



Office of the Federal Coordinator
for Gulf Coast Rebuilding



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Corps of Engineers Releases New Risk Maps for the New Orleans Area; Powell Releases New Costs for 100-Year Hurricane Protection

*Administration to work with Congress for additional drainage measures
beyond 100-year commitment*

NEW ORLEANS (August 22, 2007) – Federal Coordinator for Gulf Coast Rebuilding Donald E. Powell and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Director of Civil Works Maj. General Don T. Riley today detailed the improved hurricane protection that will be provided to New Orleans area residents once the city's levees are built to the 100-year level. In addition, Powell announced \$6.3 billion of further funding needed for improved protection for the New Orleans area and the Administration's plan to secure necessary funds to complete the work by 2011.

Powell also announced the Administration will work with Congress to fund a \$1.3 billion network of interior drainage projects to ensure the New Orleans area has a more complete hurricane protection system. The 100-year protection, in addition to the drainage component, ensures the greater New Orleans area has a hurricane and flood protection system that far exceeds what existed before Hurricane Katrina.

"Today's announcement restates President Bush's continued commitment to a Gulf Coast rebuilding effort that prioritizes the safety of the people of this area," said Powell.

"The risk maps released today by the Corps show exactly how the new 100-year system will provide far superior hurricane protection for greater New Orleans than at any time in the city's history. Safety is the top priority for the Administration and one of the main roles for the Federal government in long-term rebuilding."

As part of ongoing efforts, Corps officials also released information compiled by the Interagency Performance Evaluation Taskforce (IPET), an independent team of more than 150 international and national experts from more than 50 different government organizations, universities, and private industry, that shows maps of how this planned hurricane protection will reduce the risk of flooding once the construction is complete in 2011. This groundbreaking scientific and engineering study demonstrates a significant reduction in flooding compared to the system in place prior to Hurricane Katrina. This is the first time anyone has had a model that could provide a system wide risk assessment. The use of this model is a pioneer effort, demonstrating the state of the art risk assessment technology the Corps is using to improve the hurricane protection system in New Orleans.

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"Increased public safety and communication of risk continue to be the Corps' top priorities for the New Orleans metropolitan area," said Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley, USACE Director of Civil Works. "The risk maps being released today are another important piece of information the citizens in the New Orleans area need to help them make well-informed decisions about where and how they choose to live and work."

"The maps clearly show that the New Orleans metropolitan area will have reduced risk of flooding in the future from major storm events as the comprehensive system is constructed."

The Corps currently has sufficient funding to continue scheduled repairs and improvements until Fiscal Year 2009. The request to Congress to provide funding to complete 100-year protection and additional drainage will be made by the Administration as part of the FY 2009 budget process since the need for this additional funding will not arise until the October 2008 timeframe.

Further, Powell stated that there would be a local sponsor cost share component on the work to ensure that localities have a stake in the decision-making process and incentives to keep costs down. The standard cost-share for water projects nationally is 65 percent Federal and 35 percent local. Powell indicated the Administration will review the historic cost-share arrangements and expressed a willingness to consider options for the non-federal sponsors to meet their cost-share obligations.

With this announcement of the additional cost estimate of \$7.6 billion, the total levee repair and enhancement costs for the New Orleans area now totals almost \$15 billion. Based on continued engineering analysis, rigorous hydraulic modeling, design criteria and expected market conditions, additional funds are necessary to complete the system.

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One-hundred year flood protection is defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as the flood elevation that has a 1 percent chance of flooding in any given year. The 100-year level of flood protection is a standard used by most Federal and state agencies, including FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).