



US Army Corps
of Engineers
New Orleans District

Public Meeting Summary

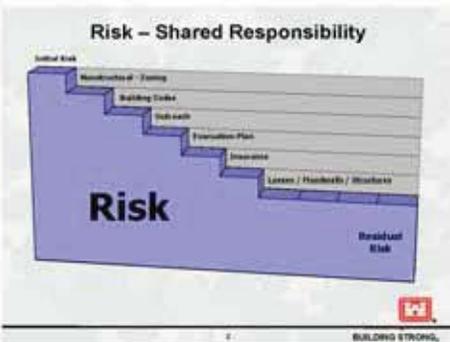
Seabrook Floodgate Complex Construction Update Oct. 13, 2011

Location	Port of New Orleans
Time	Open House 8:30 a.m. Presentation 9:00 p.m., followed by a discussion
Attendees	Approx: 28
Format	Open House Presentation
Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seabrook Fact Sheet Oct. 2011
Facilitator	Rachel Rodi

Greater New Orleans Hurricane & Storm Damage Risk Reduction System



Rachel Rodi: My name is Rachel Rodi and I work for the public affairs of the Corps here in New Orleans. I want to introduce some of our team members. We have our senior project manager Chris Gilmore, we have our project manager Eric Stricklin, and our environmental manager Laura Lee Wilkinson and she will be here to answer questions. We also have Andrew Perez and he's working on the socio economic impacts. Today we are talking about the Seabrook Floodgate Complex Construction Update.



I'm sure a lot of you have seen this slide before. It's about risk; it's a shared responsibility and there are many ways you can buy down risks. We have our FEMA guys in the audience and one way you can buy down risk is to buy flood insurance. There are also structural and non-structural things that can be done such as zoning codes, outreach, having an evacuation plan, having insurance and then there are levees, floodwalls and structures at the bottom. While we do have this fabulous new system in place there is always going to be risks because live in Southeast Louisiana and we will always encourage you to buy down your risk in any way possible.

National Environmental Policy Act "NEPA"

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

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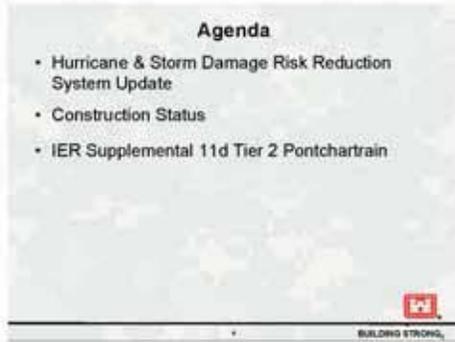
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The reason we are here today is NEPA, the National Environmental Policy Act; it's required for all major federal actions. Basically what it does is analyze the impacts to the human and natural environment. So it's not just for the bugs and bunnies, it's for us as well. We did do an Individual Environmental Report for this project early on. It was the IER 11 Tier 2 Pontchartrain document and we are back here today because we are doing a Supplemental because there are some construction delays and there will be a supplemental report done because of those delays.



Now Eric will go through the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. We will also have a construction status of this project and then talk about the Supplemental that is coming up for this project.



Eric Stricklin: On the screen is the shot of the New Orleans area. There is Lake Pontchartrain, the Mississippi River and the area we are going to be talking about is the IHNC system. The other thing I want to point out is that this system has achieved the 1% risk reduction with interim measures.



The IHNC system consists of three projects; the Lake Borgne Barrier, which is being built here. There is the Seabrook Gate, which is being built out at Lake Pontchartrain and it also has the levees and floodwalls along the IHNC in the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

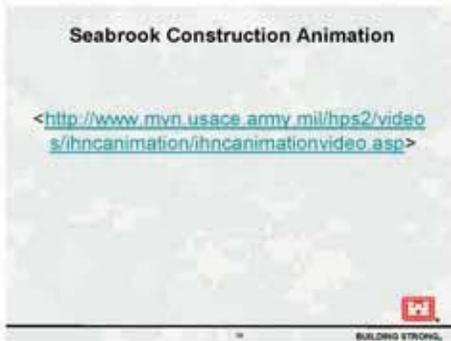


Quickly on the Lake Borgne Barrier; it consists of about a two-mile floodwall and it has three gates – a 56 wide vertical lift gate and that is the Bayou Bienvenue Gate and it also has a 150-wide sector gate and a 150-foot wide barge gate. The wall is complete and the gates are on site and they are functional even though the mechanical and hydraulic equipment is being connected. The structure itself stands at an elevation of 26 and is scheduled to be completed by June 1, 2012.

