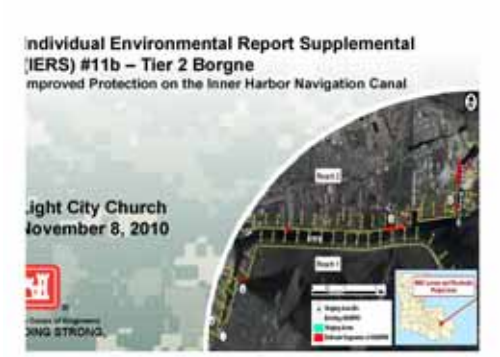
Public Meeting Summary

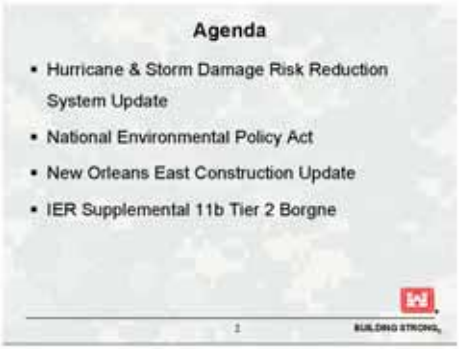
Individual Environmental Report Supplemental
IER 11b-Tier 2 Borgne
Improved Protection on the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal
Nov. 8, 2010

Location	Light City Church
Time	Open House 6:00 p.m. Presentation 6:30 p.m., followed by a discussion
Attendees	Approx. 55
Format	Open House Presentation
Handouts	• Corps Approval Process Brochure • 2010 Status map
Facilitator	Nancy Allen



Nancy Allen: Good evening. I'm Nancy Allen and I'm the public affairs officer for the Hurricane Protection Office. I want to thank everyone for being here tonight. I would like to introduce a few members of the Corps staff we have with us. You will be hearing from Ron Elmer who is our IHNC Branch Chief. Dr. John Grieshaber is chief of execution support, Laura Lee Wilkinson is our environmental manager. We also have with us Captain Brock Schmidt and Major David Carter and others to answer questions as needed. We will stay around afterwards if you have questions you would like to talk one-on-one about. I also have a few other introductions. We have Mike Hunnicut from FEMA, TK Tieu from Councilman Arnie Fielkow's office and Jerry Gillen from the Orleans Levee District. To start us off we are going to opening prayer from Tyrone Larkee from Light City Church.

Tyrone Larkee: Father God we thank you for this time and opportunity to be here and we stand before you. I thank you for the people that are here tonight Father God; I pray your blessings on them. I pray your blessings on this meeting for the people of this neighborhood and this city and this region Father God. I thank you for all you have done and all your blessings in the mighty name of Jesus, amen.



Nancy Allen: We would like to thank the Light City Church for having us this evening. The purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss IER Supplemental 11b, which focuses on improved protection in the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal. That IER is currently out for a 30-day public review. We will give you a brief status update on construction in the region and we taking your comments tonight when we are done. We are going to ask that you let us get all the way through the slides and then we will take your comments and questions. Everyone was given a speaker request card when you came in and if you would like to ask a question or make a comment, just fill out that card and either turn it in at the desk or when we get to the question and answer period, if you hold it up in the air and we

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will call on people in the order that there cards were received this evening. All comments tonight will be part of the public record on IER 11b, Tier 2.

When we talk about flooding in New Orleans, there are four major flood risks that need to be addressed. They are flooding from the Mississippi River, flooding from rainfall, flooding due to coastal erosion and flooding from hurricane storm surge. All four of those can be affected by global subsidence and sea level. There is a system in place for each one of these flooding risks. Tonight we will be primarily focusing on reducing risks from hurricane storm surge, but as you can see from this illustration, they do overlap and all of them have to be taken into consideration through different systems of risk reduction.

I want to give you a brief update on the status of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. This is a 14 billon dollar system that was authorized and fully funded by Congress and our mission is to provide 100-year level of protection by June 1, 2011. We have about 200 days left to achieve that protection. Our office, the Hurricane Protection Office, is overseeing construction on the East Bank of Orleans Parish and St. Bernard Parish, including the entire IHNC corridor. There are really three key strategic improvements that we have made. The first is blocking off the avenues through which storm surge entered the city. We are blocking off from Lake Borgne, from Lake Pontchartrain and the three outfall canals. The second is raising and strengthening levees and floodwalls across the system using the same criteria that provides a consistent 100-year level of protection for the entire region. Everything within this system will be at the 100-year level of protection. That is also what we call the one percent system, meaning that you have a one percent chance every year of a storm exceeding this design, but it is a consistent system across the region. The third improvement is repairing and storm-proofing interior pump stations and we are doing that in Orleans, Jefferson Parishes and we did repairs in St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parishes as well. Along the lakefront in metro New Orleans, we are almost complete with this construction. We have a little bit of work here on either end on the ramps and floodwalls and all of those closures along Lakeshore Drive will be reopened in a few months. Moving into New Orleans East, this portion of the work is 100% completed. This portion is all under construction right now; we are doing some floodwall work near Lakefront Airport and then some levee work in here and we are well on our way with that. Over here in the most eastern portion, we are building the most massive levees in the system; these are about 300-feet wide and some very high elevations and those boarder along the Bayou Sauvage Refuge. This section is what we call LPV 111 and what we are doing there is using a process called deep soil mixing to inject cement into the soil to create columns. This stabilizes the soil under the levees and allows us to build up these levees here. Work is going well along the IHNC Surge Barrier. Again, this is where we are closing it off here. The barrier wall is 26 feet high and that is complete. Everything we are doing now is with the three gates in here. In St. Bernard we are building about 23 miles of T-walls all around ST. Bernard and two sector gates and two flood gates. That work is currently underway. By June 1, 2011 the system will be able a 100-year storm even though work will continue for about the next year or so as we finish everything.

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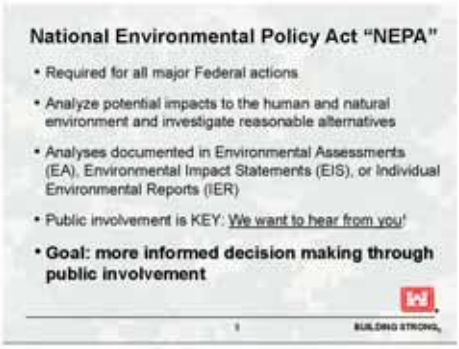
We used to refer to this as the Hurricane Protection System, but what we've learned is that it is really buying down or reducing risk. Even after we construct the system there will always be some residual risks to all of us who live in this area. What this diagram shows is that you show your initial risks and then show the way everyone who shares responsibility can lower their risks. We have non-structural, zoning, building codes, outreach, having a evacuation plan, having insurance and then down to the structural features of the system. All of these things will work in tandem to reduce your risk, but the key thing to remember is that in Southeast Louisiana there is always residual risk and we suggest that everyone have an evacuation plan and heed the warning of an evacuation.



