

Public Meeting Summary

Individual Environmental Report 1 La Branche Wetlands Levee Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Location	American Legion Post 366 12188 River Road St. Rose, LA 70087
Time	Open House 6 p.m.-7 p.m. Presentation 7 p.m.
Attendees	Approx. 20
Format	Open House Presentation Discussion
Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process Brochure • Borrow Handout • IER 1 • Bonnet Carre Spillway Master Plan • Bonnet Carre Handouts
Facilitator	Cheryn Robles, public affairs contractor

Cheryn Robles, public affairs contractor

Thank you for coming to the meeting tonight. My name is Cheryn Robles and I am a contractor for the Corps of Engineers. Before we begin I would like to introduce a few people:

Shelly Tastet	St. Charles Parish Councilman District 2
John Gordon	Representing LA Senator David Vitter
V.J St. Pierre	St. Charles Parish President
Larry Cochran	St. Charles Parish Councilman District 5



Rebecca Constance will be giving the presentation. Please hold your questions until the end of the presentation. At that time we will open the floor for comments. Everyone will be given 3

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minutes and I ask that you state your name before you comment. There were questionnaires passed out when you walked in tonight, please fill them out before you leave.

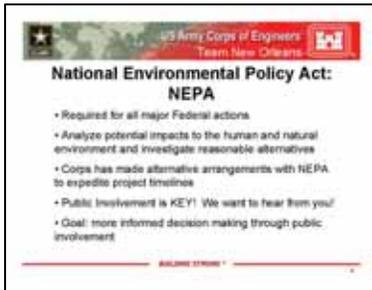
Rebecca Constance, project manager



Tonight I will highlight the recent construction milestones and provide an update on the risk reduction measures in St. Charles Parish. I will also discuss the refinements of the proposed plan to construct a stronger system on the east bank of St. Charles Parish. All covered under the IER 1 LA Branche Wetlands Levee project.



There are several steps taken to reduce risk but in the end there will always be some residual risk.



The National Environmental Policy Act requires all federal agencies to analyze the potential impacts to the human and natural environment and to investigate reasonable alternatives when a construction project is proposed. Public involvement is important to the process. The goal is to make a more informed decision through public involvement.



This is a map of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. Tonight we are going to focus on the east bank of St. Charles [pointing].

The project extends from [inaudible] to this section at the airport.

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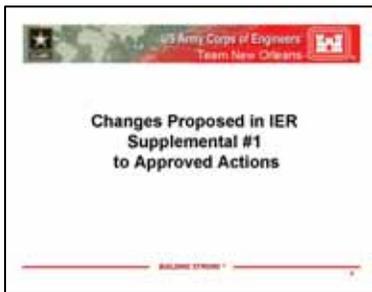
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Currently, Clark Construction is working on 3 sections of the levee. The work began in Jun 2007 and reach 2A should be complete by late summer 2009. The levee in this section is being raised to elevation 16.5.



Reach 1B began in June 2007 and is expected to be completed in July 2009. [Inaudible]



There have been changes to refine the project in IER 1 Supplemental to the approved actions.



The blue area shows the access areas approved in the IER. Airline Highway is separated from the levee by a ditch. [Inaudible]



These are the areas proposed in the supplemental IER, which would allow us to expedite the construction. The more we have the quicker we can get the work done.

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Another change involves reach 2B in blue and a portion of reach 1A. In the original approved IER there was a straddle enlargement. [Inaudible]



The approved alternative in the IER is in light green. This is the levee [pointing] and this is the straddle to the alignment. It requires 300 feet on the protected side. More property would need to be acquired.



We start from the existing levee and degrade it. There is a strong layer of geotextile fabric placed. Then we build it to the authorized elevation. There would be an additional lift to bring it to the 100-year level.



These are the Cross Bayou and St. Rose drainage structures. [Inaudible] If this is Airline Highway then on the northern side is the Bonnet Carre here [pointing]. [Inaudible] For these reaches it is this area east and west of Armond. We will build on the original levee and make it bigger but there are environmental impacts. Instead we are proposing to reduce the footprint to build it to the 100-year elevation. [Inaudible] They will be higher than they were pre-Katrina because they are now at elevation 14. You

have a much stronger and higher system. [Inaudible] The first IER was approved with the input from different agencies and they talked about how we were going to lift it. [Inaudible] The right of way is owned by the Pontchartrain Levee District. We are trying to stay within the footprint so we can strengthen the levee and raise it higher. [Inaudible] It will be cheaper because of the dirt and right of way needed. This area is where we require the straddle enlargement. We are not going to remove the original geotech. We are going to take this piece out and put the new fabric

