



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS

P.O. BOX 60267

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Planning, Programs, and
Project Management Division
Environmental Planning
and Compliance Branch

NOV 3 2008

PUBLIC NOTICE

WEST BANK AND VICINITY, NEW ORLEANS, LA
GREATER NEW ORLEANS HURRICANE AND STORM DAMAGE
RISK REDUCTION SYSTEM PROJECT
COMPANY CANAL FLOODWALL
INDIVIDUAL ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT (IER) #17

Introduction. This Public Notice is issued in accordance with provisions of Title 33 CFR Parts 336.1(b)(1) and 337.1, which establish policy, practices, and procedures to be followed on Federal actions involving the disposal of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States.

Project Authority. Raising the level of protection in the New Orleans area was authorized mainly under Public Law (PL) 84-99; PL 109-148, Department of Defense, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations to Address Hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico, the Pandemic Influenza Act, 2006 (3rd Supplemental); PL 109-234, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Hurricane Recovery, 2006 (4th Supplemental); and PL 110-28, U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007 (5th Supplemental).

Location. The proposed action is located in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana.

Project Description. The proposed project is located on the west bank of the Mississippi River. The approximate project-area boundaries are the Bayou Segnette State Park on the southwest and the New Westwego Pumping Station on the east. The closest community center in this area is Westwego to the north. An elevated section of Lapalco Boulevard crosses this reach of the WBV alignment. Most of the study area is under forced drainage via several pumping stations. Forced drainage has facilitated development for recreational, residential, commercial, and/or industrial purposes within much of the area.

The project would increase the elevation of existing levee reaches to meet the 100-year level of protection. All elevations are referenced to NAVD 88 (2004.65) datum. The term "100-year level of protection," refers to a level of protection that reduces the risk of hurricane surge and wave-driven flooding that the New Orleans metropolitan area experiences by a one percent chance each year.

This project originates at the southern border of the Bayou Segnette State Park where the Lake Cataouatche Levee transitions to the Company Canal Floodwall. The project is designed to use existing right-of-way within previously disturbed areas wherever practical and therefore minimize environmental consequences. The design, construction, and maintenance of the proposed project would be similar to that previously designed and constructed by CEMVN along the west bank. The existing Company Canal Floodwall has six reaches where alternative

methods were assessed, but the proposed action would involve only five of these reaches because of the new alignment.

Reach 1 of the Company Canal Floodwall originates at the southwest end of the Bayou Segnette State Park where the existing floodwall connects with the Lake Cataouatche Levee (IER #15) and proceeds northward (approximately 8,000 feet) within the Bayou Segnette State Park, under the elevated Lapalco Boulevard, to the Bayou Segnette Pumping Stations. Throughout reach 1, the floodwall is approximately +9 feet NAVD 88 in elevation. The existing right-of-way (ROW) is approximately 50 feet on the flood side and varies on the protected side. For approximately the first 3,500 feet of alignment (from the beginning of the floodwall proceeding towards the Bayou Segnette Pumping Stations), the ROW is approximately 110 feet. Thereafter, the ROW narrows to between 50 and 60 feet for the remaining distance of reach 1.

The proposed action would remove the existing 9-foot floodwall and replace it with a new floodwall to an elevation (el.) of 14.0 feet along the entire reach 1. The proposed alignment would require a protected side expansion of the construction ROW to accommodate relocated utilities, a relocated access road, necessary grading, and provide for protected side drainage. South of Lapalco Boulevard, this ROW would shift to approximately 200 feet (on the protected side) from the existing floodwall. Pedestrian and vehicular gates through the floodwall would be included to provide access to recreational amenities within the park.

All vegetation between the existing floodwall and the existing borrow canal would be cleared and grubbed prior to construction. The majority of this area is already mowed grass; however, along the transition from the maintained mowed grass to the open water of the borrow canal, there is a narrow strip of wetlands vegetation that would be cleared and grubbed as well. Including the entire distance of the protected side canal, the area that would be impacted is approximately 5.5 acres of swamp habitat. Final grading plans could require the placement of fill a short distance into the open water of the existing canal. The need to place these materials is not certain at this time, but could result in the filling of up to 5 additional acres of open water.

