

Mississippi River Commission

Low Water Inspection

Colonel Richard Wagenaar
August 25, 2006
Houma, Louisiana

SLIDE

SCRIPT

1. Title Slide

(Thank you, sir.)

2. Required graphic.

Bullets:

- 2,800 miles of navigable channel
- 14,500 miles of coast
- 973 MR&T miles of levees
- 327 miles of hurricane levees
- 18 locks and control structures
- 15 pumping plants
- 13 recreation areas

Good morning, General Crear, members of the Mississippi River Commission and distinguished guests.

As the New Orleans District commander, it's my pleasure to present the status of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project and associated programs in the New Orleans District.

3. Graphic: Topics:

- *River Stages
- *Funding Program
- *MR&T Studies
- *MR&T Projects
- *Hurricane Restoration

These are the topics I'll cover this morning...

I'll begin my presentation with river stages in the New Orleans District since the high water inspection back in April.

4. Graphic: Total Latitude Flows

At the latitude of Old River, total flows crested at 768,000 cubic feet per second on May 7th. To put that number in perspective, that would be 384 backyard swimming pools, or 1.5 million 5-gallon water bottles or 3.6 million toilet flushes of water. Since the crest, Mississippi River stages and flows have been falling steadily with a slight rise in early July; however, we are currently experiencing minor fluctuations in stages and flows on the Lower Mississippi.

5. Photo: Miss. River Graphic: Crest Stages

May. 7,2006 (crest)	1935-2005	
	Max.	Avg.
RRL 36.9	58.5	41.1
BR 21.8	44.0	27.3
NO 6.8	19.3	11.3
Sim 20.7	56.0	32.1
MC 3.3	9.8	3.4

Shown here are the May 7th crest stages at various locations on the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers, and the corresponding maximum and average stages since 1935.

Today the combined discharge of the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers at the latitude of Old River is _____ cubic feet per second. The average discharge for this date is 364,000 cfs. And the stage today at New Orleans is _____ ft.

6. Saltwater wedge

The toe of the Mississippi River saltwater wedge was located at **Mile 60** on 17 August 2006. We expect the wedge to remain near this position for the next week.

After that, the 28-day Mississippi River forecast indicates that the wedge will then continue advancing upstream.

For the time being, no action on constructing the saltwater barrier sill is needed. However, there is still a possibility that the sill will need to be constructed during this low water season. Since the lead-time for the sill to be constructed and become effective is about four weeks, we will keep a close watch on future river conditions and their potential effects on the saltwater wedge.

7. Graphic: 70/30

At present, we're maintaining the 70/30-flow distribution between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers. The cumulative percent into the Atchafalaya Basin since January 1st is a little under 30 percent (29,998). The deficit is about 2,600 cfs, and it will be made up by year-end.

Today, the flows are _____ cfs down the Mississippi, and _____ cfs down the Atchafalaya, giving us the 70-30 distribution.

Now let's move on to our FY 06 program...

8. FY2006 program with supplemental funding

FEMA ESF 3rd Sup
\$2.583 billion

2nd Sup - \$352 million

3rd Sup - \$2.257 billion

4th Sup - \$3.647 billion

CWPPRA - \$430 million

MVN \$320 Million

The post-Katrina program includes funding for FEMA ESF3 (Emergency Support Function missions debris, blue roof and demolition) of 2.583 billion dollars. Emergency supplemental funds for hurricane damage to New Orleans District projects were provided in two additional bills. The second emergency supplemental provided 352 million dollars and the 3rd supplemental provided 2.257 billion dollars. The 4th supplemental for hurricane protection increased district funding by 3.647 billion dollars, pushing the total program to 9.59 billion dollars.

9. FY 07 Pie Chart

The President's FY 2007 budget of 236 million dollars is mostly limited to projects with high rates of return. General Investigations will include 20 million for LCA Ecosystem Restoration, 5 million for LCA Science and Technology, 1.5million for Bayou Sorrel Lock

replacement and 247,000 dollars for the Calcasieu River Basin feasibility study. There is no funding for Construction General because the hurricane protection projects were funded in the 3rd Supplemental, excluding Comite and IHNC lock, which were not budgeted. 116 million dollars is provided for Operations and Maintenance, including funds for Major High Use Waterway Dredging. The exception is that no funds are provided to dredge MRGO. Mississippi River & Tributaries appropriations are down slightly, but money is allocated for a new study on Atchafalaya Basin lands.

10. Graphic: Four areas. Alexandria
Lower Atchafalaya Basin
Morganza
Donaldsonville

Moving on to our MR&T study efforts, we're currently managing four studies in the New Orleans District:

- Alexandria to the Gulf
- the Lower Atchafalaya Basin Re-evaluation
- Morganza to the Gulf, and
- Donaldsonville to the Gulf.