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The interior levees and floodwalls are made up of about 33 miles. One of the things that were done after Katrina was a new design criteria was developed. These walls will now become secondary protection thanks to the Barrier at Lake Borgne and at Seabrook. That said, we still reviewed all of these walls against the new criteria to find out what didn't quite meet the new criteria. We had about 4.6 miles of wall that we had to reinforce and those areas are highlighted in red.

Some of the things we did to reinforce includes installing relief wells to handle ground water because of seepage issues. We put a buttress slab, basically where we drill some concrete piles and put another slab connecting to the existing wall and that reinforced that for stability issues. We also performed some deep soil mixing; I think the last time I was here we were just about to begin that project. That has since been completed. With that we have a system video we would like to show; it orients people to some of the features of the project and makes it easier to discuss later.

VIDEO SHOWN

Eric Stricklin: On the screen you will see an aerial photo of Seabrook Gate; it was taken last month. Lake Pontchartrain is out here and this is the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal and here you will see the north wall of the cofferdam and the south wall. Permanent T-walls come out of the west, out toward France Road, and then off to the east to Jordan Road. Currently the foundation has all been placed and we are working on constructing the vertical lift gate tower you can see here. With the cofferdam tied into the T-walls we now have the 1% risk reduction, formerly known as the 100-year protection, in

place for this hurricane season and we are working toward completion. The thing I think everyone is here to talk about is when we are going to be complete so I want to jump into that.



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We have experienced delays and at this point we won't be able to complete the project until between July and September 2012; that would be the worst case scenario at this point. The reasons for these delays fall in three different categories. We have Mother Nature and some of those impacts presented unforeseen conditions and then some design changes. Starting with issues of nature; the Mississippi River flooding shut down navigation on the Mississippi River and many of our materials come down the river through the IHNC lock. With the navigation shut down we couldn't get our piles for the foundation, which is obviously a critical path that we have to get done to complete the rest of the structure; so that cost us a bit of time. Most recently we had Tropical Storm Lee and when that water came up from that channel itself it flooded our cofferdam and in doing that we had to un-water again and clean up the site; in particular down to the sector gate. We were getting ready to place the first lift of the foundation and we ended up with a foot of silt on top of it. We already had the rebar down so it was quite a process to get that cleaned up and get ready for the concrete placement. Those are a couple of things that were thrown at us that didn't help out.

Some of the unforeseen conditions; one of the things we experienced in driving the cells particularly out here in the center, there appears to be old piling from a bridge or something down there and we were unable to get the sheets down as quickly as we wanted to. We had to make adjustments to get through some of these obstructions. In addition to that, once we got the cofferdam complete and un-watered, we had some unsuitable material all throughout here, especially on the West Bank, and up over on the East; it was basically soup out there and we had to remove 20,000 yards of material to get that suitable. That also caused us some delays.

Talking about the design issues, one of the things we've been doing and since this project started a little later than others, we've been able to incorporate some of the lessons learned at other projects; for example, the concrete. The concrete we planned to use was actually a low-heat concrete and it was used on another project. While the concrete worked out fine on another project, the cure time was much longer than anticipated so one of the things we had to do is that we went back to a regular concrete and we incorporated a cooling system. In doing that, that added some time to our schedule. We also had to make some changes to the vertical lift gate roller bearings. That was another lesson we had to incorporate. One of the bigger items was the vertical lift gate towers. You can see the concrete coming up here and here and those were originally were going to be steel towers. In working with our sponsors and others, the decision was made to convert those two to concrete towers and that plays heavily in life cycle issues so that was something else that added some time to the schedule.

I know I talked to some of you the other day about completing in the spring. We had another unforeseen issue, in fact we just met with the contractor, to talk about the schedule issues; it has to do with the castings. The sector gate has castings made for the ball of the gate that sits and rotates around. We had ten castings and four of those didn't work out well. This is one of those risk items that turns out that is common in the casting world, but unfortunately it happened to us and we had to recast these items. In doing that, that's a 23-week lead item as it takes a lot of time to get these casting complete. We have started that process and doubling up the amount of castings we are doing to reduce the risk of anything further happening. With that said, the schedule slides out until late September, that's our worst case scenario. We have a recovery plan in place to will try and sequence some more activities and we think we can get that back to as early as July 15th. That would mean the channel will be closed until that time. I apologize as I



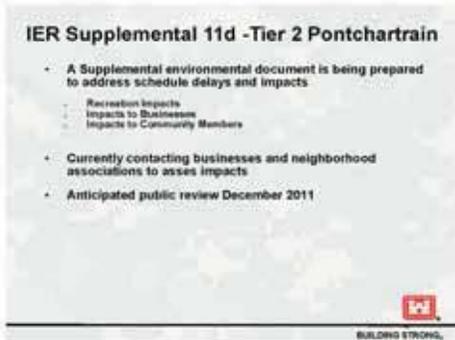
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spoke to a few of you about this, but this was a recent development and it wasn't until yesterday that we learned of the schedule impact.



