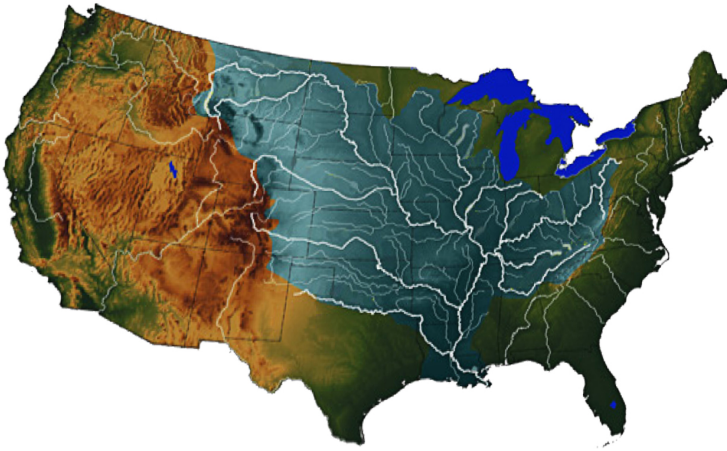


BIG RIVER COALITION



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January 14, 2019

Lower Mississippi River (LMR) Dredging Update 11419

Members,

The Corps of Engineers Mississippi Valley New Orleans (MVN) is responding to shoaling in Southwest Pass (SWP) created by the extended period of elevated river stages. **The Red Flag Emergency Call Out for the Corps hopper dredge WHEELER to work for 30 days was approved on Friday, January 11, 2019.** The Emergency Call Out process was initiated when there were no bids by the dredge contractors to the advertisement of Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental #2-2019 yesterday (January 10, 2019). There are three hopper dredges (including the WHEELER) and one cutterhead working to restore and maintain the Ship Channel in the area of SWP. **The MVN continues to pursue all options to keep the dredges working in order to restore federally authorized channel dimensions.**

TRANSIT RESTRICTIONS AT CUBITS GAP:

The Crescent River Ports Pilots Association (CRPPA) continue to recommend a maximum allowable draft of 44 feet (freshwater) with one-way traffic from Mile 3.8 Above Head of Passes (AHP) to Mile 1.8 AHP or “1 mile above to 1 mile below the Lower Gap Light.”

TRANSIT RESTRICTIONS SOUTHWEST PASS (SWP):

The Bar Pilots continue to utilize the flocculation-based transit restriction for all inbound vessels arriving Southwest Pass with a freshwater draft of 38-feet or greater. **Inbound vessels with a draft of 38-feet or greater are only allowed to enter SWP “between 3 hours after low tide, to 3 hours after high tide at SWP.”** The restriction became effective at 1000 hours on, Monday, November 26, 2018. The official notice as released by the Bar Pilots is attached, please refer to it for complete details.

The Federal Pilots implemented a similar flocculation-based restriction for inbound vessels with a draft of 38-feet or greater on November 27, 2018. The official notice is also attached.

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HOPPER DREDGE(S) IN SOUTHWEST PASS (SWP):

WHEELER: The Corp's hopper dredge WHEELER is now dredging in the area of the Venice Jump at approximately Mile 10.5 Above Head of Passes (AHP) under Red Flag Emergency Call Out. The Red Flag Call Out period is expected to last until approximately February 10, 2019. The WHEELER worked under Readiness Exercise from Monday, January 7, 2019 until 1530 hours on Friday, January 11, 2019 before switching over to the Red Flag Call Out assignment.

GLENN EDWARDS: The industry hopper dredge GLENN EDWARDS (Manson Construction) is presently dredging on assignment at Cubits Gap from approximately Mile 3.5 AHP to Mile 2.5 AHP. The GLENN EDWARDS commenced dredging on December 18, 2018 and is working under Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #6-2018. The GLENN EDWARDS is expected to complete its current contract on January 26, 2019. **However, the Corps is working to extend the GLENN EDWARDS contract until March 1, 2019, to help restore authorized channel dimensions with the latest crest predicted to reach 15.5 feet on Monday, January 21, 2019.**

NEWPORT: The hopper dredge NEWPORT (Manson Construction) is dredging at the Head of Passes Mile 0.0. The NEWPORT began dredging under Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #1-2019 in SWP on November 28, 2018. The MVN will most likely extend the NEWPORT's contract by exercising full options, that could keep the hopper dredge working until approximately May 15th.

CUTTERHEAD DREDGE(S) IN SOUTHWEST PASS (SWP):

R.S. WEEKS: The industry cutterhead dredge R.S. WEEKS (Weeks Marine) is presently dredging at approximately Mile 13.20 Below Head of Passes (BHP) on the eastern channel edge. The cutterhead's extended assignment is from Mile 10.5 BHP to 17.8 BHP, the cutterhead started dredging on December 15, 2018. The R.S. WEEKS removed 2 million cubic yards (mcy) of material from the Hopper Dredge Disposal Area (HDDA) before being released from that contract (remove a total of 12 mcy from the HDDA) to respond to Southwest Pass Cutterhead Rental Contract #1-2019.

The R.S. WEEKS is expected to return to the HDDA contract by February 2019 when it will be relieved by the cutterhead dredge CAPTAIN FRANK.

Sincerely,



Sean M. Duffy, Sr.
Executive Director