All are sub-watershed studies focusing on water resource issues.

Now let me give you a closer look at each project.

11. Graphic:
Alexandria to the Gulf of Mexico map
(19 miles of channel;
2 control structures)

The Alexandria to the Gulf feasibility study was initiated in May 04. We completed the structure inventory and surveys of the existing tributaries in the Alexandria area. The study not only identifies the flooding problems in the Alexandria area, but also the water resource problems south of the city. The remainder of this fiscal year will be spent analyzing four alternative plans which address both problems. A plan is scheduled to be selected in Jan 07. (Slide shows the plan identified in the recon study)

12. Graphic: Lower Atchafalaya Basin Study
Photo: Atch levee system

We're coordinating with Division on the preliminary draft report for the Atchafalaya Basin Re-evaluation study.

13. Title: Morganza to the Gulf
Graphic: Project Area, J-1

Project design is ongoing for the Morganza to the Gulf hurricane protection project. We're conducting a detailed design on the Houma Navigation Canal Lock Complex. The local sponsor is authorized to advance construction on Levee Reach J-1, which was awarded in January 2006. This project will safeguard approximately 200,000 residents while improving or protecting 1,700 square miles of existing wetlands. Mitigation for direct impacts would require creating 1,352 acres of new marsh which will reduce saltwater intrusion and the frequency and durations of wetland flooding. It consists of: 72 miles of earthen levee, 13 sector gate structures for flood control, 12 environmental water control structures, the Houma Navigation Canal Lock Complex consisting of: 110 feet by 800 feet lock with a 200 foot flood gate adjacent to the structure.

14. Graphic:
Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico map

On our last study, these are the possible hurricane levee alignments that are being considered for Donaldsonville to the Gulf. (PAUSE) By December we expect to select one of these alignments for design.

And now for construction progress on the Mississippi River levee system in the New Orleans District.

15. Photo: Welcome to Moonshine
Bullet: MR levee miles
Completed: 496
Under Construction: .1
Remaining: 16
Total: 512

Based on current information, we're 98% complete and have less than 16 miles of work remaining. Only deficiencies in freeboard remain. Currently, we have one ongoing construction project, West Bank Gap Closure. We recently completed the Baton Rouge Front Phase II project which corrected deficiencies below freeboard and brought the area up to authorized levels.

16. Hohen Solms to Modeste Levee

The contract has been awarded for the Hohen Solms to Modeste levee enlargement and concrete slope-paving. Once this contract is complete, work can begin on the St. Charles Parish west-bank bike path. We plan to advertise the Edgard Ferry Landing Improvement contract this month. We are awarding 6 AE contracts for plans and specifications to advance completion of the MRL project.

17. ICW/Levee Assessment

We are conducting assessments to determine existing conditions relative to pre-Katrina authorized elevations. This is being done using the recommendations from the Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force; you may know it as IPET. These assessments will help us determine the requirements to raise hurricane levees to post-Katrina authorized elevation (100-year level) and improve stability.

18. Graphic or Photo:
Davis Pond
Bullets: Davis Pond contracts
Completed FY05:
-East Guide Levee
In Progress:
-Channel Lengthening/Widening
To be awarded:
-West Guide Levee
Sheet Pile

We are in the process of widening 5 channels between the ponding area of Davis Pond and Lake Cataouatche. These cuts will help divert ponding waters into Lake Cataouatche and it is over 60% complete. A contract for installation of sheet piles on the West Guide Levee is in the process of being awarded. This installation of sheet piles will be used to raise low elevations along the West Guide Levee.

19. Photo: WABPL-40
Bullet: Atch Basin levee miles
Completed: 413
Under Construction: 5
Remaining: 31
Total: 449

These numbers reflect our levee progress in the Atchafalaya Basin, where we're about 93 percent physically complete.

20. Graphic: Atchaf. 06 Contracts
Completed FY06:
W-52 Levee, E-69/73 Levee, WLOE, Melville, Krotz Springs
Under Construction:
Gordy PS discharge lines, E-33
To be advertised:
W-102

In FY 06 we completed five contracts, and have two additional contracts currently under construction. Next month we intend to advertise one more contract. Two contracts that slipped from this year will be considered next year.

21. ICW/Levee assessment

Soon we'll conduct assessments in this area. Existing levee elevations and cross sections will be determined and that information will help us determine any requirements for improvements, if necessary.