North of Lapalco Boulevard, the floodwall would approximately follow the existing floodwall alignment and would require a small expansion (about 12 parking spaces) of the ROW into the boat launch parking lot. All other construction would be completed within the existing ROW and within areas previously disturbed and currently maintained.

Reach 2 includes the fronting protection for the Bayou Segnette Pumping Stations. This reach originates at the northeast end of reach 1 where the existing floodwall meets the Bayou Segnette Pumping Stations and proceeds approximately 450 feet around the front (i.e., the flood side) of the pumping stations. This reach is limited to floodwall (el. 16 feet) because there is insufficient room to provide the 100-year level of protection using a levee without affecting the operation of the pumping stations.

Within reach 3, the floodwall would depart from the existing reach 3 alignment and turn east to cross the pumping station access road approximately 300 feet north of the Bayou Segnette Pumping Stations. At that point, the line of protection would proceed across the open water of the Company Canal navigation channel in a southeast direction on a new alignment. This alignment would include two 24-foot vehicular swing gates (one is proposed for the existing pump station to provide access and the other is proposed where the floodwall crosses the pumping station access road), an approximately 60-foot sector gate across the navigation channel, approximately 1,000 to 1,200 feet of earthen levee across the existing dredge disposal island, and a new pumping station to be located on the existing dredge disposal island. All of

these features would be constructed to approximately +16.0 feet NAVD 88. On the east side of Bayou Segnette, the alignment would cross the Westwego Canal and connect to new floodwall within reach 5 just north of Lapalco Boulevard.

The pumping station would be sized no less than the proposed pumping capacity of the Old Westwego Pumping Station (400 cubic feet per second (cfs)). To accommodate the new pumping station, the navigation channel would be moved approximately 300 feet to the east and channel scour protection would be provided approximately 120 feet upstream and downstream of the closure structure extending across the navigation channel. From the location where the new alignment rejoins the existing floodwall and turns south (on the east of Bayou Segnette), the alignment would replace the existing floodwall, proceeding under Lapalco Boulevard and terminating at the new fronting protection for the New Westwego Pumping Station.

The new alignment across Bayou Segnette would require new ROW as none currently exists. The alignment would cross a dredge material disposal island consisting of cypress swamp (19 acres) that would be impacted. The island is designated for USACE Operations Division use when dredging the navigation channel through Bayou Segnette.

Reach 6 (New Westwego Pumping Station fronting protection) would require the demolition and removal of the existing 200 feet of floodwall. New floodwall construction (el. 16 feet) would approximate the current floodwall centerline and would occur substantially within existing ROW.

Discharges by Others. No discharges are anticipated by others.

Other Information. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused major damage to the Federal and non-Federal flood control and storm damage risk reduction systems in Southeast Louisiana. Hurricane Rita followed this storm on September 24, 2005, and made landfall on the Louisiana-Texas state border, causing damage to the Greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (GNOHSDRRS) (formerly known as the Hurricane Protection System) in southern Louisiana. Since the storms, the USACE has been working with state and local officials to restore the Federal and non-Federal flood control and GNOHSDRRS and related works in the affected area.

To date, approximately 60 percent of the New Orleans population has returned to the area. Many residents and businesses are waiting to see positive improvements in the level of protection before returning to the area. A USACE goal of June 2011 has been set for completion of much of the work that will raise the level of protection in the New Orleans area to a new standard and provide a level of security to residents and businesses that will allow and encourage them to return to the area. Federal flood protection eligibility requires 100-year level of protection.

Properties Adjacent to Disposal Sites. The proposed action is adjacent to presently developed and undeveloped lands, waterways, and a state park. Interior drainage for the protected side of the levee is maintained by the Bayou Segnette Pump Stations, Old Westwego Pump Station, and New Westwego Pump Station.

