



Individual Environmental Reports 14, 15, 16, 17 and borrow  
 Public Meeting  
 Tuesday, January 15, 2008

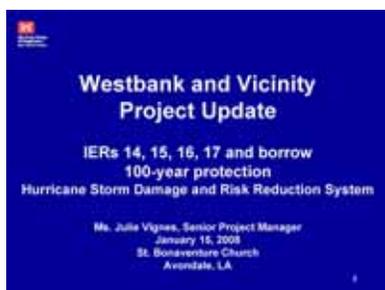
<b>Location</b>	St. Bonaventure Catholic Church 329 S. Jaime Blvd Avondale, LA
<b>Time</b>	6:00 p.m. Open House 7:00 p.m. Presentation
<b>Attendees</b>	approx 42 community members and 15 staff
<b>Format</b>	Open house Presentation Q & A
<b>Handouts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PPT print out</li> <li>• Borrow handout (11-29-07)</li> <li>• NolaEnvironmental.org handout</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitator</b>	Welcome – Julie Morgan, USACE, Outreach Presentation – Julie Vignes, USACE, Sr. Project Manager, Westbank and Vicinity

**Welcome - Julie Morgan, Outreach**

Thank you for coming tonight. This is the Corps’ 39<sup>th</sup> public meeting and we’ll be back. Comment cards and surveys are on your chairs; please fill them out before you leave. There is an information slide at the end of the presentation; we invite you to talk to our environmental manager about the environmental process and the purpose of these meetings. There are handouts and other bits of information at the side tables. Tonight Julie Vignes is your presenter. Julie is the Senior Project Manager for Westbank projects and she’ll be giving the presentation tonight. We also have several Subject Manager Experts here and I’ll introduce them as we go through the questions.

I ask that everyone to please wait until the end of Julie’s presentation to ask questions. We respectfully request that you ask questions only at the end of the presentation and while we are having the discussion, please respect each others time. Everyone wants to comment so please don’t hog the floor. Please try to limit your comments to 5 minutes. After the meeting, project managers are going to be here for you to talk to one-on-one in case you would rather not ask your question in front of everyone. We’re here to meet your needs so if we don’t answer your question, please let us know so we can get you the best answer available.

**Presentation** by Julie Vignes, Sr. Project Manager for Westbank and Vicinity Projects.



Thanks for coming tonight. We have lots of activity on the Westbank and we welcome your comments and input. This presentation will discuss Westbank and Vicinity protection and Individual Environmental Reports 14, 15, 16, 17 and borrow. You’ll see those project areas in the presentation.



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# Public Meeting Recap

## Why are we here tonight

To discuss the status of completed, in-progress and potential improvements to the Westbank and Vicinity portion of the Hurricane Storm Damage and Risk Reduction System in Jefferson, Plaquemines and St. Charles Parishes.

Our effort is to construct a system that provides 100-year protection. Tonight we're here to discuss the status of completed projects, provide an update on current projects, and talk about potential improvements to protect Jefferson and St. Charles parishes.

## National Environmental Policy Act: NEPA

- Required for all major Federal actions
- Analyze potential impacts to the human and natural environment and investigate reasonable alternatives
- Public Involvement is KEY! We want to hear from you!
- Goal: more informed decision making through public involvement
- Analyses documented in Individual Environmental Reports (IER)

The National Environmental Policy Act is a federal regulation that ensures that we are in compliance with laws. It's here to evaluate the impacts that projects may have to the human and natural environments. And you're here to help us build better projects.

## NEPA Process and Path Ahead

- The NEPA process began with public scoping meetings for IERs 14, 15, 16 and 17 in March 2007
- From March 2007 through today, current project alternatives were developed, impacts were analyzed, and public input was solicited
- Tentative dates of draft IER 30-Day public review period:
  - IER 14: January 28, 2008 - February 27, 2008
  - IER 15: January 30, 2008 - February 26, 2008
  - IER 16: March 14, 2008 - April 12, 2008
  - IER 17: April 7, 2008 - May 7, 2008

Tentative dates for the public review periods begin between January 28 and April 7. There are other Westbank IERs and other Eastbank projects also.

## NEPA Process and Path Ahead

- Final decision regarding IER recommendations will be made in 2008. Tentative decision dates are:
  - IER 14: March 10, 2008
  - IER 15: March 13, 2008
  - IER 16: April 26, 2008
  - IER 17: May 21, 2008

This is the schedule for environmental reports highlighted tonight. Following the public comment period we'll have final recommendations for alternatives to construct. These are tentative dates to move forward with construction.