IER 11 Supplemental is a NEPA document. Before the Corps begins any major project we have to complete NEPA documentation, and that's the National Environmental Policy Act. It means that we analyze the impacts of the project and investigate any alternative means. There are several ways these studies can be documented. Whether it's through environmental assessment, an environmental impact statement or what we are using on this system, an Individual Environmental Report, and IER. Public participation is the key. We are here to listen to you and answer your questions. We look at both the human and environmental impacts of all these projects. All of these projects in the system have NEPA documentation and all of that is available on-line at nolaenvironmental.gov. With that I'm going to turn this over to Ron Elmer to give you some information on IER 11.

Ron Elmer: Good evening. I am the program manager for all the work that is ongoing along the IHNC corridor and the GIWW. My office is responsible for overseeing the construction of the barrier, which is shown here in red. This is a drawing of what that barrier wall looks like. Like Nancy said earlier, the entire wall is complete. The only opening that we have is the openings along the GIWW where we are constructing the sector gate, which is on this side right here. This barge gate, the opening is completed. The barge isn't here yet, but it will be for next hurricane season so we will be able to close off that. Right now there is a cofferdam in place right here, where navigation can't get through. We are constructing the sector gate. The sector gate will be here by next year and we will be able to close this also by next hurricane season. On Bayou Bienvenue, this is the type of construction we under construction; it's a vertical lift gate. This is a smaller gate and will be primarily used by smaller vessels, shrimp and fishing boats. Another structure that is currently under construction is the Seabrook Structure out at the lakefront by the airport. We have just started this construction within the last couple of months and we are scheduled to have the 100-year level of protection in place by hurricane next season at that location also. The IER that is out for public review is addressing the interior the old levee and

floodwalls that exist along the Industrial Canal, which is a local term for the IHNC, and along the GIWW. Following Katrina the design guidelines were revamps after forensic analysis of what happened during Katrina and the way this barrier is designed, it's designed to be overtopped. It's at a 26-foot elevation and the levees and floodwalls that tie into it along the GIWW here are going to be at 32 feet as well as the T-wall they are building along the MRGO. What we are doing is taking advantage of the storage capacity that we have in the IHNC and the GIWW to hold water that will splash over during the 100-year storm. Our predictions are that the water surface elevation along the interior will get up to eight feet during the 100-year storm and even during the 500-year storm it will get up to a 10-foot elevation and the existing levees and floodwalls vary in elevation from 12-15 feet. Because of the new design guidelines we are investigating all these levees and floodwalls to determine whether they can meet those guidelines with the water conditions we are going to be introducing during the storm. That is what this public meeting is about and the IER is addressing the proposed action that we have in place to do some remediation work along here so that these walls do meet the new design guidelines.

This is a picture of the barrier that we were showing you that this wall is completed. Right now there is a cofferdam here and the vessels are traveling along this side. The vertical lift gate along Bayou Bienvenue right here is also under construction.

This is another picture of the barrier wall. This is on storm side and it's quite an impressive structure.

This is on the protected side of the barrier and shows the batter piles that go up to the deck and then go down into the ground to support the structure. These piles are approximately 245 feet long and they go down to almost a -200 feet into the ground.

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This is a rendering of what the structure will look out at Seabrook that is currently under construction. There are two vertical lift gates that will block flow and then there is a sector gate that navigation will travel to get into the lake and the canal.

These are the dimensions; the sector gate is about 540 feet south of the railroad bridge. We will have the cofferdam in place, which is a circular sheet pile cell that we will construct across the canal on both the north and south side of where the gate will be built. You pump the water out and then you construct the gates in the dry land.

We have placed some large signs showing that the canal is closed. It is closed for navigation into the lake and from the lake into the canal. This will stay closed until we finish construction.

We built a rock dike that is just south of the bridge. There is a large hole in the canal, about 90-feet deep, that we need to fill with sand and when tides come in and out from the lake through this narrow opening at the bridge, we were concerned about losing some of the sand as we dumped it into the hole so this is helping us fill that hole much quicker.

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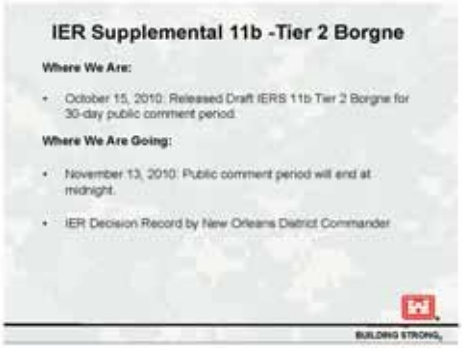
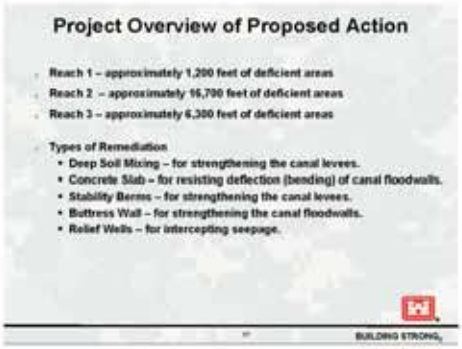


IER Supplemental 11b, Tier 2 Lake Borgne, which is the document that is now out. It went out on Oct. 15th and it's open for a 30-day public review. The public review comment period ends on November 13th. Unless there are some significant comments, we are hoping a Decision Record to be signed within a week after that November 13th date and we will move on with the construction.

The purpose of the IER is to identify areas we are going to be doing proposed action to get the walls and levee systems that don't quite meet the new guidelines up to those standards. There are approximately 4.6 miles of levees and floodwalls in different spots within the system that we will be looking at and doing work on. We broke this down to Reach 1, which is the levee and floodwall system that goes around the Lower 9th Ward up into the GIWW and then around to the barrier. Reach 2 is the one that goes around the New Orleans East side and Reach 3 is the western side of the canal in metro New Orleans.



In Reach 1 we have approximately 1,200 feet of area we need to do work in. On Reach 2, almost 17,000 feet and on Reach 3 we have 6,300 feet of work area. There are several different methods we will be using to address the different types of deficiencies that we are analyzing. As mentioned earlier, there is deep soil mixing and that is what they are using along the GIWW levee system to strengthen the foundation conditions so that we can raise the levees up along there. We will be using that in some areas to correct stability problems. We will also be using concrete slabs to resists the bending forces that occur on walls when water gets on them. Some areas we will be adding additional dirt to strengthen the levee system; we call those stability berms. There is another method we call buttress walls where we drive piles and build slabs to buttress against the existing walls. In areas where we have seepage problems we will use relief wells that drain the water that seeps through the sand layers below the levee to prevent the seepage from causing an unstable levee section.

This shows the areas where we are looking at doing the proposed work; where it is in red. There is a spot along here near Reach 1. There is another area along the Michoud Canal and the GIWW as well as along the IHNC itself towards the lake end of the canal. There is one little spot near the lock, a piece of wall that we are looking at doing some additional strengthening.