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in. We are going to build the compacted levee to the authorized level of protection. Then we will come back and do a second lift to reach the 100-year level. [Inaudible]



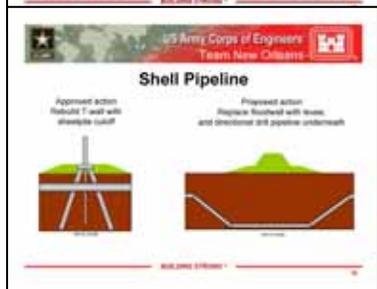
Cross Bayou and St. Rose drainage structures. The left picture is the approved action adjacent to the existing structure. The right picture is the proposed action on the flood side of the existing structure. At Cross Bayou the plan was to build a new structure adjacent to the other and connect the channel. But as we refined the plan we found that we would have to have a temporary solution for hurricane season. [Inaudible]



The St. Rose drainage structure would be built adjacent to the structure to reconnect the channel. Now we are building on the flood side. No need for temporary protection. That is a change from the original plan.



A pipeline meets in the middle of the levee section and floodwall. The plan was to demolish it and rebuild it with a pipeline going through it. [Inaudible]



Now instead of building a floodwall we will drill to minus 75 to 100 feet. We have been talking to Shell and we will allow them to move the lines this way there would be no more relocating or shut downs for them. By doing this the maintenance is better and there are no tie-ins.



The next change is at the airport levee. The original approved plan is to have a flood side shift away from the airport.

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Now the proposed solution is a 45 foot shift to get away from the airport because it is sensitive in this area. [Inaudible] It shifts the stability berms to the other side. There are two landing lights impacting the project but we are working with the airport to move them in or near the levee. We are also working closely with the airport to prevent impacts.



There are ten contracts totaling over \$130 million under way. Levee reaches 2A, 2B, 1A, and 1B are under construction. [Inaudible] Bayou Trepagnier pump station and [inaudible] tie into the Bonnet Carre guide

levees. [Inaudible] The Cross Bayou structure will be built this year pending the approval of the IER. The Gulf South and the St. Rose floodwall will be demolished and rebuilt. [Inaudible] The I-10 floodwall will be rebuilt [inaudible]. The Armenian and Walker structures will be built to a higher elevation. In 2010 we will improve the Canadian Railroad gates and improve the tie in walls.



This is a map of all the borrow pits around the Bonnet Carre Spillway. [Inaudible]

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We are working with DOTD, the local government, etc. to minimize the impacts to the area. There will be more people on the road and safety is important to us. [Inaudible]



Currently available for public review is IER 1 which was released on May 15 and will close on June 13. The Bonnet Carre Master Plan is also available until this weekend.



There are many ways to provide input into any of the IERs. We invite you to share your input at public meetings, at the www.nolaenvironmental.gov Web site, or by contacting Gib Owen the environmental manager. We want to hear your thoughts.



These are two sources where you can find any of these documents. This is the Corps local district Web site with details.

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Before we begin with the questions I would like to introduce the other Corps members here tonight. In addition to Rebecca Constance we have:

Brett Herr	Chief of Regional Project Planning Branch
Carl Anderson	Senior project manager
Gary Brouse	Senior project manager
Gib Owen	Senior environmental manager

Question 1. V.J. St. Pierre: [Inaudible]

Response 1. Rebecca Constance: We find that it is less expensive to build stability berms than to build the levee up.

Question 2. Barbara McArthur: How long it will take?

Response 2. Rebecca Constance: About the same time [inaudible].

Question 3. Unidentified man: Are they going to keep raising it for subsidence?

Response 3. Rebecca Constance: It will make it stronger and more stable. They will be built one at a time.

Question 4. Unidentified man: Was there something wrong with the original [inaudible].

Response 4. Rebecca Constance: There would be more material [inaudible].

Question 5. Unidentified man: Earlier in the presentation it showed infringement on the levee moved toward Airline Highway. The original plan was proposed in 1981 was that suppose to be for commercial use?

Response 5. Rebecca Constance: What we propose would stay within the LADOTD [inaudible]. If the plan is approved it would require additional [inaudible] Airline Highway. We will stay within the current right of way with no impact to Airline Highway. [Inaudible]

Question 6. V.J. St. Pierre: On Airline Highway, are you going to add the renovation to the existing project ongoing?

Response 6. Rebecca Constance: We are meeting and discussing the impacts [inaudible].