## Westbank and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project



This map shows the alignment of current hurricane protect projects. There are 66 miles of levees and floodwalls on the Westbank. Protection goes west from Jefferson Parish through Westwego to Jean Lafitte, up to the Harvey Canal, and all along the Algiers Canal to the east. Then it heads along the Hero Canal and ties in below Hero Canal to Oakville in Plaquemines. The western most part of the project is at the Lake Cataouatche western tie-in which is discussed in IER 16.



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We're evaluating three alternatives to construct the Lake Cataouatche Western Tie In (IER 16) and provide protection to the Westbank.



Alternative 1 ties in to the existing levee south of Hwy 90. It would include construction of a levee and floodwalls along S. Kenner Ave, coming in below the railroad tracks to Davis Pond.



Alternative 2 ties into the levee, it goes west of Hwy 90 towards St. Charles Parish, crosses Hwy 90 then ties in to Davis Pond. The existing levees would be improved.



Alternative 3 is similar to Alternative 2. It parallels Hwy 90 along the Davis Pond then ties in to the Mississippi River. We are still doing engineer analysis and evaluating the environmental report. This is all included in IER 16, which goes for review later this spring.



The Lake Cataouatche Area is IER 15. This slide shows the current alignment. We have existing levees, pump protection, and more levees which tie in to Bayou Segnette.



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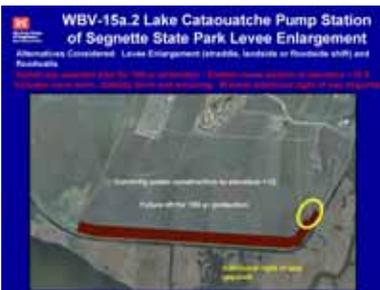
# Public Meeting Recap



Project WBV 17 is the reach of protection south of Hwy 90. We are evaluating proposals for this now. This is ongoing work; it will bring levees to higher than existing protection, but not 100-year protection. We're considering alternatives to provide 100-yr protection; the levee section will go to about 15 1/2 feet. We've tentatively selected raising the existing section. It will include berms and armoring.



Project WBV 18.2 ties in to another reach, and the contract is underway. It was awarded in Oct. 2006. Another contract will raise this reach to 15 1/2 ft. We'll do an earthen levee raise with existing right-of-way already acquired.



Project WBV 15a is under construction. It includes an earthen levee. Our existing right-of-way is narrower here so we may need to acquire additional right-of-way. We'll have impacts to existing right-of-way on the protected side of the levee.



Bayou Segnette and Company Canal are part of IER 17. We're currently evaluating four alternatives for 100-yr protection in this location.



Alternative 1 is parallel protection which includes raising levees and floodwalls along the current alignment. We have provided an interim barge gate that can be closed to protect the area behind it. We've done work to strengthen the current floodwalls. This area has been strengthened since Hurricane Katrina. We've looked at designs to strengthen the Company Canal. The canal can be closed off to surges up to 9 ft. We would also replace existing floodwalls and raise the alignment.



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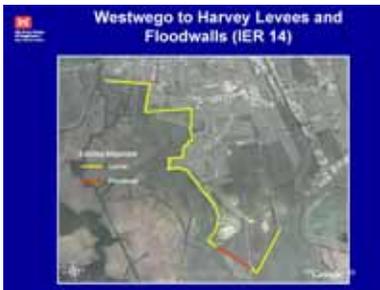
Alternative 2 would be construction of a sector gate closure in Bayou Segnette. It would include a pump station. If we provide protection at the green location [see slide], we wouldn't need to replace the levees and floodwalls behind the green section.



Alternative 3 would provide a gated structure at a different location than the one explored in Alternative 2.



Alternative 4 is a gated closure at the location of the barge gate which was just installed. If we did this we'd have to raise all the levees and floodwalls along Bayou Segnette to 100-Year elevations.



IER 14 covers Westwego to Harvey Levees and Floodwalls. From Westwego we pump [inaudible] to Orleans Village. This project is going to go to construction in March 08. More projects brought these levees to an elevation of 10 ft and that was our pre-Katrina authorized level of protection. They are a little deficient now so we're going to over-build them, allow them to settle, and then come out again to raise them to the right level. First construction will be in March 08, then for 100-year protection we will do an earthen levee enlargement along the alignment of existing right-of-way.