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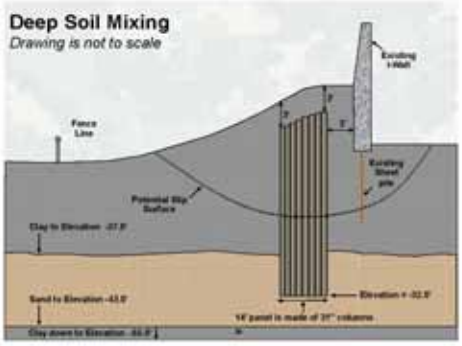
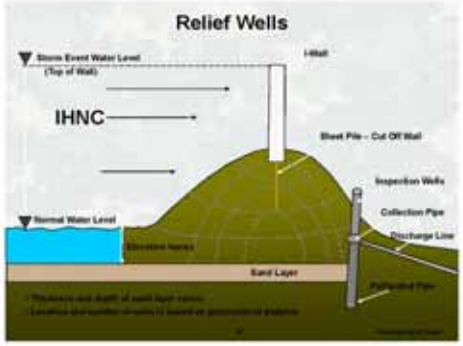
If everything goes well with the IER public review and the Decision Record is signed and with all the plans and designs are completed, we will advertise in early January in 2011. Construction will be completed by next hurricane season as we do have enough time to do all the repairs before then. All the work we are doing will be done within the existing right-of-way along the levee system and floodwalls.



This shows the deep soil mixing method that we will use for stability problems. What they do is drill down with an auger and when they raise the auger; then pump in cement to create these columns. The purpose of the columns is to strengthen where we have detected a failure plain in the system and these columns intercept these failures and prevents this whole system from rotating and causing a levee or wall failure.

This is a picture of some deep soil mixing we did along IHNC prior to Gustav. This shows the auger going in and coming out and creating the cement columns.



This is a depiction of how the relief well works. Where we have the water in the canal rise up against the wall, that addition pressure pushes water in sand layers that exist below some of the levee sections. If you do not control that push of water, it forces water in the sand layers it could start to move the materials and cause a levee failure. What we do is put in relief wells and what that does is control the flow of the water in the sand layer and it brings it up in the well and discharges it into the existing storm system.

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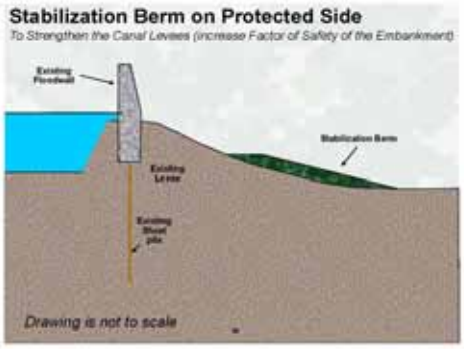
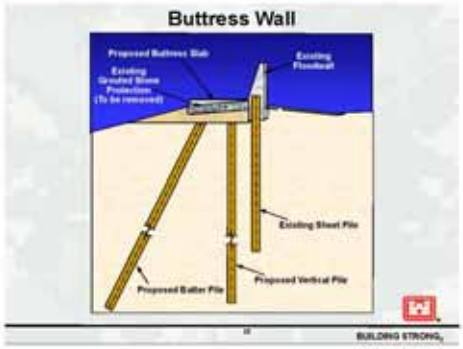
These are some pictures of relief wells that are in place now. This is what they look like when they are finished.



This is an example of a stability berm being used to offset some stability we might have in some areas. In some areas where we are quite close to meeting the guidelines but they do still show some instability, one counter-method of acting on the instability is to add to dirt on the back side, which is called a stability berm, to offset and potential failure.



This is an example of a buttress wall. Right now what you have is sheet pile going into the ground with an I-wall and a scour pad behind it, this grey piece. What we will be doing is taking these pads out and driving piles and then putting in a slab to buttress this wall against a stability problem.

Female Speaker: Can you say that again?

Ron Elmer: What's out there now is this concrete wall sticking up; it's an I-wall with a sheet pile into the ground. In areas where this is the best way to offset detected stability problems, what we will do is take this pad out, drive pilings and then report a slab behind the wall to make it more stable.

Here are some impacts that can be expected during construction. There will be elevated noise levels from the equipment. In the areas that we are working in there may be some access limitations. We do plan to work extended times, six days per week up to 12 hours per day. We will enforce that contractors use approved haul roads in the areas and not drive through neighborhoods.

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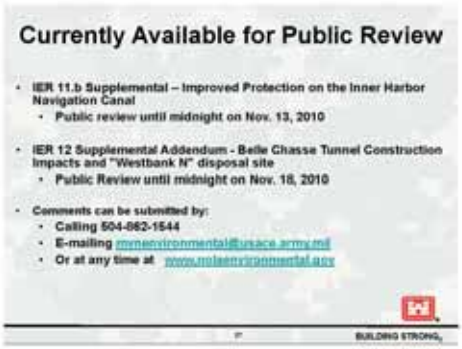

Nancy Allen: In addition to IER 11b that is out for public review, there is another IER out regarding the Belle Chasse Tunnel construction. Again, IER 11b public comment closes at midnight on November 13th. All comments made here tonight will become part of the record and you can submit them until November 13th via phone, e-mail or online at nolaenvironmental.gov.

We are in the process of writing a comprehensive environmental document that will look at all the cumulative benefits and impacts of construction of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. This is the schedule for that document. We expect a draft to be released in April 2011 and then we've already held one scoping meeting, which was on September 2, 2009, and we will hold more meetings. All this information regarding the Comprehensive Environmental Document can be found on www.nolaenvironmental.gov.

We do have some upcoming meetings, including some pertaining to mitigation. I know that was a question at the last public meeting so there is another meeting to talk about mitigation for the system on December 7th. We also have some coastal meetings coming up as well.

There are many opportunities for public input. Make sure if you signed in tonight at the back table and if you did, you will be on our mailing list. Again, you can submit any comments at nolaenvironmental.gov. There is an email address listed and then there a contact person and that Patricia Leroux.

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We have two websites. The first is nolaenvironmental.gov. That is where all of our environmental documents are located. We also have our district website is mvn.usace.army.mil. We have also established a construction impact hotline. If you have any questions or concerns about construction in your neighborhood, you can call this number, 1-877-427-0345. There are magnets in the back that have that number. We take reports from everyone who calls and we do all we can to resolve the situation.

We are also using websites like Twitter, Flickr and Facebook to put out additional announcements. You can find us by searching for Team New Orleans on these sites. We are now going to open up for your questions and comments. You were given a speaker request card in the back and I do have a stack here from those who filled them out. If you have one at your seat and you would like to make a comment, hold it up in the air and someone will come pick it up. You will have three minutes at the microphone. We do ask that you be respectful and give everyone their amount of time to speak. We do have a light system to track time. The light will blink yellow when you have a minute left and you will have a buzz when your time is up. We will be here as long as needed to answer your questions and take your comments. Once we've gone through all who have put in a card, we will open it up to anyone with follow-up questions. There will be transcript made of tonight's meeting so it's important that you speak into the mic and speak one at a time so we can get an accurate transcript, which will be available on line.