22. Photo: Atch Basin

Title: Authorized Management Units

Bullets:

- Buffalo Cove
- Beau Bayou
- Cocodrie Swamp
- Flat Lake
- Henderson

We executed the Buffalo Cove Project Cooperation Agreement with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources in May 05. Construction start was delayed by storms. We completed Phase I construction in Feb '06, and will begin Phase II September '06 at 100% federal funding. We've begun SEIS for Henderson Management Unit and Recreation Feature of ABFS. We plan to start the SEIS process for remaining units in November '06.

23. Graphic/photo:
Lake End Park plan

We're also coordinating activities with our local sponsor on the Lake End Park project in Morgan City. We're conducting planning, engineering and design for 70 acres of recreational improvements along the Lake Palourde shoreline. The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources is seeking authority for a type-A regional visitor's center adjacent to the park.

24. Photo: Boating Recreation

Bullet: Future boat landings and improvements:

- Millet Point in St. Mary Parish –
-Bayou Pigeon in Iberville Parish
- Bayou Sorrell in Iberville Parish*
- Krotz Springs in St. Landry*
- Butte LaRose in St. Martin Parish*

We're continuing to work with the non-federal sponsor for the Millet (mee-yet) Point boat launch. A construction contract is ready to be awarded once negotiations are final. We're also in the planning phase for boat landings and related improvements at the four sites shown.

25. Graphic: Pie chart
50K/338K

To date, the Corps has purchased more than 47,000 acres in fee title in the basin, and acquired another 108,000 acres for easements.

26. Channel
Improvement
Bullet:
381 authorized
362 completed
19 remaining

As for the district's channel improvement program, we've constructed just over 362 miles, making revetment work about 95% complete on the Mississippi River. This year we placed half-a-mile of underwater stone at Carrollton Bend (Mile 102-L).

27. Photo: generic
revetment work on
Atch
Bullet: Atch Basin
Bank Stabilization
(miles)
Completed: 57.6
Schl'd this Year: .4
Remaining: 4.0
Total: 62

We'll build half a mile of revetment on the right descending bank of the Atchafalaya River at Barberton at mile 23.5 and at Goudeau (Ge-DOUGH) at mile 25.5. Completion of this work will leave about four miles of Atchafalaya revetment to be constructed.

28. Photo: Hurricane
recovery – dredging
Chart: Maintenance
dredging
(Supplemental Funds)
location-activity /
cubic yards

In Fiscal Year 2005 following Hurricane Katrina the Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf and Black project received 10 million dollars of supplemental funding. A 6.66 million dollar contract was completed in April 2006 for the Atchafalaya River Bay Channel and Upper Bar Channel. The balance of the Fiscal Year 2005 supplemental funding was applied to the bar channel contract and was awarded for 8.22 million dollars in May 2006. That contract was completed in July 2006.

MROV - 3,363,568 cubic
yards
MRGO - 0 cubic yards
Bayou Lafourche - 653,000
cubic yards
Barataria Bay - 498,510
cubic yards
Calcasieu – no change
Freshwater Bayou - 575,000
Mermentau River - 950,000

Additionally, we received supplemental funds for the Atchafalaya Basin Maintenance Project. Approximately 270,000 dollars was expended to conduct inspections of damages to project structures including the 11 pumping stations in St. Mary Parish. Approximately 90,000 dollars in repairs have been completed at the pump

stations directly related to hurricane damage. Another 200,000 dollars in Hurricane repairs are scheduled to be completed this year. We also received supplemental funding to conduct dredging along the Wharfs east of the Morgan City Dock Facilities. That dredging was completed in July 2006.

29. Katrina slide transition

I'd like to now bring you up-to-date on the current state of the levees in metro New Orleans.

30. TFG slide

The hurricane protection system is better and stronger than Pre-Katrina. Here you can see the improvements and protections that are in place. The areas in red were completed before 1 June 2006.

31. TFG slide

This slide shows the enormity of the repair and construction of the levees. The bulk of this work was completed by local contractors and forty percent of the local contractors were small businesses.

32. Terrebonne

Now I want to bring you up-to-date on projects here in the Terrebonne Parish Area. Thirty million dollars in the fourth supplemental has been allocated to repair and restore non-federal levees to their authorized levels. We have been meeting with the Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District and parish leadership to define the work.

33. Larose to Golden Meadow

In the Larose to Golden Meadow area, four million dollars has been allocated for advance to completion work.

34. 2007

By September 2007, the current plan calls for all undamaged federal levees and floodwalls to be returned to authorized design heights. One exception is the IHNC flood gate project areas, which will be protected once the flood gates are completed.

39. Photo: Coin and coastal photo

In closing, I'd like to thank the levee districts, state and local representatives, *other partners and stakeholders*, district employees and the Mississippi River commissioners, who, working together, ensure the continued safety and economic benefits to citizens and businesses in south Louisiana.

Thank you for joining us here today.

40. NOD mission map

(Used for reference by the public in follow-up statements)