For Project WBV14c.2, we awarded a contract a couple months ago. The contract will raise the levee elevation to 14 ft. We'll enlarge that levee within our existing right-of-way.



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Under Project WBV 14f we would do earthen levee enlargements to reach 100-yr protection.



WBV 14b is currently under construction to elevation 11 ft. It is tentatively the recommendation for 100-year protection. We're likely going to recommend an earthen levee enlargement within the existing right-of-way.



Project WBV 14d runs between Hwy 45 and Lafitte Hwy. [the circled area] Here is an I-wall. We're considering a levee enlargement or replacing it with a floodwall. It is most likely that we will be replacing the I-wall with a flood wall. We would also replace [inaudible] at Hwy 45 and a ramp at Lafitte-Larose. The ramp can be built within the existing alignment. There are some minor impacts at the proposed ramp crossing.



This is Project WBV 14e. This is what we call the "V" line levee. On the east, the construction contract is planned for March 2008. Future work will be raising the levee to elevation 14 ft. It looks like we'll be recommending an earthen levee enlargement but we're concerned about the soils. We may have to acquire additional right-of-way in order to build a stable levee section. We may be enlarging the levee and building berms which may cause relocation of the existing drainage canals.



There are currently two IER addendums out for public comment. IER 18 and 19 discuss Government Furnished Borrow Material and Contractor Furnished Borrow Material. Public comments on the addendums are due by Feb 11 2008. Copies are available at the [www.nolaenvironmental.org](http://www.nolaenvironmental.org) website and you can make public comment on those reports.



# Public Meeting Recap



This slide indicates locations we're looking at as potential borrow sites. This is Lake Cataouatche [pointing] and this is Hwy 90 [pointing]. This [pointing] shows sites we're investigating. To build levees, we do a technical review of borrow. We look at soil borings and an environmental assessment of the location.



These are sites that are under investigation on the Westbank.



This is Belle Chase, English Turn and the Algiers Canal. These are eastern sites under investigation.



Thanks again for coming tonight. Our environmental staff and borrow team is here to answer your questions.

## Public Comments, Questions and Answers

Julie Morgan: Here tonight and available to answer your questions are:

Julie Vignes	Sr. Project Manager, Westbank and Vicinity Projects in Jefferson and St. Charles parishes
Gib Owen	Chief, Ecological Planning and Restoration Section for Hurricane Protection System
Stuart Waits	Sr. Project Manager, Floodwalls
Soheila Holley	Sr. Project Manager, Borrow
Ed Lyon	Environmental Justice



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We're taking notes and they'll be on the [www.nolaenvironmental.gov](http://www.nolaenvironmental.gov) web site. We will take your questions and comments into review, and we'll incorporate your question into the next presentation.

**Question 1.** J. Drake, New Orleans: **What does the Corps do in Risk Analysis to determine if it will build an earthen levee or floodwall?**

**Response 1.** Stuart Waits: The Corps prefers earthen levees but if soil foundations can't handle the weight of a levee then we use floodwalls. We also need appropriate right-of-way and there are real estate concerns. Some areas need a larger footprint because the area can't handle the weight [of the clay]. Sometimes [the levee] must go several hundred feet from the base. There are also wetlands and mitigation costs to consider. We have switched from using I-walls to T-walls. There are a number of factors that go into Risk Analysis.

**Question 2.** Representative Robert Billiot, Westwego: **In the section over by St. Charles Parish, the one near the Canal on St Charles, there's little protection from Lake Cataouatche. Are they [St. Charles Parish] going to continue to maintain it [the levees] themselves as a parish?**

**Response 2.** Julie Vignes: As far as Westbank projects go, [the levees] extend to Lake Cataouatche here [pointing to IER 16] we have levees to this point [pointing]. Westbank projects will close this section [pointing] and protect it. We may construct this alignment [pointing] but that's the end of the Westbank project. There is work that [St. Charles] Parish is pursuing on its own, as a 404 action. The [St. Charles' project] is not currently a federal project.



**Question 3.** Billiot: **When you mentioned Davis Pond, do you eliminate Hwy 90?**

**Response 3.** Vignes: We'd be south of Hwy 90 and then cross the highway. We'd build along the green line.

**Comment 4.** Billiot: **You mentioned St. Charles, their leadership said they wanted to build their own levee.**

**Response 4.** Waits: You're referring to the Donaldsonville to the Gulf of Mexico project. That's another project. They are studying it right now, it's not tied into Westbank and Vicinity project. It's in a feasibility study. That project is currently authorized.