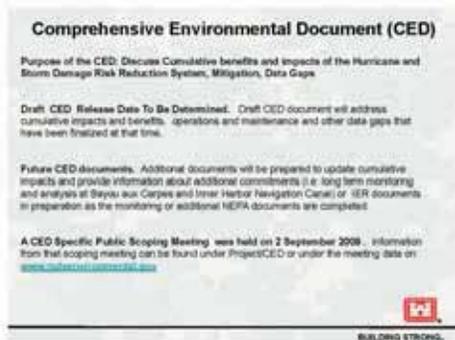
On the screen is a current rendering and this is what the structure will look like when complete. You can see the 95-foot-wide sector gate here and the vertical lift gates; these gates will be in the open position all the time except during a tropical event.



So the meeting here today is the IER Supplemental so we can disclose what has happened, assess the impacts and collect information. There will be people from our socio-economic group who will be contacting you and surveying you. I would encourage you to participate as we need to collect all the impacts we can as this helps us make informed decisions. It looks like December will be the time when we have the actual document out for review. During the public review period there will be at least one more meeting if not more.



When it comes to construction and what to expect, I know some of you are aware we had 24-hour pile driving going on and I do apologize for that but we needed to do that to tighten up the schedule. I am happy to say we are done with the 24-hour pile driving and we are working on our way up now. You can still expect some elevated noise levels and traffic along the roads and some extended work hours though I don't anticipate noise being an issue. I also want to point out the Construction Hotline. You can call that anytime if you have questions or complaints and we will get back to you.



Rachel Rodi: So far for the whole system we are doing a Comprehensive Environmental Document and we've had several meetings on this and Laura Lee wanted me to mention that we are working on the mitigation for the entire system as well. What this document will do is document the entire impact of the whole system. We don't have a final date on that but we are thinking it will be in the next few months.

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Upcoming Public Meetings

Thursday, Oct. 13, 2011
St. Gabriel the Archangel Church
Parish Hall
5070 Pelly Dr.
New Orleans, LA 70118
Open House 8 to 9:30 p.m.
Presentation 9:30 p.m.

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If you want to hear more, you and your neighbors and friends can come tonight to St. Gabriel the Archangel Church as we will have this same meeting tonight.

Opportunities for Public Input

- Regular Public Meetings throughout the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS) Area
- Make sure to sign in tonight to get on our meeting notification mailing list
- Comments can be submitted at any time at www.nolaenvironmental.gov
- Individual Environmental Reports (IER) 30-day Public Review

Questions and comments regarding Hurricane Risk Reduction Projects should be addressed to:

Patricia Leroux
FMAS
P.O. Box 80267
New Orleans, LA 70185-0267
Telephone: 504-862-1344

E-mail: mvnenvironmental@usace.army.mil

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We are now going to invite questions. You can also go to www.nolaenvironmental.gov where the IERs are out for 30-day public review and comments can also be made there. Patricia Leroux will take comments or you can call her at 862-1544. Everything is on-line so if you go to the website you will find it.

JOIN OUR SOCIAL NETWORK

US Army Corps of Engineers
Team New Orleans

Facebook.com/usaceola
Flickr.com/TeamNewOrleans
Twitter.com/TeamNewOrleans
YouTube.com/TeamNewOrleans

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We invite you to join our social network. A lot of people followed us during Tropical Storm Lee and the flood fight this year. All our pictures are on Flickr and we do Twitter for quick updates and then Facebook for photos and information. This video you watched today is also on YouTube.

Web-based Resources

www.nolaenvironmental.gov <http://www.mvs.usace.army.mil>

NOLA US Army Corps of Engineers

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS HOTLINE
877-427-0345

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We do answer the Construction Hotline on a daily basis. We are videotaping this so it's all on the on nolaenvironmental. Also, Andrew Perez, who is the socio-economic person is in the back, he can talk to you about what Eric was discussing during impacts. If you can, please fill out information for him.

