



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division



Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter

December 30, 2013 - Final Issue

Task Force Hope Newsletter *standing down*

Newsletter reported activities
and progress of
*Hurricane and Storm Damage
Risk Reduction System,*
the Corps' history-making mission

by Susan Spaht

On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina made landfall in southeast Louisiana and southwest Mississippi and brought record levels of surge, waves and rainfall. It has been cited as the greatest natural disaster the United States has ever suffered. More than 1,300 lives were lost, and more than \$20 billion in property losses were recorded in the New Orleans area alone.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers devised a plan and a programmatic cost estimate to repair and rebuild the area's hurricane and storm surge defense system. The U.S. Congress and the Administration moved swiftly and generously to aid the devastated area. The Corps' estimate became the basis for the FY 2009 Presidential Budget seeking the full Federal share of funding for the work. Congress appropriated \$5.784 billion in the 6th Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act. The 7th

Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act provided \$1.5 billion to finance the State's cash cost share to be paid back following completion of the projects.

The Mississippi Valley Division responded to this disaster by forming **Task Force Hope**, a special office in New Orleans to manage the program and oversee execution of the design and construction of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System.



To communicate the Corps' work and progress on the HSDRRS, the Commanding General of the Mississippi Valley Division authorized the **Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter** to serve as the primary tool for accurately transmitting the Corps' hurricane recovery work to partners, stakeholders, the public, and Corps employees.

Over the past eight years, the TFH Newsletter documented, photographed and explained almost every feature of the burgeoning HSDRRS and how the new system meets the Congressional mandate of being able to defend against a 100-year storm surge. The Newsletter reported how the Corps progressively and expeditiously strengthened and improved the levees, floodwalls, gated structures, and pump stations that form the 133-mile Greater New Orleans perimeter system as well as the approximately 70 miles of interior defense structures.

The TFH Newsletter also reported on the ancillary aspects of the mission, many of which are unique to the Corps, and many of which represent best practices for mega-program management by other Corps districts as well as other states and foreign countries. For example, utilities such as the HSDRRS *Dashboard* (an innovative program data and management tool), NEPA Alternative Arrangements, Industry Forums, active engagement with partners and stakeholders, Risk Analyses to inform design, elevation maps, and much more.

Continued on page 2

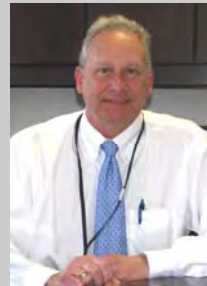
Continued from page 1

Now the HSDRRS work is nearing completion, and the Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter is standing down. This last issue features a selection of Newsletters that reflect major milestones in construction, the Corps' use of new technologies, and other innovative and outstanding project aspects that made this program so unique. This has truly been a history-making mission as was reflected in the Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter.



A word from the Chief of Task Force Hope

The mandate to deliver the Corps' largest ever civil works initiative within a compressed timeframe and a finite budget, advancing the state of the practice in engineering and design, and maintaining the highest standards of quality of the completed work, has made the Greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System a mission unlike any other in the history of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Mike Park

The extraordinary achievements in execution of the HSDRRS represent a model for megaprogram delivery which has attracted attention world-wide.

We are grateful for the timely response from Congress following Hurricane Katrina to provide the authorities and full funding of the program, the sustained support of two Presidential administrations, and the unwavering determination, blood and sweat of Team New Orleans and the extended project delivery team.

When the Corps of Engineers is given the authorities and full funding, we can accomplish incredible things. We just proved it.

Mike Park

The following pages feature selected TFH Newsletters from the past eight years.



March 22, 2006

The first Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletter is released. Hurricane debris cleanup is a major issue at the time.



HPO and PRO offices are formed to oversee construction of the HSDRRS.

June 17, 2006

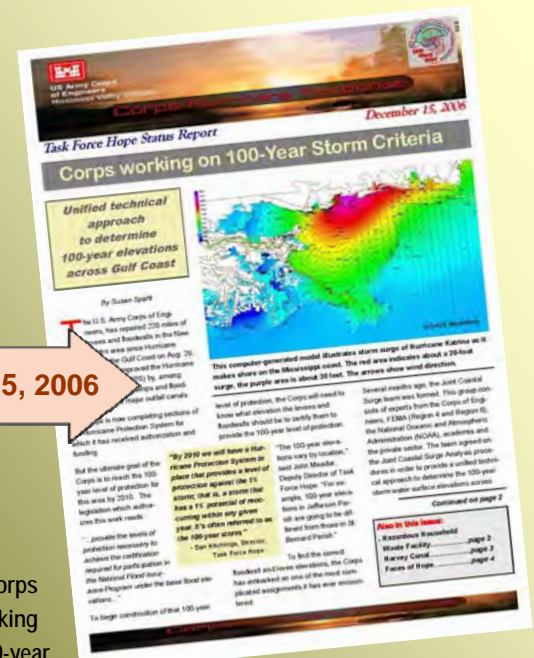
Corps sponsors first of several Industry Forums to provide an arena for discussion of upcoming HSDRRS contracts.





August 25, 2006

One year after Katrina, the largest disaster recovery operation in Corps history is underway.



December 15, 2006

The Corps is working on 100-year Storm Criteria, the technical analysis which will determine levee and floodwall heights for the HSDRRS and across the Gulf Coast.



February 21, 2007

A major project milestone: Alternative Arrangements allows Corps projects to move forward sooner than under traditional NEPA process.



July 24, 2007

Corps releases Decision Chronology which documents the 50-year decision history related to the Lake Pontchartrain & Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project.



January 9, 2008

Corps requires +100 million cubic yards of borrow, a special clay material, to construct the HSDRRS levees.