Beth Butler: I just wanted to say that we are against the expansion of the Industrial Canal and this is a timely subject because when you look at what we have to do and spend all this money, we need to spend more to make our area safer. I am very concerned that the [Inaudible] Canal is still not being handled by the Corps of Engineers. That has somehow been left off the list and it's a big drainage form Metairie into our city every time that thing overfills and it needs to be added back into the Corps responsibilities and not a line item in the federal budget. That is very important to our area. Also, the whole thing about MRGO and filling it in can't be done quickly enough. We really need to step on this and I would also like to have you have the critics positions brought up as part of a presentation so we can have a better discussion because it's just the Corps presentation and we've had a lot of experts say this is not adequate for flood protection.

Nancy Allen: If you have any questions concerning criticisms of the Corps, we are happy to address those.

Linda Jackson: I've heard several times tonight about community input and the Lower 9th Ward community has not given that input because you've never had meetings here because this is the first. I would appreciate it if you would have more so more people in the community can come out and give their input. I understand there are a lot of things going on around the Lower 9th Ward and no one has

given their input because there were no meetings. I heard you go to the East and West Banks, but not the Lower 9th Ward and we would like to be a part of that program.

Nancy Allen: Thank you. We do ask that you sign up in the back because all Corps meetings are publicized and we are also available to come to community and home owner associations, church and homeowner groups to speak. Nick Silbert has some cards and if you would like to have one our team members come speak to your group, we are happy to do that.

Linda Novak: I have a number of questions. When you said while pointing the slide on the Bayou Sauvage area, you said that the levee walls would be 32-feet high?

Ron Elmer: Yes, where they tie into the surge barrier, they start out at 32 feet.

Linda Novak: I just wanted to make sure because nowhere on this map does it say 32 feet. The highest is 28, 27?

Capt. Brock Schmidt: That's because they actually built the wall higher…what you see on there is a 100-year level of protection number and we've actually gone above that so it will be 32 feet.

Linda Novak: I would also like to know if the height of the levee walls along the IHNC is equal height no matter where you are up and down the canal.

Ron Elmer: No. The existing levees and floodwalls within the existing IHNC varies from place to place from anywhere from 12 to 15 feet.

Linda Novak: Is there is a reason why we don't want to make them all as high as possible and equally along the length of it?

Ron Elmer: We were charged with providing a 100-year level of protection and that is what we are doing by building the barrier and the Seabrook structure. The levees and floodwalls that will be behind those two structures will become secondary line of protection.

Linda Novak: That leads me to and it's a question that you may not be able to answer. All of this work you are doing won't amount to much if there are large objects in the Industrial Canal such as barges or ships and they once again go crashing through levees so the surge barrier won't make any difference in that situation. So my question is what organization is tasked with insuring that there are no potentially damage objects in the canal?

Ron Elmer: The Coast Guard is responsible for making the rule governing whether or not barges are inside the IHNC. They will ask for our input and we will give them our recommendations.

Linda Novak: I would like to know about the navigation gates. I would like to know the size of that navigation gate, specifically what size of ship will be able to get through that gate?

Ron Elmer: First of all, that is a barge channel so you won't get ships in there. There are two gates and each one is 150-feet wide and -16 feet deep.

Linda Novak: One final question, if you could address the issue of why the areas in red were the ones chosen to be updated last.

Ron Elmer: Because those are the ones based on our analysis do not quite meet the new design guidelines so we need to do this remediation work so that they do meet the guidelines. We analyzed all the walls and levees and those are the areas where we have deficiencies with respect to meeting the new guidelines.

Nancy Allen: Let me clarify. Are you talking about the areas that are red on that status map that you have?

Linda Novak: I guess my question is why is this area the last to be updated? For instance, the top area around the lakefront in green and yellow means that area is up to the standard you want it to be or close to it.

Ron Elmer: That is the status map of where we are with the 100-year level of protection being built.

Nancy Allen: That's where we were as of June 2010. All of the area on that map, everything that is red and amber, will be green by June 1, 2011.

Linda Novak: I suppose you do not understand what my question is. I want to know why you chose that first versus that last.

Nancy Allen: We didn't. There was less work needed in some areas than others, but all of it was to be completed by June 2011 to handle the 100-year storm.

Vanessa Gueringer: Are there any plans to improve the existing IHNC levee north of the Lower 9th Ward, which is 12 feet high and an unreinforced dirty and grassy ridge and also are there plans to improve the secondary protection, which is a sheet pile wall along Florida Avenue belonging to the Orleans Levee Board.

Ron Elmer: I'm not certain what areas you just identified in particular….

Vanessa Gueringer: I'm talking about Florida Ave., there is a sheet piling levee system along Florida Ave.

Nancy Allen: It's where the new and old….

Ron Elmer: I don't if that's in one of the areas we are going to be doing remediation work on.

Vanessa Gueringer: So you are saying there are no plans to reinforce it?

Ron Elmer: No, not as far as I know.

Vanessa Gueringer: So that sheet piling is going to remain?

Ron Elmer: Yes.

Vanessa Gueringer: Isn't it true that the 12-foot earthen levee that protects us from a five-mile stretch of a 41-foot deep MRGO channel remains authorized right above the Lower 9th Ward? We are talking about the MRGO and we are talking about a 40-foot deep channel that is five miles within the

MRGO channel that is above Lower 9th. We understood that MRGO was deauthorized in its entirety, the entirety of MRGO…

Ron Elmer: The MRGO was deauthorized where it converges and goes into the GIWW, from this spot all the way down to the gulf, that portion of it.

Vanessa Gueringer: Why wasn't that stretch deauthorized the five mile stretch above Lower 9…

Ron Elmer: Because it was a different authorization and it's still a deep channel that has to serve…

Vanessa Gueringer: Was it not deauthorized because the Port asked you not to deauthorize it?

Ron Elmer: I do not know how that came about as I was not a part of that.

Vanessa Gueringer: In any case we were not notified about the entirety of MRGO was not deauthorized. Isn't it true that the Crop plans a large toxic sediment reservoir, a confined disposal facility for the lock project on the south side of the 12-foot earthen levee in the flood plain that will sit right beside Bayou Bienvenue if you do the lock project?

Ron Elmer: I'm not familiar with the lock project. We have Bobby Duplantier here to answer that.

Bobby Duplantier: There is a proposed two-cell confined facility right in the area that you are speaking of, but that material has been tested and it has shown no significant risk to human health or the environment. In addition, it will be capped and covered to be sure none of it seeps out into the area.

Vanessa Gueringer: You're going to be really sure of that? One last question if I can. You talked about an eight-foot splash over from the surge barrier. Once those surge gates are closed and this splash over happens in the IHNC and there is a hurricane and there is rain, we are talking about eight feet and we already have the lowest levees in the entire system that are basically at 12 feet, can you be sure it will only be eight feet and we are not going to flood?