WDSU Cameraman: I was hoping you can give me an overview of what the expectation originally was for completion and when you expect to have it done and what will be the result of all the hard work?

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Eric Stricklin: Originally the Seabrook project was scheduled to be completed by June 1, 2011. We went out for our construction contract and with any contract, you run the risk of receiving a protest and we did. That protest costs us a significant amount of time and once that happened we couldn't complete the project by June 1st. We took the approach of taking interim measures and that is why you see the cofferdam as robust as it is and T-walls so we have achieved the 1% risk reduction. As far as what to expect now, we are looking at a mid-summer completion.

WDSU Cameraman: Inaudible (left mic)

Eric Stricklin: In the interim, yes, the inconvenience will continue. When the structure is complete, it will be opened all the time. Currently people can access Lake Pontchartrain and also Lake Borgne. How do you get to the lake? You can go down the IHNC to the GIWW over to the Rigolets; that's the access to the lake right now.

WDSU Cameraman: Inaudible

Eric Stricklin: There is a recreational boat launch just north of the project and that is open up now so you can launch your boat now.

Dwight Montz: I'm here with Seabrook Marine, obviously we are the most impacted on the Industrial Canal. You had mentioned the economic impact and we've been through that before so I'm wondering why we are all here as you could have done exactly what you told us today over the phone. We've had no success with the economic impact that we had and our businesses are down at least 70% so what's going to be different?

Eric Stricklin: I can't promise you that anything is going to be completely different and I can't promise you that you will be reimbursed. Right now we don't have a mechanism under the law to do that. We still need to collect the impacts and we want that information. We apologize ...

Dwight Montz: So what's the point? If nothing gets done from collecting the data what's the point in collecting the data?

Eric Stricklin: We have to know what impacts are out there. I can't tell you what is going to happen in the future and what that data will be used for. Additionally, it's the law as it's something that we have to do. I again apologize for the inconvenience and I've talked to you before and none of us are enjoying this. We don't have the goal of putting you guys out of business.

Dwight Montz: Well that is what is happening.

Eric Stricklin: Our number one priority is to get flood protection for the city.

Dwight Montz: We understand that and [Inaudible] so what's the purpose of collecting the data if you do absolutely nothing.



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Eric Stricklin: One thing is that we don't know what we can do with anything until we collect it; that's part of the purpose.

Dwight Montz: When can I get a boat through the Harbor?

Eric Stricklin: Right now it looks like it's going to be mid-July that's our intent.

Dwight Montz: Inaudible (not at mic)

Eric Stricklin: With the recovery plan that is our intent. I can't promise you that nothing unforeseen is going to happen. We didn't expect this casting issue, we didn't expect Tropical Storm Lee, we didn't expect the Mississippi River flooding; these are curve balls we are trying not knock down. I promise you we are doing everything we can. Colonel Sinkler had us bring in Tiger Teams to analyze schedules; we had experts come in and sit down with us, I mean every task on a 2000 line schedule, trying to find a way to compress it and we did just that and we continue to do that. For example, the September completion; if we left this casting issue unchecked we go to September. We talked to the contractor and the contractor suggested that we restructure how we take down the north wall of the cofferdam we may be able to that sooner and get started on the guide walls and finish up the armoring that we have to do on the north side of the structure. None of that work can be done with the cofferdam in the way. Those are things we are trying to sequence as we can buy eight weeks in doing that. As far as the navigation goes, we talked about the partial navigation with the work that we have to do in the middle of the channels there is no room for safe navigation; be it from velocity or the volume of boats and barges in the channel.

Dwight Montz: Inaudible

Eric Stricklin: One of the things we will continue working with the contractor on is that, but right now they are working 20-hours days and taking four hours to maintain equipment. If they are doing that in the channel it's going to be hard to have a boat safely get through there. We want to get the channel opened up but we have to do it safely.

Dwight Montz: These guys aren't working 24/7. I need partial navigation. This is not a temporary inconvenience, this is life and death.

Eric Stricklin: I assure you they are working. The rod busters and such, they are down there tying steel all day.

Dwight Montz: Let people know that when they sleep at night, it's on the back of Seabrook Marine.

Eric Stricklin: The only thing I can promise you is that we will continue to look at it and try to find some way to open it up. We really are trying, I promise you that.

