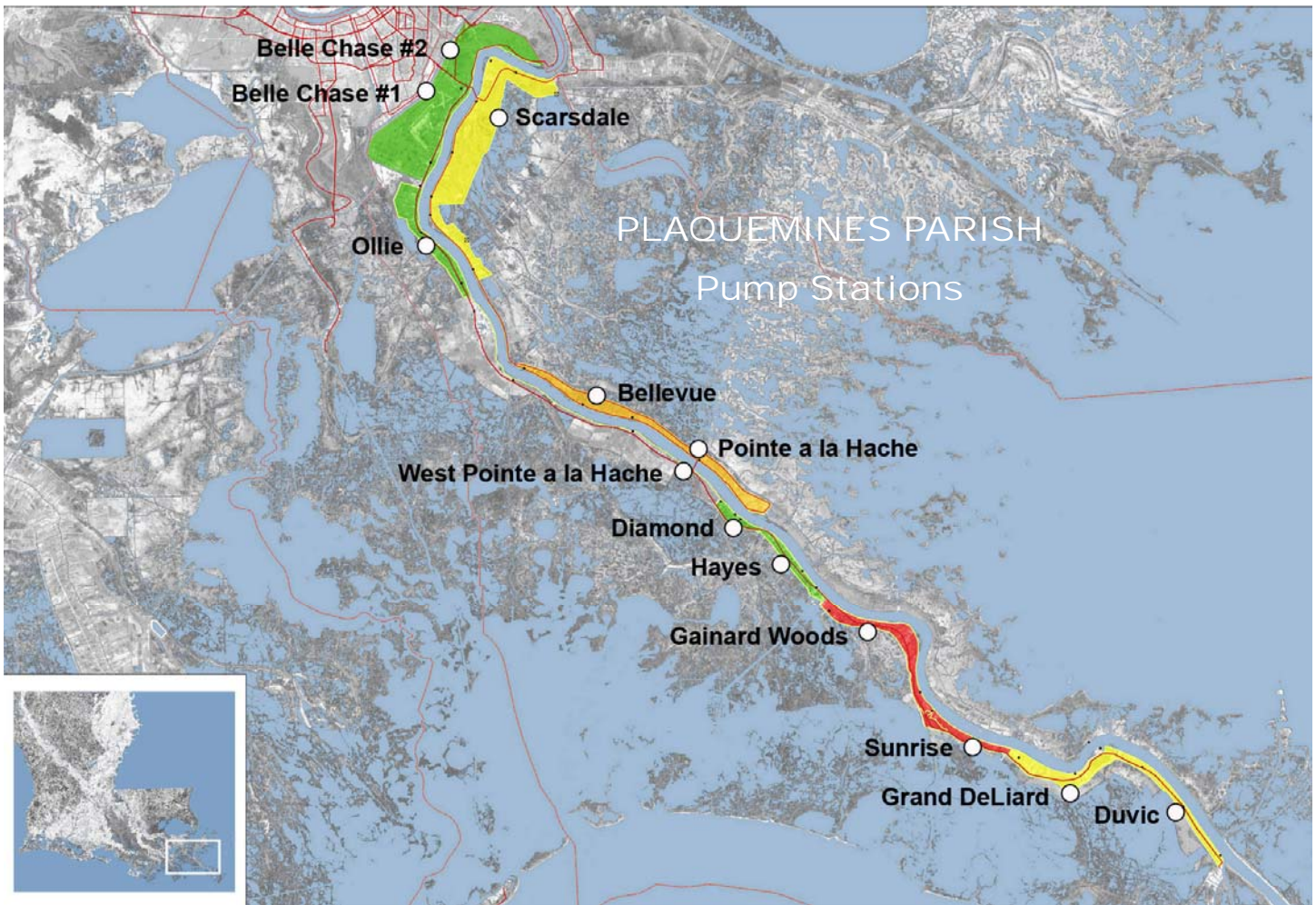
Aguilera, “for supporting the HSDRRS program goals and objectives as well as the commitment we have made to the people of the greater New Orleans area.

“We are dedicated to achieving success in a

timely manner by working together toward this common objective and national priority.”



*The New Orleans District is one of six in the Mississippi Valley Division.



\$14.3 Million in repairs - 100% Federally-funded

Corps repairing 13 Pump Stations in Plaquemines

On December 17, the Corps of Engineers awarded a contract for \$2 million worth of repairs to two pump stations in Plaquemines Parish. The contract was awarded to DV & Associates LLC of Pennsylvania, a disabled veteran-owned small business. The six-month contract calls for repairs to West Point-a-la-Hache and Diamond pump stations.

The repairs consist of replacing motors, air compressors and generators, and other minor improvements “to help ensure the reliability of those pump stations throughout future

storm events,” according to Drew Walsh, Senior Project Manager. The cost of the repairs is 100 percent federally-funded.