Ron Elmer: Based on our analysis that is what I believe. We have used very conservative numbers assuming a 100% capacity of all the pumps pumping water in and we took all the rainfall and applied it to the system. We have taken a very conservative approach to it and we are saying eight feet for the 1% storm, the 100-year storm, and 10-feet for the 500-year storm.

Vanessa Gueringer: You can't ever be certain. We are the most flooded neighborhood in the city and once you close those gates, we are going to be trapped like rats in here if that water exceeds eight feet and we are dealing with 12-foot levees. The levees need to be raised just like they have been raised for the entirety of the levee system. We again are being left out.

Ron Elmer: Once again, the system on the inside, the secondary line of protection, you have a primary line of protection that will provide the same level of protection everyone has in the entire system; everyone is getting equal treatment.

Vanessa Gueringer: We are not.

Theola Garret: Why does the design allow for any overtopping at all in the system and secondly, why are we preparing for a 100-year risk instead of 500-year protection? If the project is authorized then why don't we do the 500-year plan as opposed to 100-year? Also, you mentioned some failure plains and areas where there is some instability and I would like to know where they are located especially if they are in the Lower 9th Ward near Claiborne and Florida Avenue in particular. My next question is the Shaw group, where are they from and who are they? Also, the hotline number that you put up there with the 277 number, where are those people located that we will be talking to about our complaints?

Nancy Allen: Let's work backwards. The construction hotline goes to a member of the public affairs staff here in New Orleans. We then figure out what project and area it's associated with and then we get it to Capt. Schmidt or one of our other folks. It is handled locally and we do our best to get you an answer or provide information or point you in the right direction.

Ron Elmer: I remember the one about Shaw. Shaw is a Louisiana -based company in Baton Rouge. As far as the areas we are looking at, where you see these red spots along the GIWW and the canal, those are the areas we are looking at doing proposed action. The Lower 9th Ward is down here so there is one spot here, the closet one to your area that we will be doing work; this is right where the levee ties into….that's Florida Avenue, north of Florida Ave. Congress authorized us to do the 100-year storm; we can only do what Congress authorizes us to do. We can't go beyond that. As for splash over and why we allow that. As you have seen since Katrina, there is a lot of emphasis on how the Dutch do things. They do these kinds of things. You take advantage of your conditions and storage capacity and you implement that and make that part of your system and how it operates. If we would have built this wall up to the 32 feet up to the other side where we are tying in, we probably couldn't have built this type of wall; it would have to have been different and would have cost more. This was an effective use of the existing conditions and what we were trying to do. This is a standard practice in the Netherlands to use storage area for storm water.

Theola Garret: I do have another question about scouring as I don't know where the flood wall is now along the canal from Claiborne to Florida Avenue if you have the scouring pads or whatever…

Ron Elmer: Following Katrina that was one of the first major things we did. We put scour pads behind all the existing walls.

Theola Garret: Is that wall at its highest elevation or is there any plan in the future to raise it. I know the last person who was in charge said it was raised two feet but they redid it after Katrina.

Ron Elmer: They did after Katrina to the walls that had catastrophic failure, they rebuilt those walls to 15, yes.

Theola Garret: And that wall is a T-wall and not an I-wall?

Ron Elmer: Yes, all our walls will be T-walls, no I-walls.

Nancy Allen: I do want to recognize state senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis just came in; we thank you for being here.

Vanita Rogers: You didn't mention much about the remediation. I was at the last meeting in New Orleans East and I talked about the deep soil mixing and I had concerns about it because you kept mentioning that the soil in Louisiana is so bad. Right after they had in the Times-Picayune and

the problem they had with BP because of the cement. I'm wondering if you have a quality control or some standard that you will have for all of your deep soil mixing in that some areas have worse soil that will be mixed and you are not going to get the stability that you will need or how are you going to handle that?

Ron Elmer: On all of our construction projects, we have an extensive quality assurance program. The contractors that are building have a quality control plan system in place that they are required to do varying amounts of testing on the concrete they are pouring as well as the soil they are putting in the levee systems. There is an extensive quality control put into place from the contractors and on top of that, we the Corps also do quality assurance tests on what they have already tested. We do a double testing within our control.

Theola Garret: So you already have it established what grade of cement you want? If that particular area doesn't come up to grade do you bring something in to make it up grade?

Ron Elmer: Yes, when we are using concrete they test it and if it doesn't meet the specifications, it's redone. It's taken out and redone, but that rarely happens.

Theola Garret: Since you are saying that you are doing the deep soil and it's going to be right for the soil for that area, so where do you get the soil….

Ron Elmer: In the deep soil mixing, they use the soil that is there. They auger down and as they back the auger out, they inject concrete. Now they have done soil test where they are doing this and in every situation is different. They design the concrete mix based on what the soils conditions are at that spot.

Theola Garret: The lady just asked about the remediation areas were and one was going to be at Florida and another time, I think you said one was going to be by the lock?

Ron Elmer: There are a couple of spots. Theirs is this area on the east side by Florida Avenue as well the spot next to the existing lock.

Theola Garret: On those two areas, what kind of remediation will you be doing by the lock and for the one by the bridge?

Ron Elmer: They are doing deep soil mixing here and they are putting a concrete slab here at the lock.

Theola Garret: Deep soil mixing will be by the Florida Avenue?

Ron Elmer: Yes.

Theola Garret: In what areas are you going to put the well?

Ron Elmer: I know there are some areas along here that we have to put some additional wells and along this area, but it varies from place to place.

Theola Garret: I'm still concerned because our area will have overtopping and our pumps are not being shielded on Florida Avenue so I'm concerned about the height you say you are going to allow for topping.

Ron Elmer: The lowest wall on the system is 12 feet.

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Theola Garret: Right, but if you are saying you are going to allow for topping into the drainage system and the pumps aren't working…

Nancy Allen: We are allowing for overtopping at the surge barrier, we are not allowing for overtopping on the levees and floodwalls. We do have a blowup of this map on display and we can stay back there afterwards and if you specific questions on what type of work we are doing in areas, it's probably easier to see back there and we can answer those questions.

John Koeferl: I have already made some comments. You know I'm uneasy about the 12-foot levee along the old MRGO section. I think it's not adequate, but tonight what really strikes me is that there has been modeling that has determined the height of levees and I know that the modeling has been done by the National Academy of Science and that it has been done a little piecemeal for this section and that section and this consideration and that consideration. I heard that in other testimony in other meetings that we've had. I'm concerned that no independent review has been done with an overview to the protection of us all down here for hurricane protection and from the navigation channels that are being built separately by another Corps department. I'm concerned that there isn't the coordination of the publically obvious person who has the overview. The best I could find are the people doing the levees don't really know what the plans are for the changes in the levees that are made necessary by the deep new lock project. Is that correct?

Ron Elmer: If and when they build the new lock, all the levee systems that would be affected by it will be built to the new standards that we have now.

John Koeferl: But they are not built to those standards now as far as we know.