David Kearny: I work for Kearney Companies and we lease the France Road Terminal from the Port of New Orleans; we are a little bit further up the canal towards the Bywater. During Tropical Storm Lee we sustained flooding so the concern is that the 1% reduction with Seabrook accomplished nothing. I realized that flooding came from GIWW into



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the canal, but one of the concerns we have that I leave you with in hopes that you can update in your meetings looking toward the future of what the requirements will be when the gates are deployed, is that even with 2-foot storm surge we get wet. I know Dwight and all the other businesses along the IHNC and Industrial Canal Complex have that same fear that we are going to do all this work and create a primary line of defense, which is substantial, but we are still going to flood all up and down the original primary line of defense. That is something to think about. We definitely had three to four feet of water in our terminal, which resulted in the total flood of the area. That was no different than when Hurricane Ike passed; even in a passing storm we had the same issue. This is just something to think about in your planning as I don't know if you've released yet the final guidelines on when you close the gates or leave them open for fear of a rain event.

Eric Stricklin: The water control plan is still being developed. We do have an interim water control plan and one of the lessons learned after Tropical Lee was, do we do close for every event? The lesson there was that it didn't necessarily have to be a hurricane or anything for us to close the gates; we notched that down to looking at any tropical event, even the smaller ones that are expected to be rain events. I anticipate a different operation of the gates other than what you saw during Tropical Storm Lee.

David Kearny: When will that be released, the water control plan? How do we find the final plan so that we can update our plans as well?

Heath Jones: I'm Heath Jones and I work Emergency Management for the Corps. The water control plan for this season is going to be radically different than what it will be for next season because of the barge gate and the Seabrook Complex upon final completion. We did learn during Tropical Storm Lee that the cofferdam in the structure had some impacts that we didn't see in advance. The weather service predicted a 4 to 4.5-foot surge in the IHNC, which we made a decision early on Thursday, not to close the gate to allow navigation to move around. We had the ability to close the gates; we had stop logs at the surge barrier that we could have put in to close it, but we made a decision not to close it. By blocking Seabrook off, there was a 3-foot head from the IHNC side to the lake side, which if you remember the video of Hurricane Gustav and the water pouring through the Seabrook Bridge, that didn't happen during Lee because we blocked the channel off. The weather service models and all the predictions didn't take into the account that we had Seabrook blocked off and that is something that we know now but at the time we didn't think it was going to have as much of an effect as it did and we will take that into account the next time we operate the structure. The truth is we are a month out of being out of this hurricane season and history shows there are no large storms happening past October 4th and we think we will get minimal storms if we get anything at this point, but the water control plan is still being analyzed and we don't have a date on it yet. What we are working towards is getting off the interim plan and getting toward more the permanent plan.

David Kearney: To give you an idea, this weekend we had a strong southeast wind and the Levee Board shut down the flood system and operated the floodwalls on the IHNC so our facilities, which receive rail cars 24/7 was severed because the gates were closed. They reacted very quickly because Tropical Storm Lee caught everyone off guard because water was going everywhere. It's obvious that we need to make sure the Levee Board is working with you guys



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and the water control plan looks at if you don't close the GIWW, the Levee Board needs to make sure they have their system completely closed because the water is coming in.

Heath Jones: And we do; we work very closely with SLFPA East and the NOLD and when we made the decision on the Thursday not to close the gates, the first thing we did was call NOLD and tell them we are not closing it so you need to make sure all the gates behind the surge barrier are closed. We now have a system that is shared between our levee districts and us and the state in tracking when gates are closed. It shows which gates are closed so everyone can be on the same page and our office works closely with SLFPA East and NOLD through these defenses. There was that coordination going on as early as that Thursday and NOLD got out there and started closing those gates.

Clay Miller: During Tropical Storm Lee we understand it was a different situation but the Port of New Orleans needs a seat at the table. We know there is a maritime interest and that's international commerce. If we can shut the gate in a timely manner when this 3-foot or above is anticipated we know it's going to delay maritime traffic and that's all it is, it's a time delay. What happened in Tropical Storm Lee is property damage, people with [Inaudible] being out of business for a week or so for property damage in addition to the time. These are all local state tax payers that need to be taken into account. It's not just a system where you are protecting New Orleans, it's taxpaying citizens and we would like to be involved in that and say our peace. We know the different elevations along the canal and we know when it floods and there are places that flood more quickly than others so we would like to be there.