**Gib Owen:** St. Charles Parish is pursuing that project.

**Billiot:** I was on my way home when I got a phone call from Eddie Fauchaux who said he was going to stop me from getting home unless I made it here. Also with me Wendy Maise, she is going to work with me in my office. We don't have a phone yet and one promise I made during my campaign was to work fulltime and this [position as State Representative] would be my job. My second promise would be to have an office in Waggaman. We're putting together the office now. We've been working together in Westwego. The Corps is doing a tremendous job. You knew what we started with to bring us here.

**Morgan:** Thank you very much.



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**Billiot:** The slide you use shows more green than there is actual land. We'll set a trip up so we can go out there and see it. We want people to see what's happening at Davis Pond. (clapping)

**Question 5.** Irving Haydel, Avondale: **Hwy 90 is where levees are tilting into [inaudible]. What's the elevation there?**

**Response 5.** Vignes: The highway is at elevation 6 ft, until we construct the levee.

**Question 6.** Haydel: **So could water go around Hwy 90?**

**Response 6.** Vignes: If we chose that alternative there will be drainage sections that would be closed for a hurricane event. There would also be a gate. Right now we're not closed but once this is constructed we'll have drainage.

**Question 7.** Haydel: **Will there be any more pumps installed on the Westbank?**

**Response 7.** Vignes: Not as a part of the hurricane protection system other than along Algiers and Harvey Canals. One alternative we're looking at is raising the levee and also installing a floodgate. We'd have to provide pumping capacity to drain the canals above the structure. At Company Canal that gate could [inaudible] from Westwego. One of those pumps would [inaudible] pumping capacity.

**Question 8.** Mary Clulee, Luling: **Can you show again how you'll block Bayou Verrett?**

**Response 8.** Vignes: We don't have a detailed drawing but it's an alternative under consideration in IER16. We'd have to provide a closure structure that would be open most of the time unless the area is threatened by a hurricane.

**Question 9.** Clulee: **So [this plan] would block [Bayou Verrett]?**

**Response 9.** Vignes: [inaudible]

**Question 10.** Billiot: **Is that Pier 90?**

**Response 10.** Vignes: We know about maintaining the opening for [inaudible] traffic. It would be closed for a storm event.

**Question 11.** Clulee: **But blocking it is in the plan?**

**Response 11.** Vignes: Yes, and we will share more details as we move through the design process.

**Question 12.** Clulee: **Have these alignments been tied into [the] 1-49 [expansion] design alignments?**

**Response 12.** Waits: We meet with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development [regularly].

**Question 13.** Clulee: **Are there any joint ventures on construction or drainage?**

**Response 13.** Waits: There are no current plans to tie the projects together. We know what DOTD is doing and they know what we're doing.

**Owen:** We have tried to tie-in with them but our construction timelines don't align.

**Vignes:** One of our sponsors is DOTD. We meet regularly with them to discuss design and construction, etc. We've identified some opportunities to do things jointly but we have a timeline to be completed by 2010 or 2011, so if we have funding we'll go on with our work. We can partner but they aren't authorized yet.



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**J. Morgan:** If we don't answer your question completely, please let us know so we can tackle it from another angle. We'll work until we get you the right answer.

**Question 14.** Jack Hebert, Avondale: **I have a question about pumps. Everything is fine if pumps are working but without pumps it backs up.**

**Response 14.** Vignes: I didn't get into detail but the yellow boxes along the levee alignments indicate pump stations. There will be T-walls in front of the pumps to protect them. We'll be putting in backflow protection also so there will be reduction of risk to backflow.



**Waits:** Jefferson Parish drainage is putting in safe houses to run pump stations continually.

**Comment 15.** Hebert: **When water gets high we can't pump if the levee is 20 ft.**

**Response 15.** Vignes: Right now there is no backflow pump protection but we'll put in backflow protection with the gates.

**Question 16.** Mary Collegan: **When you talk about armoring are you talking about riprap armoring or concrete sides?**

**Response 16.** Vignes: We haven't finalized which kind of armoring we'll use. Where the levee is prone to overtopping, we could use riprap or we could use mats like those on the Mississippi River. We're looking at vegetative species. We're not finished yet and it may differ. It could be some riprap.

