



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P. O. BOX 60267
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

March 10, 2008

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

**WEST BANK AND VICINITY, NEW ORLEANS, LA
GREATER NEW ORLEANS STORM DAMAGE
RISK REDUCTION SYSTEM PROJECT
WESTWEGO TO HARVEY LEVEE
INDIVIDUAL ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT (IER) #14**

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, in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana. The levee project extends from Westwego on the western end to Marrero on the eastern end and is in the vicinity of the Mississippi River to the north; Barataria Bay to the south; Harvey Canal to the east; and Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (JLNHPP) and Lakes Salvador and Cataouatche to the west. The purpose of the project is to provide storm damage risk reduction to residents from storm surges from Lakes Cataouatche and Salvador. The project would increase the elevation of existing levee reaches to meet the 100-year level of protection (14 ft elevation) and replace all of the existing I-walls with T-walls (16 ft elevation). All elevations are referenced to NAVD88 (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. The proposed action has been divided into five component reaches for construction: WBV-14c, WBV-14b, WBV-14f, WBV-14d, and WBV-14e.

Reach WBV-14c comprises three sub-reaches: WBV-14c.2-1, c.2-2, and c.2-3, extending from Westwego Pump Station (PS) #2 in the northwest to Orleans Village PS in the south, spanning a total length of approximately 3.3 miles. The proposed action for this reach consists of construction of an earthen levee enlargement with protected side shift within the existing right-of-way (ROW) to an elevation of 14 ft. Even though majority of work would occur on the

protected side within the existing ROW, the flood side of the levee may need some work for stability.

Reach WBV-14b comprises an earthen levee extending south from Orleans Village PS to Hwy 45. The Ames PS (WBV-37) and Mt. Kennedy PS (WBV-43) are protected by floodwalls at elevation 15 ft. The earthen levee spans a total of 2.8 miles and the floodwalls span 1,203 ft. The proposed action for this reach consists of construction of an earthen levee enlargement with flood side shift to an elevation of 14 ft. Even though majority of work would occur on the flood side within the existing ROW, the protected side of the levee may need some work for stability.

Reach WBV-14f stretches 1.7 miles south parallel to Hwy 45 from WBV-14b to the V-line levee floodwall. The reach has two floodwalls at the gas lines running across the levee. The existing elevation of the levee in this reach is 12 ft. The levee has a canal on the protected side and bottomland hardwood forest on the flood side. The proposed action for this reach consists of construction of earthen levee enlargement with flood side shift to an elevation of 14 ft. Even though the majority of work would occur on the protected side within the existing ROW, the flood side of the levee may need some work for stability.

Reach WBV-14d, comprised of a floodwall, spans between the intersections of Hwy 45 and Hwy 3134 (Lafitte-Larose Highway) with the levee. The reach, a part of the V-line levee, spans 6,972 ft and the existing elevation is 11 ft. The proposed action for this reach consists of replacing the existing sheet pile floodwall with a T-wall at 16 ft elevation. The proposed action would occur within the existing ROW. As part of the proposed action, the floodgate at Hwy 45 would also be replaced and a ramp would be constructed to increase the height of Hwy 3134 pavement to ensure that there would be no structural gap in the levee and floodwall system. There would be a new wall constructed to hold fill material from encroaching on JLNHPP, except the piling supports which will extend approximately 80 ft sub-surface into JLNHPP. The Corps is in the process of getting approval for the action.

Reach WBV-14e extends 0.16 miles from Hwy 3134 to the vertex of the V-line levee and extends northeast another 2.73 miles from the vertex. The existing elevation of the levee is 10-12 ft. This reach of the levee has Bayou Aux Carpes 404 (c) site on the flood side and a 200 ft wide and 15 ft deep interior drainage canal on the protected side. The proposed action for this reach consists of construction of an earthen levee enlargement with protected side shift to an elevation of 14 ft. Additional ROW would be required to implement the proposed action. An additional 200 ft of ROW is required on the protected side, along the reach from the vertex to the east end, to facilitate relocation of the canal for levee enlargement and an additional 1,500 ft of ROW is required along Hwy 3134 near the levee between reaches WBV-14e and WBV-14d to allow the highway to be raised to fill the gap between the two reaches.

The estimated surface area of wetlands impacted by the proposed project is 120.25 acres.

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 Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (GNOSDRRS) (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 GNOSDRRS 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 primarily adjacent to presently undeveloped lands. The protected side of the levee is owned by Jefferson Parish with the exception of WBV-14d which is owned by the Archdiocese of New Orleans and a private citizen. The flood side of the levee is owned by the United States Government, the West Jefferson Levee District, Jean Lafitte National Park, and a private citizen and consists of mostly fresh marsh and swamplands.

Status of Individual Environmental Report (IER) and Other Environmental Documents. IER #14 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 GNOSDRRS 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 GNOSDRRS 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 (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) 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; receipt and acceptance or resolution of all Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality comments on the air quality impact analysis documented in the EA; 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.

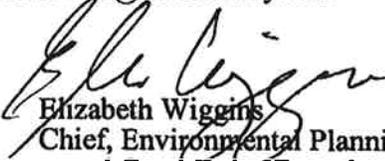
Evaluation Factors. Evaluation includes application of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines promulgated by the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, through 40 CFR 230.

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: April 9, 2008