



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
New Orleans District

# News Release

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: John Wm. Hall, 504-862-2545  
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## **Tree removal will begin on London Canal**

*Work will strengthen hurricane defense for Gentilly neighborhoods*

NEW ORLEANS—As part of the restoration of hurricane levees and floodwalls in New Orleans, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will begin tree removal in October along the London Avenue Canal.

Right of entry has been requested from the Orleans Levee District and public meetings will be scheduled.

The trees to be cut are rooted within the levee section and within 6 feet of the protected-side levee toe, a critical portion of the levee during a hurricane. Roots of these trees extend down into the levee section, which underlies, at an angle, the area near the levee's toe. Tree roots within the levee section violate Corps guidelines and endanger the integrity of the flood defenses for areas of the city beyond the specific neighborhood affected.

About 350 trees will be removed. Most of them are on the backyard edges of 264 canal-side properties. Trees will be cut at 4½ feet high so storm winds cannot blow them over and rip out roots, grass and soil. After the hurricane season, stumps and roots will be removed and the holes packed with clay. Delaying the stump removal will avoid weakening the levee embankment during the hurricane season.

“It’s unfortunate that we must remove these trees after New Orleans has suffered so much loss of its tree canopy. But we have no choice,” said Michael Stout, project manager for tree removal.

The reasons for tree removal are based on principles of science and engineering. Trees and other woody vegetation endanger hurricane protection works in several ways.

--Roots in levees open up pathways for seepage, especially after a tree dies.

--Toppled and uprooted trees create instability in the levee by removing grass and soil. This accelerates seepage, promotes erosion and weakens stability.

--Large overturned trees can damage floodwalls, which can also cause a levee breach.

Tree removal is part of the work to strengthen the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project, which involves New Orleans and St. Bernard, Jefferson and St. Charles parishes.

The New Orleans work is being done in coordination with the Orleans Levee District and will be carried out in two phases.

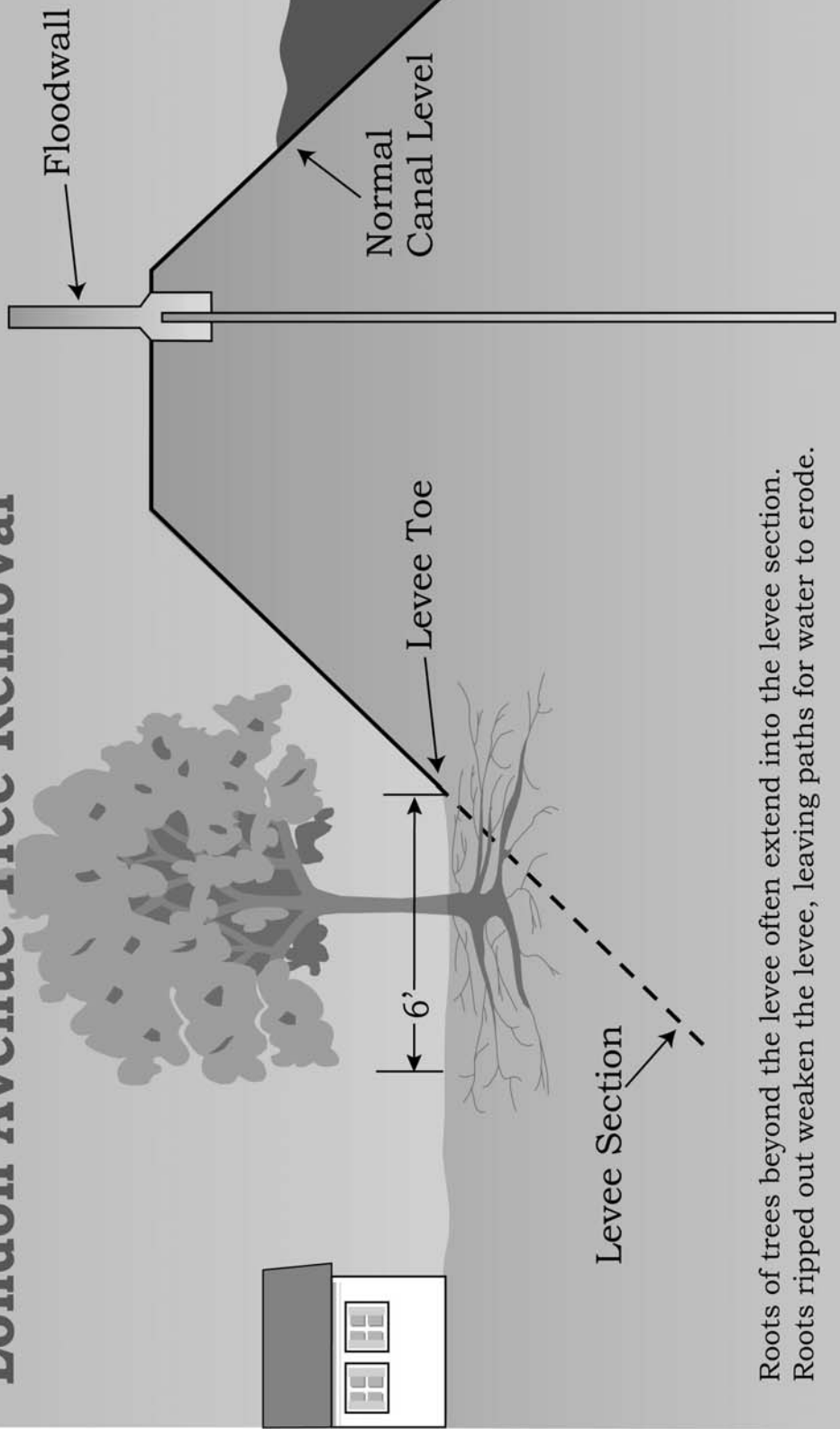
**Phase 1.** Only those trees within the levee section and within 6 feet of the levee toe are being removed. This is now underway along the lakefront and the Orleans Avenue Canal. Tree removal on the London Avenue Canal is scheduled for October 2006.

Later, trees will be removed along the 17th Street Canal. As with the London Avenue Canal, the pre-existing levees that support the floodwalls extend into backyards of adjacent property owners. The Corps is at work to determine which trees must be removed and will soon schedule public meetings to keep the public informed.

**Phase 2.** This phase has not yet begun. It will begin with an assessment of the impact of structures near the levees and floodwalls and of trees more than 6 feet beyond the levee toe. Levee safety may require that some of these be removed.

**Attached:** Tree and levee-section graphic

# London Avenue Tree Removal



Roots of trees beyond the levee often extend into the levee section.  
Roots ripped out weaken the levee, leaving paths for water to erode.