Ron Elmer: These are the areas we are saying that are not meeting those standards and that is what the purpose of this meeting is to show you the areas that we are going to go in and do work for the areas that do not meet those guidelines. If and when they build this new lock, if they move it north of Claiborne that was the proposal when I looked at the project, all the levees that will be built as part of that project will have to meet these same guidelines.

John Koeferl: And you have no idea or nothing to tell us about what those guidelines would be. It's conceivable that the levees will have to be done over, right?

Ron Elmer: Not the ones we are doing, no.

John Koeferl: Along the Industrial Canal, along Jourdan Ave. we already have relief wells because the soil underneath the levee, the seawall there, isn't able to be drained without those relief wells, so there is a certain amount of water liability there. If on the canal side six more feet is taken out and that is just the beginning of navigation for containers, then it seems to me that it will be a lot weaker. Right now it has a safety factor, according to you all, of 1.3. Sandy soil with an I-beam construction and relief wells. What my question is, is how much more depth in the canal can that particular levee stand? It seems to me that it's pretty close to what is capacity is right now.

Dr. Greishaber: Let's take this back to the original part of your question. You're concerned with the levees that are protecting you for hurricane protection. Today, they are designed for the existing conditions today. When a change is made to the system, they add a lock, they deepen the channel there is an actual design that is revisited for the change in the condition. So if they dredge the canal six feet deeper, than part of that project would be the institution of additional relief wells, additional dirt, deeper cutoffs, whatever is required. This is a balanced system today for the existing condition. No

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changes will happen that will put this system in jeopardy because when the change happens, the adjustments will be made to the existing hurricane protection system.

John Koeferl: You don't mind if I ask you right now what those changes are going to be. The lock project is an authorized project and I as a citizen and resident down here want to know what to expect from it.

Dr. Grieshaber: The changes would be a function of the depth. If you are telling me it's going to be six-feet deeper, I would either add additional sheet pile or additional wells or a combination of both.

John Koeferl: You don't mind me asking to know that now. I want to know what right this is an authorized project…

Nancy Allen: Bobby do you want to give an update on the lock?

Bobby Duplantier: You are correct that the lock is an authorized project but it is still very early in its design phases. We are not even 20 to 30% complete design yet. Once we complete that design then we will be able to turn that over and figure out what changes will have to occur in the system to accommodate this new structure.

John Koeferl: I would like to know what we are in for, you know. To have an authorized project that is going to dig the canal deeper and yet you can't tell us what impact that is going to be on the levees that are already pretty marginal as far as I'm concerned. With relief wells that tells me that there is not a whole lot that can be done without going a lot deeper with sheet piling or doing a lot of soil remediation, but do you see what I mean? It seems like there isn't anybody who can give us the overview, the long-term planning of what's going to happen in our area. It's not enough to say when that project gets rolling, when that stuff starts happening that someone will then design and provide the money for something that has a lot of implications for us. We live down here. We don't want to have our lives disrupted and have our children and grandchildren not be able to get back-and-forth the canal, to have our property values down because you can't tell us what these two projects coming together are going to mean in real dollars and cents. I don't think that is a unreasonable request.

Dr. Grieshaber: Let me go back. The system you referred to of relief wells, you use the term marginal; I take exception to that. These levees and floodwalls along the IHNC corridor are designed to the same stringent criteria as the rest of the hurricane protection system. This is the same criteria that is used in St. Bernard, St. Charles, Jefferson Parish, Orleans Parish and New Orleans East. There is no marginal system here. We have criteria that was very stringent and we have applied it to every aspect of the system. Secondly, that criteria is going to be a constant. If there are changes that are brought about by the lock project that criteria will still be applied. Whatever it will take, whether it is more relief wells, deep sheet pile or a combination of both, you will have that …..

Nancy Allen: [Inaudible]

Dr. Grieshaber: As far as what was done under modeling, let's go back to before there was a hurricane protection system. Hurricane Betsy came. When Congress put together the authorization to build a system, they only knew one storm. They came up with Hurricane Betsy as the critical storm and we designed our system for a Betsy-like storm. We looked at three approaches coming up the river. Now with the advent of super computers, we were able to generate 152 storms and we used six super computers. The Department of Defense gave up three of their super computers to do nothing but analysis on this model. We had three computers from universities. We then took these 152 storms and came up

with our system. We then went back and we took Camille, Katrina, Flossie, George and we plugged it in to make sure we had a good model. So the modeling has been very rigorous. They have taken every combination that these super computers could come up with and they came up with the model. They then turned around and tested the model with storms that we've already had. So this isn't just a guess; this was a very rigorous solution of every possible combination that was brought together and used to develop the storm surge that set the elevations to protect this area.

John Koeferl: Has the model factored in subsidence and sea level rise?

Dr. Grieshaber: Yet it did. If you look at all these numbers there are two numbers. They are what we call the 2057 number and the current number. The 2057 number is taking into account general subsidence and sea level rise and that is why we have projected all of our walls to an elevation to the 2057 number because it's difficult to add to a wall that had already been built.

John Koeferl: And a slow moving storm that causes the surge gates to be closed and the city to be pumping water into the canal and if it stays five or six days maybe a storm we haven't had yet that will sit over us and pour down 20 inches a day for four or five days, would be a serious event in the Lower 9th Ward with those 12-foot levees. Inside is what concerns us.

Dr. Grieshaber: We are going to close those gates at elevation three. We will close the gates at three and we say we will have 24 straight hours of a 10-year rain event and we will estimate that every drop of water that falls within the basin ends up in the canal, even those we know the pumps can't officially move that much water. So we reached the conservative estimate for how long we can have this rain and we reached out and took the most conservative estimate by assuming every drop of water that fell within that basin got pumped into the IHNC, which is not really the case, and then we assumed all the rain that fell in and we put all that. That totaled less than eight feet and then we used eight feet as our design. Now this modeling tells us a lot of things. One the big storms don't just sit out there. The kind of storms that would get you overtopping at the surge barrier have to move through or they will die if they sit there and stay as tropical storms. If they are tropical storms there is a good chance we don't close the Lake Pontchartrain gate any way. So what we have is an extremely conservative approach to a very rigorous model.

John Koeferl: Would you be willing to give that model and other work to the National Science Foundation…

Dr. Grieshaber: I'm sure the National Science Foundation was part of the review. The levels of review were the ASCE, National Science Foundation, IPET; these models have been given to everyone. We want to know the right answer. If someone can find a flaw step up and tell us.

John Koeferl: Well I asked you about a storm that sits out there three or four days and you used 24-hours and a 24-hour storm and that doesn't seem the storm that we fear.

Dr. Grieshaber: The storm that you are speaking of that will stay in one place for days …

John Koeferl: A huge storm that moves very slowly so that the surge gates are closed, the city is pouring water into the canal and we are here. A lot of can't evacuate and the water is going to come over the lowest place, which is right by us and we are part of what absorbs the water and we are not happy with that. We are the fail safe for the system. It doesn't feel very comfortable to us.