**Question 17.** Vanessa Gueringer, New Orleans: I'm a resident of the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward and I'm sitting here listening to this information you're presenting about temporary protection for the 100-yr storm. I'm from the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward and I don't know if your community follows but maps show that in the black community there is little or no protect post Hurricane Katrina. So this is refreshing. We have to cross our toes and fingers to hope that we won't flood until 2011. So can you shed light on why there is inequality in the black community? **Why is there all this hoopla on flood protection?**

**Comment 17.** Billiot: The community that we are talking about now is 95% minority.

**Gueringer:** That's on this side of the river.

**Billiot:** In your area there is a plan but what happens, in my opinion, it means too much that your questions are coming down and [inaudible] to the next group of people. We want to see what type of community input they have from here. What I suggest is that you call your Councilman and State Representative and talk to them to tell them you want a meeting.

**Gueringer:** The Corps can answer but they aren't prepared, they don't have information or maps that we need to get our questions answered.

**Billiot:** I'll give your name to your State Representative.

**Gueringer:** I'm in constant contact with city officials. The Corps has failed. The engineers have failed the Corps.

**Morgan:** If you look at the map in the presentation, it's of the entire system. This weekend we went to the Upper 9<sup>th</sup> Ward and we had information for the career day and Friends and Family Day. We were there and so were a lot of people.



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**Comment 18. Gueringer:** You've never had a meeting in the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward. You had a meeting on the [Industrial Canal] lock. We've been fighting for that for 20 years. Old Metairie and Lakeview, you are telling us that we have to wait until 2011 and I want to know why. What type of temporary floor protection [inaudible]?

**Response 18. Morgan:** If you would like to recommend a venue we'll come to you and we'll have appropriate information there and people to answer your questions. We want to satisfy you as much as possible. We'll meet after this session and we can talk about the details. I appreciate you coming all the way over here.

**Owen:** We're having a meeting Thursday night in St. Bernard also.

**Comment 19. Gueringer:** We flooded because of Hurricane's Rita and Katrina. You came in March. I see no security tonight. We're intelligent people, why are you scared?

**Ed Lyon:** We're talking about setting a up a meeting with Councilwoman Willard-Lewis and hopefully by Thursday well have that set up.

**Gueringer:** Tell the Council Lady my name, she knows us. I'm a representative of my community throughout the city because you have failed us.

**Morgan:** Well talk about a meeting and we'll hold a meeting there.

**Question 20. Cheryl Cashio, Bridge City:** I was looking at a letter to Col Lee. Based on information from IER [inaudible] wetlands would be converted to open areas and borrow pit. **What area is that?**

**Owen:** We have investigated [potential] borrow areas. The letter you're referring to is at the bottomland hardwoods.

**Cashio:** What area is that letter pertaining to?

**Response 20. Owen:** We're looking in Plaquemines, St. Bernard and sites in Mississippi. You may have bottomland hardwood there and one site [the Corps investigated] is in Dockville that had [inaudible]. We also investigated a site called Kimble 2, it has bottomland hardwood.

**Question 21. Vincent Vastola, Marrero:** With all the work that needs to be done, there's going to be an awful lot of borrow used. **Do we know how much borrow we're going to need?** The Corps has identified a number of sites for borrow. **What criteria did the Corps use to determine if the site meets LAC2 requirements? How do you know how much?**

**Response 21. Soheila Holley:** At this time the estimate is that we need more than 100 million cubic yards of borrow. We identify [borrow sites] that are close to an alignment because it will reduce the cost of hauling and there will be less dust and traffic. When the borrow is Government Furnished, that option is the landowner submits a right-of-entry to the Corps. The Corps comes on the land to do the testing and technical work, they check for organic material and sand content to make sure the material meets our design requirements. The second choice is Contractor Furnished Borrow, which is when the landowner does testing themselves and submits criteria to the Corps. We review the test and once a site is suitable, a construction company deals with landowners directly to move it. The third option is to investigate the possibility of a Supply Contract to identify borrow and that is what we just did. We did a Sources Sought to help us find who are the potential bidders with site areas of Suitable material that we could potentially purchase. We have 60 packages submitted and the submission will go through same testing criteria to make sure the clay is suitable. We will have a solicitation package out in a month and the qualified bidders will compete for the clay contract.

**Vastola:** You said over 100 million CY for the entire system?

**Vignes:** That's for projects in St. Bernard, Jefferson, Orleans and Westbank projects.



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**Holley:** And that number will change as we get to the final design phase for each levee reach.