Status of the Individual Environmental Report (IER) and Other Environmental Documents. IER #17 has been prepared to address the proposed action and alternatives for this reach of the WBV project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and

the President's Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) Regulations (40 CFR §1500-1508), as reflected in the USACE Engineering Regulation, ER 200-2-2. The execution of an IER, in lieu of a traditional Environmental Assessment (EA) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), is provided for in ER 200-2-2, Environmental Quality (33 CFR §230) Procedures for Implementing the NEPA and pursuant to the CEQ NEPA Implementation Regulations (40 CFR §1506.11). The Alternative Arrangements can be found at www.nolaenvironmental.gov. The CEMVN implemented Alternative Arrangements on March 13, 2007, in coordination with CEQ. This process was implemented to expeditiously complete environmental analyses for any changes to the authorized system and the 100-year level of the GNOHSDRRS authorized and funded by Congress and the Administration. The proposed actions are located in southeastern Louisiana and are part of the Federal effort to rebuild and complete construction of the GNOHSDRRS in the New Orleans Metropolitan area as a result of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Environmental compliance for the proposed action would be achieved upon: coordination of the draft IER with appropriate agencies, organizations, and individuals for their review and comments; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service confirmation that the proposed action would not be likely to adversely affect any endangered or threatened species; Louisiana Department of Natural Resources concurrence with the determination that the proposed action is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program; receipt of a Water Quality Certification from the State of Louisiana; public review of the Section 404(b)(1) Public Notice; signature of the Section 404(b)(1) Evaluation; receipt of the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office Determination of No Affect on cultural resources; receipt and acceptance or resolution of all USFWS Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act recommendations; and receipt and acceptance or resolution of all NMFS Essential Fish Habitat recommendations. The IER decision record would not be signed until the proposed action achieves environmental compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Coordination. The following is a partial list of agencies to which a copy of this notice is being sent:

U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VI
U.S. Department of Commerce, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
Louisiana Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
Governor's Executive Assistant for Coastal Activities
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Management Division
Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Restoration Division
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office

This notice is being distributed to these and other appropriate Congressional, Federal, state, and local interests, environmental organizations, and other interested parties.

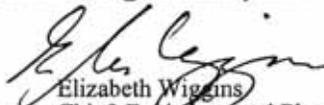
Evaluation Factors. Evaluation includes application of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines promulgated by the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, through 40 CFR 230.

Public Involvement. Extensive public involvement has been sought in preparing this IER. The projects analyzed in this IER were publicly disclosed and described in the Federal Register on March 13, 2007, and on the website www.nolaenvironmental.gov. Scoping for this project was initiated on March 12, 2007, through advertisements and public notices placed in USA Today and The New Orleans Times-Picayune. Nine public scoping meetings were held throughout the New Orleans Metropolitan area to explain the scope and process of the Alternative Arrangements for implementing NEPA between March 27 and April 12, 2007, after which a 30-day scoping period was open for public comment submission. Additionally, CEMVN has continued to host monthly public meetings to keep the stakeholders advised of project status. The public has been able to provide verbal comments during the meetings and written comments at any time in person, by mail, and via www.nolaenvironmental.gov. All comments postmarked on or before the expiration of the comment period for this notice will be considered.

Any person who has an interest that may be affected by deposition of excavated or dredged material may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the comment period of this notice and must clearly set forth the interest that may be affected and the manner in which the interest may be affected by the proposed action.

You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any parties who may have an interest in the proposed action.

For further information regarding the proposed action, please contact Mr. Gib A. Owen at (504) 862-1337, FAX (504) 862-2088, or Gib.A.Owen@usace.army.mil.


Elizabeth Wiggins
Chief, Environmental Planning
and Compliance Branch

COMMENT PERIOD FOR THIS PUBLIC NOTICE EXPIRES: DEC 3 2008



Figure showing proposed alignment of IER #17