Nancy Allen: We need to move on to another speaker, sir. We will come back to you when we get everyone else who hasn't gone yet.

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State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: To continue the discussion when I came in about the consistency and uniformity of the system and about the wall heights. Before Katrina we had variations in heights from parish to parish and from within the city. So now you've done this extensive modeling and come up with this target height that protects every part of the city and parishes from the perfect 100-year storm, but it's still different so could you speak to that for a second.

Ron Elmer: The model results show that your 100-year storm elevation is different from one spot to another. In Jefferson Parish on the lakefront the 100-year level is different than what it is at Seabrook and it's different from what it is in St. Bernard. The system is being built on the data that came out of these models.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: Before Katrina, when we had the earthen levees that were subsiding going from Orleans to St. Bernard, there was a variation in the height of the levee systems even though they may have been along Paris Road, which is part Orleans and Jefferson Parish. I just raise that as an example and can you speak to that in terms of the same geographic zone would there be any differences or has that been corrected in the height of the levees.

Ron Elmer: There are differences in the height…..

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: But in the same zone?

Ron Elmer: For instance, the wall they are building along the MRGO, it starts out at 32 feet and when it gets here it is lower.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: It's taking into factors the natural elevations or what?

Ron Elmer: It's taken into fact all the different geography that you have and how the storm surge affects those particular areas. As you can see you have a funnel here so if a storm surge comes in here obviously the water is going to stack up higher at the barrier than it will at this point because you are out here. That is just the way the water reacts with the storm; it varies throughout the system. At Seabrook for instance, the 100-year storm elevation is 10.5 feet. At the barrier it's 18.5 feet. So we are building the system to address those elevations that came out of the model.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: I understand that at Seabrook it would be at one point and then the MRGO would be at another because you have distances separating; you got topography that is different. M y concern again is an example is Paris Road, which connects Orleans and Jefferson, before all the extensive work, before there was all this review and science and modeling and projections for what would be the best most comprehensive system. There were differences in the elevation and it may have been because of subsidence over the years and no one was monitoring it. I don't know what caused it but I'm just trying to verify that has been remedied.

Dr. Grieshaber: What you are talking about is before we had a system in name only. What happened is that we were partially funded; we did not have a fully funded system. We built as Congress gave us money. So we went forward and built with the money as we had it and there were times when we had subsidence take place and we only had the funds to build up small portions of the areas that subsided. Today, we have a fully-funded system. We learned and were told that one of the problems was that you didn't have a system. The second problem was you didn't build it all at one time. Now we are not in that situation. The exact case you are talking about was one side got money for a levee raise and the other side didn't.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: So inequities have been adjusted have been in adjusted in this system approach, which is everyone is protected That's what we wanted to have on the record and I thank you for your response and to the recognition that it was a problem in the past and hopefully the corrections have been made to resolve it. I also want to ask about information that shares and communicate to the public about the jobs that have been given to local families from Orleans, St. Bernard Parishes. Everyone knows Shaw and they are a great company, but the question is to drive the jobs to the local level so families that were impacted where skills are available are a part of the rebuilding of their protection for their future. I think it just builds for greater trust and builds a great economics throughout. We realize this is the largest civil works project in the history of the Corps, $800 million, so my question is do we have the data that shows the individuals and the corporations from Orleans Parish that have participated in the work?

Ron Elmer: On the Shaw contract in particular, we do have the data that shows all the small business firms that got subcontracts from Shaw that are locally owned, Louisiana-owned or if they are from out of state.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: Along with that, what percentage of the total value is there?

Ron Elmer: We can get that to you.

Nancy Allen: Just speaking for the whole system, of the 14 billion dollars, we have awarded more than two billion dollars to small businesses and I think more than 75% of those are local or Louisiana small businesses. We have a very active small business program and Ned Foley, who is our deputy for small businesses, would probably be the best person to package that information so we will take that back to him. We can also speak to all the companies who are getting the big contracts.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: We don't want the history and the relationship to be as it was with our beautiful National Guard $200 million project and very little work was given to locals and to small businesses.

Ron Elmer: We do incentivize for the contractors to use small and locally-owned businesses.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: I think those type of incentives are great, and yes we recognize Louisiana corporations, but again the devastation was here in New Orleans and in St. Bernard and Plaquemines, and again to help build the economy of the businesses that were destroyed is prudent and wise particularly if the same skill sets are there. If there is an incentive for those communities who lost homes, businesses, employees, I think that type of thought process…and I know you have to deal with federal regulations and rules, but that again drives the dollar into the community and builds trusts and builds relationships. My last questions as I move to the state, the issue of insurance and the fact that insurance premiums continue to rise in this region even though you are doing this great work and Congress has extended this unheard of amount of money to push forward our protections of this region that will benefit from the work being done by people committed to making this region safer, but the insurance industry acts as if nothing has happened or changed because rates continue to increase. Can you speak a little bit to certification and communication with the insurance industry, being our state commissioner, has he been on tour of the closure of the MRGO. It's a significant project.

Nancy Allen: We do have someone here from FEMA, but homeowners insurance in not FEMA.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: We are really proud Mr. FEMA as we probably need both. If it's all about risk reduction, which the projects have been about risk reduction then there should be a corresponding reduction in the rates that people are paying because right now people are being driven out of their homes because of increasing insurance premiums and being at that the national level. I was in a debate about insurance and the region I represent the companies paid nothing because people were told their homes were destroyed by flood and that's a national program so thank you for all the advance on that and the good work you are doing now and the public assets that are coming up. Since you are here, I'll let you know we need our schools back in the 9th Ward so we appreciate your help in getting that done, but anything that would help from the national perspective to recognize all of the work that the Corps is doing so that there is a corresponding decrease in flood insurance rates and we had that same discussion with our commission of insurance on homeowners.

Mike Hunnicut: I agree with you. We have done some preliminary estimates and looked at the future outcome and what it's projected to be. I'm from St. Bernard Parish so I live on the same island that you live on. I've looked at some of the data and the data shows me that because of a lot of improvements the city and St. Bernard has done with drainage, the levee improvements, we will see an improvement and our flood elevation levels dropping. It won't be the whole community, but it will be parts of it. So there will be areas that will be taken out of flood hazard areas and put into non-special flood areas, which will reduce flood insurance.

State Senator Cynthia Willard-Lewis: Would you keep us posted on those meetings and timelines?

Mike Hunnicut: With the flood insurance and the maps and until the levees are completed FEMA will be redoing the official maps, which won't be until 2012. Right now, to keep everyone at ease, flood insurance has been frozen for this area. We are not increasing or decreasing anything. What we will be doing is redevelop the maps and we will be holding public hearings in the five parish areas affected by the levees.

Nancy Allen: We can certainly reach out to the insurance commissioner to see if he wants to do a tour and in fact, we invite anyone who would like to see the projects we can coordinate a group tour. We can take you up on the barrier and other areas. Do we have other questions from those who have not had time to ask questions or make comments?

