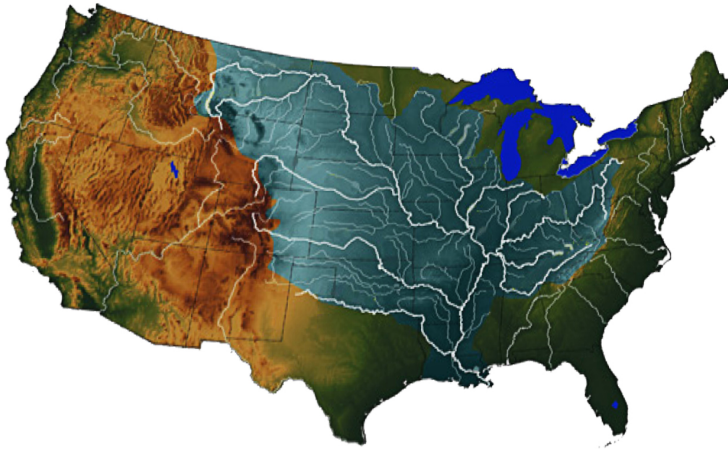


BIG RIVER COALITION



Sean M. Duffy, Sr.
Executive Director
4741 Utica Street, Suite 200
Metairie, LA 70006

Office (504) 833-4190 x 805
Cellular (504) 338-3165
sean.duffy@bigrivercoalition.org

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USACE FISCAL YEAR 2021 WORK PLAN UPDATE 12921

Members,

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) recently released the [Fiscal Year 2021 Work Plan](#) with historic news for the Mississippi River Ship Channel (MRSC). The Work Plan is the USACE official allocation plan to distribute funding authorized by Congress that is above the amounts listed in the President's Budget Request.

The President's Budget Request amount for Operations and Maintenance on the MRSC in Fiscal Year 2020 was \$64,000,000, the Work Plan did not increase the amount of funding for USACE channel maintenance. However, the Work Plan did dedicate an additional \$3,853,575 for O&M to the Donor & Energy Ports on the MRSC. More importantly, the Work Plan provided the second and final portion of federal funding needed for the ongoing MRSC Deepening Project (50 feet) with an additional \$45,707,000 added to the Construction account.

The descriptions below were listed in the Work Plan documents for the MRSC funded projects:

Donor & Energy Transfer Ports: "Work Plan funds (\$3,853,575) will be used for commonly performed O&M work. Funds will also be used for specific work activities including dredging." The Donor & Energy Transfer Ports on the MRSC are the Ports of Baton Rouge, South Louisiana, New Orleans and Plaquemines.

Mississippi River Ship Channel Deepening Project (50 feet) the \$45,707,000 is listed in the Construction account to "Physically and fiscally complete construction project."

The \$64,000,000 for O&M channel maintenance is much lower than recent years but is sufficient based on the record amount of funding appropriated the last few years and the dredging contracts that have previously been funded. The amount will be sufficient to fund the dredging on the Crossings with the three dustpan dredges, a contract for a cutterhead dredge at the New Orleans Harbor, the Readiness Exercises for the USACE Hopper Dredge WHELLER and possibly one additional contract for channel maintenance in the area of Southwest Pass (if needed).

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The Fiscal Year 2021 Work Plan funding in the Construction account (\$45,707,000) when matched with the \$85,350,000 allocated in the Work Plan funding from Fiscal Year 2020 represents the total amount of federal funding to dredge the MRSC to 50 feet. The total federal allocation for dredging contracts towards the channel deepening to 50 feet is \$131,057,000.

The undersigned intends to check with the non-federal sponsor, our colleagues at the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LDOTD) for an update on the non-federal funding. Although, Phase 1 of the MRSC deepening is fully funded and all dredges are actively working under contracts. The required deepening of the utility pipelines on Crossings Above New Orleans will be conducted with an equally cost-shared commitment from the LDOTD and the identified pipeline owners. The only other cost for the non-federal sponsor is the cost-share of the dredging to a deeper depth on the Crossings. LDOTD has been actively working on the pipeline effort and expects to remain on schedule so that the deepening on the Crossings will not be delayed.

Sincerely,
Sean M. Duffy, Sr.

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Executive Director