



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

News Release

Public Affairs Office
504-862-2201

www.mvn.usace.army.mil

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

John Wm. Hall, 504-862-2545

Nov. 24, 2006

Key drainage contract awarded in Metairie

This will be first of many new SELA contracts in metro N.O.

NEW ORLEANS—The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has awarded a \$24.0 million contract to improve rainstorm drainage on a key stretch of the Soniat Canal that parallels David Drive in suburban Metairie.

The contract is part of the SELA or Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control Project, which is designed to reduce rain flooding. SELA is a multi-year project in Jefferson, Orleans and St. Tammany parishes for which the Congress has authorized \$1.2 billion.

“This is great news for the people of East Jefferson,” said Stan Green, the senior project manager for SELA. “It’s the first contract we’ve awarded on this project in three years, and it will take us closer to completion of the Soniat-Elmwood system.”

The Soniat Canal contract will complete the last major obstacle to more efficient flow in the Soniat-Elmwood system. Such flowage improvements are necessary to capitalize on an increase of 2,400 feet per second of capacity in the Elmwood Pump Station that was completed earlier.

A flow of 2,400 cubic feet per second works out to a depth of five feet of water over almost 40 acres in one hour’s time.

“We expect this to be the first of many SELA awards in the months ahead,” Green said.

The contract was awarded Nov. 17 to B&K Construction Co. of Mandeville. Drainage capacity will be improved along a 1,600-foot stretch

of the Soniat Canal from just south of Veterans Boulevard northward to Canal No. 3.

Canal No. 3 runs east-west along Interstate 10 and links the Soniat to the Elmwood Canal, which reaches Lake Pontchartrain at the Elmwood Pump Station.

“The most prominent improvement feature is lining the canal with a concrete ‘U’-frame. This replaces an earthen ‘V’-shape, eliminates protruding drain pipes and allows the water to drain out more efficiently,” said Soheila Holley, the SELA project manager for Jefferson Parish.

“Though it’s true that other kinds of flooding can be more dangerous than rain flooding, SELA is important because rain floods are far more likely to occur than the others,” Holley said.

The most important construction remaining to be completed on the Soniat-Elmwood system is the replacement of three bridges that impede flow on the Elmwood Canal. One bridge is under construction by Jefferson Parish and the Corps is planning to award contracts on the other two.