On December 19, the Corps awarded a \$1.65 million contract to modify five other Plaquemines Parish non-federal pump stations. That work is set to begin this month. The contract was awarded to Healthcon Inc., a New Orleans firm. The six-month contract calls for repairs to Belle Chasse, Ollie, Grand DeLiard and Duvic pump stations.

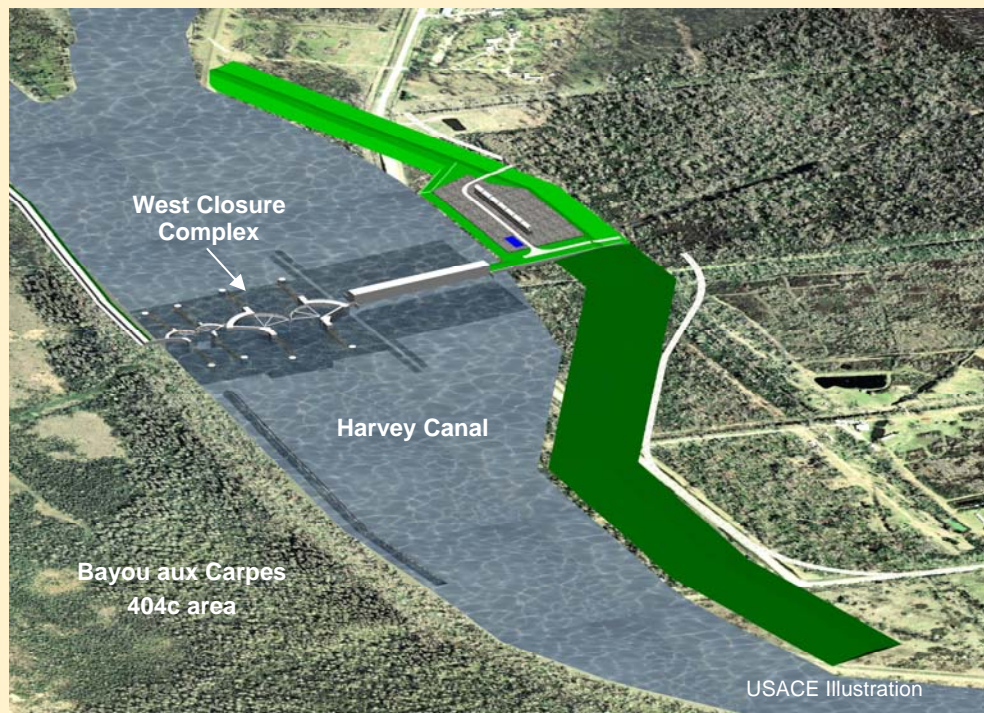
“This contract is the fourth and final

pump station repair project for Plaquemines Parish,” said Walsh. The work includes replacing motors, air compressors and generators as well as making other minor improvements to the stations.

The Corps has awarded a total of \$14.3 million for repairs to 13 pump stations in Plaquemines Parish. The cost of the projects is 100 percent federally-funded. The Corps is working with the Plaquemines Parish government to complete all the repairs.



ECI to expedite construction of West Closure Complex



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will use Early Contractor Involvement (ECI)

to expedite construction of the proposed Gulf Intracoastal Waterway **West Closure Complex** project. This Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction project, when complete, will reduce the risk from storm surge for residents and businesses in the West Bank area.

Early Contractor Involvement (ECI) allows members of the construction industry to participate in the early stages of the design and planning for this \$500+ million project. ECI also enables the Corps to incorporate innovative construction sequencing techniques into the proposed plan for the West Closure Complex project.

“Early Contractor Involvement is a beneficial tool for everyone involved due to the magnitude and complexity of this project,” said Col. Alvin Lee, New Orleans District Commander. “We have never used ECI as an acquisition strategy before, and we are

excited about the benefits it brings to this monumental project.”

The Corps will host a Pre-Proposal Conference on **Thursday, Jan. 29**, at the New Orleans Marriott Metairie at Lakeway Hotel to discuss the terms and conditions of the ECI solicitation with members of the industry. Further information is available at: www.mvn.usace.army.mil/EBS/cont_preproposalconference.asp as well as at: www.FedBizOpps.gov. The project solicitation number is W912P809R0004.

Unprecedented Work Ahead

The proposed West Closure Complex would reduce the risk of storm surge from an event that has a 1 percent chance of occurring in any given year for a majority of the West Bank area by preventing storm surge from entering the Harvey and Algiers canals.

The Corps' proposed action for the

project will require a pump station with an unprecedented 20,000 cubic

feet per second storm water drainage pumping capacity, the largest of this type in the world. The proposed complex also features two navigable floodgates, as well as levee and flood wall construction. In addition, the project is adjacent to an Environmental Protection Agency wetland area of national significance, and construction impacts on this area must be kept to a minimum.

The Corps is working in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency, federal and state resource agencies, non-federal partners, the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, and the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-West, as well as other interested stakeholders, to develop the best engineering alternative with the fewest unavoidable environmental impacts.