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Question 7. Unidentified man: [Inaudible]

Response 7. Rebecca Constance: I am aware of where they plan to put the Cross Bayou Bridge structure. It is not a Corps project but we are aware that they are working in that location. See where the yellow and red lines are, these are the approved places for the where the pump stations would be located. [Inaudible]

Question 8. Shelly Tastet: [Inaudible]. When we built the levee it was by the Corps standards. And the new levee is going to [inaudible].

Response 8. Rebecca Constance: To prevent us from creating more impacts [inaudible]. It either needs another layer [inaudible].

Question 9. Shelly Tastet: In the future if you come back would you revise it again?

Response 9. Rebecca Constance: We only can do what is authorized by Congress and right now this is what we need to do to reach the 100-year level of risk reduction.

Question 10. Unidentified man: What issues do have now when operating [inaudible]? See what we have now. [Inaudible]

Response 10. Carl Anderson: It would be the same amount of water flow.

Question 11. Unidentified man: There are issues there right now.

Response 11. Rebecca Constance: It would be the same. We are working to the west side of the channel to make sure [inaudible].

Question 12. Unidentified man: [Inaudible]

Response 12. Rebecca Constance: The water flow to the structure is the [inaudible]. We are building it to ensure the structure and we will make sure it is zoned.

Question 13. Unidentified man: Can you explain where Cross Bayou is?

Response 13. Carl Anderson: Cross Bayou is here [pointing]. There are three drainage structures designed to let water go out. They act as a title exchange. [Inaudible]

Question 14. Cliff Miller: What is the total timeframe for raising the levee?

Response 14. Carl Anderson: We are going to start awarding late summer and construction will go until May or June 2011.

Question 15. Barbara McArthur: I thought you said it would not be during hurricane season?

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Response 15. Carl Anderson: When we degrade the levee it will not be done during the hurricane season. [Inaudible] It is 16 ½ feet from the Bonnet Carre to the east of Highway 310. [Inaudible]

Question 16. V.J. St. Pierre: Was it supposed to be higher?

Response 16. Carl Anderson: [Inaudible]. It is a combination of still water and waves. The levees are to take care of the wave run up. The floodwalls will be built to the [inaudible] elevation. [Inaudible] The levees are built to the 2011 standards with overbuild for subsidence. There will be future lifts to the levee but those levees will get higher over time.

Question 17. Barbara McArthur: Will that stop water from the Gulf to Lake Pontchartrain? [Inaudible]

Response 17a. Carl Anderson: Congress has to give us authorization. We can not do it until Congress gives us authorization.

Response 17b. Gib Owen: The LACPR report started [inaudible]. I ask you go to the Web site www.lacpr.usae.army.mil because that gives the different alternatives. [Inaudible]

Question 18. Barbara McArthur: Why can't the councils of all the parishes get together to determine the cost and value? [Inaudible]

Response 18. Gib Owen: [Inaudible] The model shows we would put higher surge on Mississippi if we put a barrier at the Rigolets.

Question 19. Bryan Holder: When you degraded the levee will it be 100 feet at a time or would it be the whole levee down?

Response 19. Carl Anderson: [Inaudible] but it would be more than 100 feet. They do not start until they know what areas [inaudible].

Question 20. John Harmon: When you degrade the levee where are you taking the material?

Response 20. Carl Anderson: We will stock pile the material on the edge. We will degrade it to elevation 3 but [inaudible]. Once the geotech fabric is down then we would start moving it back on top of the levee.

Question 21. Unidentified woman: My concern is what comes first the chicken or the egg. [Inaudible] Our soil is something else. How much research did the Corps do on other countries [inaudible]. How many studies were done in that area? The soil is unique.

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Response 21. Rebecca Constance: We have looked at our soil. In our district we have 3 dozen engineers doing lots of research and historical studies on the soil. We have a better understanding and we work with other nations to look at the material. [Inaudible]

Question 22. Unidentified man: Are you familiar with the article in the paper about the trip to the Netherlands?

Response 22. Rebecca Constance: We have a working relationship with other countries. We do invite and encourage other nations to provide feedback on our projects and we work with them to give them advice on theirs.

Question 23. Unidentified man: The levees along the Mississippi River seem to work.

Response 23. Carl Anderson: The Mississippi River levees are made of clay.

Question 24. Unidentified man: What has been done in the Bonnet Carre Spillway?

Response 24. Carl Anderson: We are using the borrow material as a source of material for the levees. There will be a lot of ponds in there until we operate the Spillway and the area starts to build up again.

Cheryn Robles, public affairs contractor

The project managers will be around if you would like to ask them more questions one on one. Thank you for coming to tonight's meeting.