April 7, 2008

"We made history today," is the statement made by Karen Durham-Aguilera, SES, the Director of Task Force Hope, when the Corps signed the largest Design-Build contract in Corps history: *the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Surge Barrier project at Lake Borgne.*

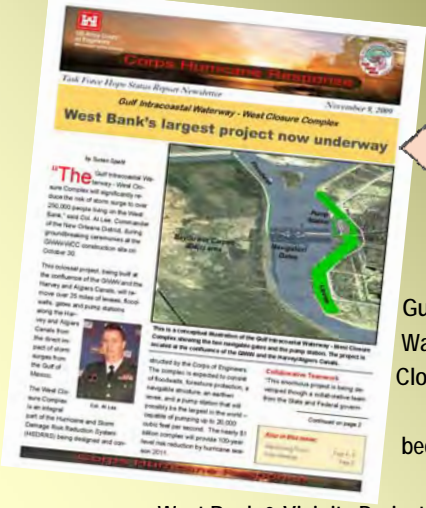


May 13, 2008

Advanced scientific and engineering methods bring major improvements to floodwall design and construction.

September 9, 2008

Hurricane Gustav is first major storm to test the still unfinished system; the pumps performed and the system held.



November 9, 2009

Gulf Intracoastal Waterway - West Closure Complex at +\$1 billion becomes centerpiece of the West Bank & Vicinity Project. It houses the largest drainage pump station in the world.

November 1, 2010

Corps applies latest technical advances in science and engineering in determining to include portion of Mississippi River levee with HSDRRS.



The nation's largest sector gates were constructed in Texas and barged down the GIWW for installation at the West Closure Complex, the +\$1 billion risk reduction complex located at the confluence of the Harvey and Algiers Canals.



March 14, 2011



July 25, 2011

December 15, 2011



Armoring is the last step in the completion of the HSDRRS. The Corps of Engineers has been testing different types of armoring to determine the best product to add resiliency to the levees in the event of overtopping from a storm surge greater than a 100-year storm.



April 11, 2012

Safety is a top priority of all Corps districts. The HSDRRS safety record surpasses that of general construction business averages for man hours worked and lost time accidents. A remarkable Civil Works record.



June 1, 2012

At the start of the 2012 Hurricane Season, the Corps assures the public that the HSDRRS, even though still under construction, is ready to defend the area against a major storm. (see September 7, 2012)



July 26, 2012

The Seabrook Floodgate Complex, one of the largest structures in the HSDRRS, opens for water traffic a day ahead of schedule. The structure is designed to work in tandem with the IHNC Surge Barrier at Lake Borgne.



August 10, 2012

The NOV-NFL Project Partnership Agreement allows the Corps, the State and Plaquemine Parish to move forward with construction of \$1.457 billion in levee work in the Parish.



September 7, 2012

Hurricane Isaac hits Greater New Orleans area exactly seven years to the day after Hurricane Katrina.

Outcome: "the system performed as designed."



December 18, 2012

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, East Coast officials come to New Orleans to observe and learn from the Corps of Engineers' response to Hurricane Katrina.



May 31, 2013

At the start of Hurricane Season 2013, the New Orleans District Commander announces: "I am confident in saying ...the entire system is complete."



August 9, 2013

The Southeast Louisiana Project, known as SELA, approaches peak of construction to provide improved drainage to Orleans, Jefferson and St. Tammany parishes.

October 28, 2013



The Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk

Reduction System mission reaches \$3 Billion in Small Business contracts. More than 50% of the dollars were awarded to Louisiana-based companies as the prime contractor, and even more as part of Large Business contracts.

To view full issues of all Task Force Hope Status Report Newsletters, go to these websites:

http://www2.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps2/hps_newsletters.asp

<http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/Media/Publications/TaskForceHopeNewsletter.aspx>

Our Commanding General gets the final word

The Mississippi Valley Division's work in New Orleans has served as the Nation's number one domestic priority for the past eight years; and because of that importance, we have carefully chronicled the Corps' tremendous achievements.

For the past eight years, the Task Force Hope Newsletter successfully documented, photographed and explained almost every feature of the burgeoning Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. As we approach the completion of the system, we are retiring the TFH Newsletter and passing the future documentation of this historic program to the New Orleans District's Public Affairs Office.

Public safety remains the Corps' top priority, and the citizens of New Or-

leans are now more protected than at any time in the past by a system that is more resilient than it has ever been. All of the principal physical features are now in place to provide the 100-year level of risk reduction.



Brig. Gen. Peter "Duke" DeLuca

This final issue of the Task Force Hope Newsletter highlights some of these achievements.

I want to commend Susan Spaht, the editor of the TFH Newsletter; and Mike Park, Chief of Task Force Hope, for the incredible job they have done to capture the key historic moments of the HSDRRS Program. Congratulations for a job well done!

Building Strong!

Duke DeLuca

*Brig. Gen. Peter "Duke" DeLuca
Commanding General
Mississippi Valley Division*



Corps Hurricane Response

Contact Information

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Task Force Hope

(504) 862-1488

New Orleans District

(504) 862-2201

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

It also serves as the primary tool for accurately transmitting the Corps' hurricane risk reduction efforts to stakeholders.

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

This issue and past issues can be found at:

http://www2.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps2/hps_newsletters.asp

and

<http://www.mvd.usace.army.mil/Media/PublicationsTaskForceHopeNewsletter.aspx>

Comments and questions may be sent to the Status Report Newsletter editor at: b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil

The Status Report Newsletter is an unofficial publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. Views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Corps of Engineers or the Department of the Army.



Status Report Newsletter

Task Force Hope
Strategic Communications
7400 Leake Ave., Room #186
New Orleans, LA 70118
(504) 862-1949