**Question 22. Vastola:** The Corps has designated certain areas on various maps and said that could be a borrow site. **What criteria did the Corps use to determine it could be used?**

**Response 22. Holley:** We're avoiding wetlands and we'll identify sites near the levee alignments. Once an area is designated then the team does testing and borings.

**Vastola:** What I want to know is what criteria, other than if wetlands, did the Corps use to determine if it's a potential site?

**Owen:** Numerous things are factored in. How close it is to the alignment. If it is wetlands. If it is bottomland hardwood. A geologist who looks at sites needs to say [inaudible] is on the USDA map to be wrong. All we do is focus on potential areas to investigate.

**Holley:** These are investigations to see if the material is suitable.

**Question 23. Vannicola:** Some potential sites that you are identifying are in close proximity to residential areas and there will be dust. **Was location taken into consideration?**

**Response 23: Holley:** All those concerns will be investigated to make sure we're minimizing impacts [inaudible]. These are just preliminary sites that could be potentially used for borrow.

**Question 24. Vastola:** So a potential borrow site is located within a residential or a commercial area. Then in the overall scheme of things that site could be a borrow site. **Why not look at remote areas for borrow sites?**

**Response 24. Owen:** I initially looked at more rural sites, as we've extended the search we're looking at more developed areas but initially we looked at rural areas. As we did more research we need more borrow and it needs to be closer to businesses and homes.

**Question 25. Jeanie Rent, Times-Picayune:** My concern is that in 1996, three professors from Wisconsin or Michigan did a study in east [inaudible] basin. In that report they were talking about loss of wetlands and upper hardwood forest area due to development of businesses. That's what the study was about. Some of the area over here, there is a lot of [inaudible] especially because of Hurricane Katrina [inaudible] there is more liability now. We're losing land. If you are going to use land as borrow and [inaudible] the forest will turn into wetlands. What I want to understand is [inaudible] the geologist just looked maps instead of going out [to the area they were investigating] and considering instead how this would impact people. **Is the corps going to send people [to investigate borrow sites in person]?**

**Response 25. Holley:** Geologists conduct site visits

**Comment 26: Rent:** I hope the army uses that as a last resort. Studies from Louisiana State University, University of New Orleans, Nicholls State University and private foundations are [inaudible] at how we're losing areas to marshlands. Were trying to fight that.

**Response 26. Holley:** We appreciate your concern. We're trying to provide hurricane protection and minimize risk. We have a budget we're trying to keep a balance between cost and construction completion date. We're trying to make sure we're not impacting the environment. There are a lot of criteria we're trying to meet. That's why we're pursuing the 3<sup>rd</sup> option [Sources Sought] to get good material. We need suitable material and the price has to be right so have money to build the whole system. We appreciate your concerns and we're trying to work with all of these [criteria].

Rent: We're losing areas for hunting and fishing as it is.



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**Question 27. Irving Haydel: On borrow how big [are the pits]?**

**Response 27. Holley:** They are about 20 ft deep.

**Question 28. Haydel: How big [are the borrow pits]?**

**Response 28. Holley:** Sites are no less than 10 acres.

**Question 29: Jimmy Poole: What can be done with the borrow area once you guys are finished?**

**Response 29. Holley:** At this time we don't have authority to backfill the borrow sites and in the Government Furnished option the landowner gets the site back and the owner can backfill or develop the site.

**Question 30. Poole: So [the borrow site] would turn in to a big pond? It stays a 10 acres pond?**

**Response 30. Holley:** Yes

Man from audience: Bring your fishing pole. (laughing)

**Question 31. Al Schweitzer, Avondale: Are you saying some of the [borrow] will be taken from federal land?**

**Response 31. Holley:** Yes, we're taking some of the borrow from the Bonnet Carre Spillway. We try to get borrow from 20-25 miles away from the site otherwise it's not very feasible to use that borrow anymore.

**Vignes:** You may recall we had an event when we monitored the gate and closed the gate at Harvey Canal. Because of weather expected tonight, we are monitoring and we may close those gates. We're on top of this.

**Morgan:** Please go to the Web site, [www.nolaenvironmental.gov](http://www.nolaenvironmental.gov) to contact Gib Owen by snail mail or e-mail. Please fill out the surveys on your chairs. We appreciate the turnout tonight and we'll stay in touch. The project managers are here to answer your questions.