Heath Jones: We have several partners in this and ultimately the law states that we have to turn this over to levee districts and the state eventually so NOLD and SLFPA East have a stake in this as well, the Port and maritime have a stake in it too. We also have the AIS System at our office too and during Tropical Storm Lee we were monitoring the barge traffic and traffic moving in there. What we noticed was that there wasn't much traffic moving around in there and that was a bit surprising. There was a navigation concern originally that the decision not to close the gate was based upon a 4.5-foot surge prediction on the IHNC. Keep in mind we have the same issue on the West Bank with that complex. Before the surge barrier was put in place, before the Seabrook Project was done, these businesses were on the outside of the primary protection and the surge barrier now, was intended to work for larger events, but now we are looking at it for smaller events. By being on the outside of that primary protection, they are still on the outside of the secondary protection and there are some challenges as to when do we close it and how do we balance that with the navigation industry. That's what we are looking at and when we get to that point, I absolutely agree that the port needs to be a part of that decision, the maritime industry and the levee districts need to be part of that decision on when we close or keep it open.

Clay Miller: [Inaudible] to draft the plan and get the instructions

Heath Jones: But that doesn't mean they can't have input into it

David Kearny: I heard what you said but that's not good reasoning not to take extra precautions now since protection is in place in order to close those gates a half-day or day earlier if that surge is going to come through. I know your main service is protecting the floodwall, not to let it get to elevation 8 but if that's your only concern, if it's going to be elevation 6 like it was



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with Tropical Storm Lee, you are not going to worry about it and you are not going to worry about the tenant out there and that is what needs to be addressed.

Male Speaker: Inaudible

Heath Jones: Tropical Storm Lee was one of those difficult storms for our office and everyone because it's a decision to make; do you close, do you not close? The plan for the surge barrier for a large storm coming in, a Cat 3 or 4, the plan for the surge barrier will be executed and we know we are going to close it and we give 72 hours notice and we close it. The RNA is enacted inside the IHNC and all boats either have to have their approved mooring plan by the Coast Guard or they have to be out of there. That's the easy plan believe it or not. The harder ones are the smaller storms; the Tropical Storm Lee's where the surge prediction isn't quite known yet. As Eric said, we are looking at that. We had an after action review after Lee and we participated with the City of New Orleans as this is a topic with them, and we are looking at that on this side as well as the West Bank side; it's the same exact issue on the West Bank. You have businesses on the outside of the Harvey Canal and the West Closure Complex, Boomtown and other major economic business for Jefferson Parish on the outside of the wall and so there are some things we are looking at system-wide in that case. I assume we will get to 80 or 90% solution and then get y'all involved and get some input from the locals on what we need to do and how it impacts you.

Clay Miller: What's the difference between the GIWW West Closure Complex and the IHNC Lake Borgne Surge Barrier?

Heath Jones: It's about the same thing. The difference on the west side is that we have an 18,000 cfs pump station to get the water out, which plays a big difference. There is also a 32,000 cfs going in. The Industrial Canal is not so much the same; those little pump stations they have on the Industrial Canal in the area of it doesn't even compare to the smaller size on the West Bank. So there are different procedures over there, but it's roughly the same problem with minor tweaks.

David Kearny: What about rain? The storm surge brought in 20 inches of water.

Heath Jones: You didn't notice the rain because you had storm surge coming in. The rain was there; it wasn't the 24 inches thw Weather Service said it would be though. Remember with Tropical Storm Lee, the weather service was saying 24 inches of rain in two to three days. That was a concern for us to close the gate off. It wasn't the ultimate reason but it was a concern that you would trap water behind the gate. With the barge gate, the inoperable one right now, you can't open that thing against a reverse head so if we fill that basin up on the back side of the barge gate you can't open the thing until you find a way to get the water out. What was a concern during TS Lee was the rain. We think all the factors, having Seabrook closed, having the rain, having the rain pumping rain directly into the basin and then having the station pump those rains for basically two days straight, all that contributed to that 6.2. That elevation was Saturday morning around 5 AM; we were all up at 3 AM because the cofferdam was being overtopped and but that's when the streets flooded and all the rain happened.

David Kearny: It would have been worse but there were HESCO baskets on Florida Ave.

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Heath Jones: So we also learned a lesson from that. We built the elevation up to +6 for Tropical Storm Lee and the tie-in wasn't quite what it should have been. So there has been a lot of talk about how to prevent that from happening again. The answer is that is the only temporary protection back there and for any future event we are going to build it to the top of the existing protection. We've had engineers looking at how to tie-in and we don't anticipate that happening again.

Rachel Rodi: We will have this meeting again tonight; Heath won't be there tonight, but everyone else will be there. The meeting is at St. Gabriel Archangel Church. Thanks for coming and we will stick around to answer questions. We also welcome written comments.