John Koeferl: Three minutes isn't very long so I haven't been able to tell you what a good job you are doing. I want to thank you for all your work and you can't help it if you have orders that may preclude you from doing things that we wanted. I wanted to make a note here about my question about the coordination necessary about levee work and the lock project. Do you remember Hurricane Gustav when the head of the levee work, Karen Durham -Aguilera saying don't worry it's just sloshing and lapping and nothing to be concerned about. But actually we were very fortunate I think because what had happened was the Galvez Street Wharf had been removed from that area of the seawall but there wasn't any coordination or care for repairing the wall, which was weaker than the rest of the wall. There was no one watching over that and that created a crisis. One place where it was worse was in Katrina where the lock work was doing excavation beside the levee wall that broke, there was no coordination between people looking over the levee for hurricane protection and doing the project work and we know what happened there; we got flooded. I'm not asking for you to accept liability for that as I know you are under orders for that too, but this is a very important issue for us. In asking that question I'm not trying to stump you or get something I don't feel….I ask it as a legitimate questions so we know what needs to be done out there and it's not just one project or another, but that someone somewhere in or outside the Corps is watching out for the whole. We are right were all this happens. We have three different levees, we have the Corps Lock Project levee controls, we have the Hurricane Protection Levee, we have the

Mississippi River Levee and it's all involved in change in this project. We don't have a sense that anyone knows where it's going.

Theola Garret: I asked earlier about remediation that was going along the Industrial Canal at each one of the sites. Do you know?

Nancy Allen: We can do that now, but I'm just not sure everyone can see the red on the map, but we will show you each spot. Everywhere on this map where there is a red line that is where we are doing some form of remediation work. What we are doing here along the Michoud Canal, that is a proposed stabilization berm and near there is relief wells.

Female Engineer: [Inaudible]

Ron Elmer: Stability berm right here, we have deep soil mixing here, over here we have another stability and here we have a concrete slab. On the east side just across from the lake, we have buttress wall along here, south of here there is a stability berm and concrete slab and on the west side we have all relief wells.

Theola Garret: Someone made the comment that in the post-Katrina levee that you put up that there are deep wells in that also?

Ron Elmer: There were relief wells already in place before Katrina as that was the standard practice for that type of issue. There were relief wells in the system prior to Katrina. After Katrina we did add additional relief wells and after Gustav, we added more here.

Theola Garret: In the last meeting you said with the deep wells the water goes into the drainage system so I'm still saying that if you are in the middle of a storm and it's raining on your side and you are getting a lot of water, but if you have a lot of deep wells on that side you are going to get more water into the ….

Ron Elmer: But it's not a lot of water. All those parameters were taken into consideration in the analysis.

Theola Garret: I was just looking at all the areas outside the Industrial Canal so making comments I would prefer having something else noted.

Ron Elmer: You have to understand that we are using the latest and greatest engineering and science that we have available to us to design the system.

Vanessa Gueringer: I'm just going to say this. What we feel in this neighborhood is that we don't' fee like there has been any consistency to the height of these levees. To tell us that there are levees that are being raised to 32 feet and we are still at 12 feet really upsets us. To tell us that you've done all these computer generated analysis of eight feet of water lapping over into the canal and we are at 12-feet levees, doesn't sit well. To say in your report that all the IERs in the New Orleans area say that they protect population, except this one. This one in your report is said to protect the IHNC, it does not say that it is advanced protection to protect the population. When you all came last year to this neighborhood with the port to talk about the lock expansion project, to hear you say 15 years of traffic jams, bridges being out, devaluation of our property, trucks driving all day, pile driving, then you would pump $47 million into the community, by then we will be a ghost town. There is no consistency or urgency to provide protection for this, the most flooded area in the city. You all want to sit here and control what mother nature wants to do. You say it's going to be eight feet and that a storm won't sit over the canal and dump

that kind of water. During Gustav I looked at water lapping over the canal on the upper 9th side and I had to believe that it was like that on the Lower 9th side. And you talk about the Seabrook Structure being in place by June 1 and you say you are going to put a cofferdam in 2011, can you assure us that is going to be in place? We've been lied to over and over again by you people as to whether our protection will be in place. You then come and say June 1st comes we had some issues so guess what, y'all not really fully protected yet. I understand we are people and we are just like the rest of the city. It hurts us that we are the last ones to get protection and to hear you all stand up and say there are no differences being made, yes there are. I don't understand you people. Is there any compassion for our lives in this area, for our property or is it always about the bottom line, money. The port, the city and your jobs. It's not about us because we have flooded over and over again and until you walk in our shoes, you will never understand how we feel. So all of this means nothing because there is no consistency and no urgency to protect us and we know that.

Ron Elmer: First of all, we do have a sense of urgency. We are working extremely hard to have all these systems in place next hurricane season. Right now we envision we will be done on time, that's our schedule. As far as it goes, every individual living behind this system when it's done will have the same level of protection. I don't know any other way to put it…well then you know more than our engineers and our scientists.

Vanessa Gueringer: We still have metal pile driving along Bayou Bienvenue that the Orleans Levee Board won't address. We have all kind of pockets of weak situations in our levee system. They talk about blight being a jack o'lantern affect; we have a jack o'lantern levee system. Instead of T-walls, we have I-walls. How did you get authorization to heighten levees everywhere else but in this area, the area that has flooded the most because you know why, you want to hold us hostage with this lock project. The city wants to dredge and put the sediment on Bayou Bienvenue and then you will poison our water down here. You don't care about us.

Nancy Allen: I want to make one clarification. The Seabrook Structure will not be completed as it looks here by June 1, 2011. The cofferdam will provide 100-year level of protection by June 2011 and there is work going on all over the system. Basically the entire levee system is all being constructed right now. There is work in all parishes, everywhere is under construction right now and the mission is to reach the 100-year level of protection by June 2011 for the entire system.

Vanessa Gueringer: The surge barrier is the only thing that is going to protect us. When they are not we have all these weak situations in our levee system and they are not being addressed.

Ron Elmer: Yes they are and that's the purpose of this IER. We are looking at all the levees and floodwalls on the IHNC and GIWW to verify which areas do and do not meet the design guidelines and we are doing work to make sure they do.

Vanessa Gueringer: You need to take a tour of all these areas of the levee system and let us tell you how protected this looks to us. We've been flooded. You haven't experienced that, we have.

Nancy Allen: Do we have other questions or comments? We will stick around and answer any questions and listen. There is a map in the back with this remediation area and we can show you specifics. You were given a survey when you came in and if you could fill that out and leave it. Again, we are happy to take anyone out to see any of these projects, please let us know what we can do and we can speak to neighborhood or church groups. For a tour our speaking engagement, you can get a card from Nick Silbert and send him your request.

Dr. Grieshaber: If you want to organize something, we will gladly go with you and walk the system and show us the areas of your concern. Because if there is something out there that we don't know about, we want to know about it.

The following notes were recorded by USACE contractors. These notes are intended to provide an overview of the presentations and public questions and comments, and are not intended to provide a complete or verbatim account of the meeting. This account is not intended to be a legal document.