



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter

May 28, 2010

HSDRRS construction in full swing

Perimeter system taking shape over 5-parish area

*Corps driving toward
100-year level
risk reduction
by June 2011*

by Susan Spaht

June 1 will mark the start of the fifth Hurricane Season since Katrina. In the past four and a half years, the Corps of Engineers has made significant and noticeable progress on the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS). Levees, floodwalls, barrier walls, gates and pumps around the five-parish area are under construction and form the massive perimeter system the Corps is building for the 2011 Hurricane Season.

Work on two of the largest projects in the HSDRRS is progressing at a fast pace. The Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Surge Barrier, the Corps' largest design-build civil works project,



This image from Google Earth shows the IHNC Surge Barrier spanning nearly two miles - from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (at Michoud) to across the MRGO. When completed, the project will include gates at the GIWW and at Bayou Bienvenue. 100-year level risk reduction features are expected for June 2011.

is more than 50% complete after only a year of construction, and progress continues toward the June 2011 goal. At nearly two miles long, it is being called the "Great Wall of Louisiana." This enormous barrier is now clearly visible by satellite (see *Google Earth image this page*).

The IHNC Surge Barrier is already a formidable defense against storm surge that would come from Lake Borgne.

The West Closure Complex (WCC) on the West Bank, another colossal construction project, will include the world's largest drainage pump sta-

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IHNC Surge Barrier

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tion, capable of pumping more than 19,000 cfs. After only eight months of construction, working day and night shifts, the project is already 30% complete.

In addition to the giant pump station structure, the 200-acre WCC site will include a closure wall, six sluice gates, T-walls, a levee, and a 225-foot sector gate that will consist of two 700-ton closure gates.

The West Closure Complex defends against storm surge from the Gulf of Mexico for the more than 250,000 people living on the West Bank.

History in the Making

Over the past few years, the Corps has been working side-by-side with local, state and federal government entities, stakeholders and partners to

complete the 100-year level system by Hurricane Season 2011.

“The magnitude and timeframe of this mission is something that has never been attempted before,” said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope. “We’re making history here in New Orleans.

“It is remarkable what has been accomplished in only four and a half years. We are making our construction schedules and we are getting the job done right because of the hard work, dedication and excellent teamwork of everyone involved in this mission.”

Good News

With one year remaining to achieve 100-year level surge risk reduction, the Corps of Engineers already has a lot of good news for the area:

Lake Pontchartrain & Vicinity: 57 of 66 100-year contracts awarded

- Orleans Metro perimeter system over 90% complete
- New Orleans East: final 3 contracts awarded
- St. Bernard Parish: major construction continues between Bayou Bienvenue and Bayou Dupre and Hwy. 46
- IHNC Surge Barrier is 50% complete

West Bank & Vicinity: 31 of 38 100-year contracts awarded

- Approximately 15 miles of levees and 2.5 miles of floodwalls have been raised throughout the West Bank & Vicinity

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West Closure Complex

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- The Harvey Canal Floodgate and Company Canal Interim Barge Gate are both complete and operable
- West Closure Complex is 30% complete

SELA - Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control Project, 12 of 35 contracts awarded

Pump Station Repairs, now 97% complete

Storm Proofing projects are 28% complete

The regional impact of the Corps' nearly \$15 billion budget is truly significant:

- More than \$2 billion in Small Business prime construction contracts have been awarded for the HSDRRS
- Almost 70% of HSDRRS contractual dollars have been awarded to Louisiana-based businesses
- Nearly 4,000 direct construction jobs to date have resulted from work on HSDRRS

"The Corps has a commitment to small and disadvantaged businesses," said Mrs. Durham-Aguilera. "Reaching \$2 billion in Small Business contracts recently is an accomplishment that the Corps worked hard to achieve. And it's gratifying to

have so many HSDRRS contracts go to Louisiana-based companies - the people and businesses most affected by the 2005 hurricanes.

"Building the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System for the greater New Orleans area is a vital and important mission," commented Mrs. Durham-Aguilera.



Karen Durham-Aguilera

"Having a positive economic effect on the area at the same time just seems right."



A Word from the Chief

“This is the largest design-build civil works project we have in the Corps. It’s marvelous! It’s not finished yet, but it already makes us light years better than we were before!”

- Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp speaking to the news media at the IHNC Surge Barrier on May 13



Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, Chief of Engineers, talks to the news media on May 13 during an inspection at the IHNC Surge Barrier. At left is Col. Robert Sinkler, Commander of the Hurricane Protection Office; at center is Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of Task Force Hope; and at right is Mayor Mitch Landrieu, City of New Orleans.
USACE Photo

The last time I visited New Orleans was December 2009. In the short time since that visit, so much has happened. I am pleasantly amazed at the amount of construction that has taken place on the area’s Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System.

I am so proud of the Corps employees and all the outstanding contractors who are working so hard to get this important

job done. The results of their hard work and dedication can be seen throughout the entire system we are building in the five-parish area.

On May 13, I walked on the IHNC Surge Barrier – only a year after the start of construction, and it is already over 50% complete. Congratulations!

I also want to thank and congratulate all our stakeholders and partners who are

collaborating with us on this important mission. Just look what we can accomplish through teamwork!

But we are not finished yet. Let’s keep the momentum going, and by next hurricane season this will be a true system, a 100-year level system for the great people of Southeast Louisiana.

Robert Van Antwerp
Lt. Gen., Chief of Engineers

A Message from the Commander

*Brig. Gen. (P) Michael Walsh, Commander
Mississippi Valley Division*

The Mississippi Valley Division's work in New Orleans remains the Nation's number one domestic priority. As we enter the final year for completion of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System, we continue to learn valuable lessons that are making a profound impact on how we do business.

Public safety is the Corps' top priority and the citizens of New Orleans are more protected now than at any time in the past by a system that is more resilient than it has ever been. We are determined to have all physical features in place to provide 100-year level risk reduction for the 2011 Hurricane Season.

The next 12 months are critical as we move into the height of construction and the system becomes operational. Our commitment to our stakeholders and partners is stronger than ever as we finish this phase of a monumental task.

The incredible system we are building with our partners, stakeholders and contractors shows what we can do with full rather than incremental funding, and we are grateful for our Nation's commitment



Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp, left, Chief of Engineers; and Brig. Gen. (P) Michael Walsh, Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division; inspect the IHNC Surge Barrier work on May 13. USACE Photo

to invest more than \$14 billion to help improve the system.

Our work in New Orleans proves that regionalization is a key to quickly completing critical missions. All six of the Mississippi Valley Division Districts are involved in the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System work, as are several other Corps divisions and districts.

We are taking a holistic approach to risk reduction, and the public's safety will improve greatly with the multiple lines of defense we are building. In addition to

the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System, the New Orleans District and Mississippi Valley Division are intensely focused on coastal restoration through a variety of key programs, including the Louisiana Coastal Area and the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Project.

It's clear to me that our team is delivering for Louisiana, and for the Nation.

Michael Walsh

Brig. Gen. (P), Commander
Mississippi Valley Division

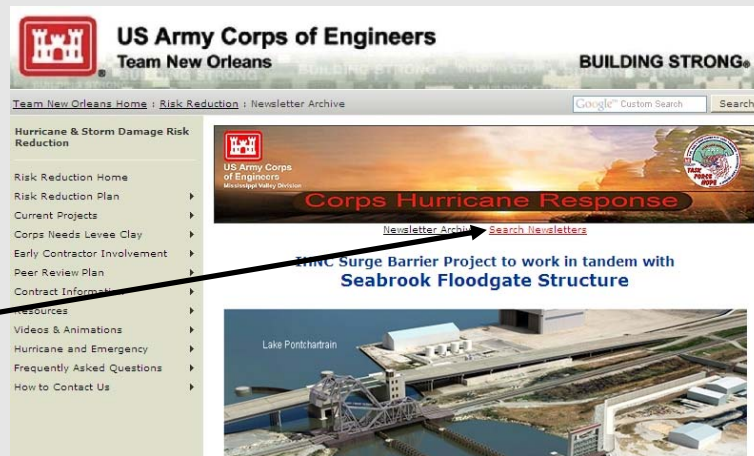
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<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps2/> Click on the Newsletter, then

1. Click on **Search Newsletters**
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3. Click the **Search** button



1.



2.



3.

Here are your articles



New meets the Old

Earlier this month, the first monolith of the new north T-wall for the IHNC Surge Barrier tie-in went up in New Orleans East. This is the first section of a T-wall that will be replacing the old I-wall, in foreground above. The new floodwall is visibly taller than the old floodwall and is being constructed using the Corps' new more stringent design criteria.



USACE Photos

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The *Status Report Newsletter* supports the information program for Task Force Hope and its stakeholders.

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This is an online publication that is open to public distribution.

This issue and past issues can be found at: <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps>

Comments and questions may be sent to the

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