



# LOUISIANA MARITIME ASSOCIATION

Issue Date: November 1, 2023

Members,

## RE: USACE MISSISSIPPI RIVER MAINTENANCE FORUM MEETING NOTES

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Mississippi Valley New Orleans (MVN) holds monthly meetings to discuss channel conditions and related issues directly with the maritime industry. These meetings are usually scheduled for 0900 hours on the first Wednesday of the month. Today's meeting was conducted both in person and via teleconference the agenda provided by the MVN is attached.

### Maintenance Forum Notes November 1, 2023

#### 1) Introductions

**2) Southeast Waterways Update:** The President's Budget Request (P Bud) Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) is \$3.75 Million, and the P Bud for FY 24 is \$4.75 Million.

**Tiger Pass:** The USACE advised that in response to being unable to award any of the bids received (3) to the cutterhead dredge contract advertisement in September to dredge Tiger Pass that they are performing a market analysis survey to seek input from the dredge contractors. All three bids received were significantly more than the Government Estimate and therefore could not be awarded, the USACE hopes the market analysis will lead to a successful bid when this contract is readvertised in the first quarter of 2024 (January to February). Tiger Pass remains severely deficient, the prospective contract would remove nearly 2 million cubic yards of material to be beneficially used for marsh restoration in the area.

**Baptiste Collette:** The cutterhead dredge ROBERT M. WHITE (Manson Construction) completed dredging Baptiste Collette on December 10 (2022). The USACE advises mariners transiting this shallow-draft channel to utilize the online channel surveys, noting multiple shoals (Miles 10.75, 9.0, and 3.75 specifically). The USACE expects to utilize the FY 24 funds to award a cutterhead dredge contract to restore authorized dimensions across Baptiste Collette. The contract advertisement is expected to occur in the first quarter of 2024 (February-March) with most of the removed sediment to be beneficially used with a portion designated to extend one of the recently created bird islands in the vicinity (Gunn Island).

**3) Mississippi River Conditions Update:** The FY23 P Bud is \$209 Million with an additional \$22.5 Million received in the Work Plan. The FY 24 P Bud is just over \$185 Million.

**New Orleans Gauge (Carrollton Gauge):** The stage this morning was 3.7 feet. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) Extended Streamflow Prediction (28-Day) for the Carrollton Gage issued today forecasts stages will reach 3.9 feet tomorrow and then resume a slow fall to 3.5 feet on November 4 before beginning a rise projected to crest at 4.2 feet on November 18 then forecast predicts a fall to 3.1 feet on November 29 (2023).

**Baton Rouge Gauge:** The stage this morning was 6.8 feet. The NWS extended forecast indicates stages will continue a slow rise to 9.0 feet on October 12 and will then resume a slow fall to 6.7 feet on November 29 (2023).

**\*NWS long range projections only account for rainfall projected to occur over the next 48-hours.**

#### A. Crossings Between Baton Rouge and New Orleans:

The latest channel surveys for the Crossings Between Baton Rouge and New Orleans are included in the attached agenda. The USACE is working to restore full channel dimensions on the Crossings with the dustpan dredge WALLACE McGEORGE (Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel). The WALLACE McGEORGE completed dredging at Granada Crossing (Mile 204.3 Above Head of Passes [AHP]) this morning and moved downriver to commence dredging at Bayou Goula (Mile 198 AHP) at 1130 hours. The USACE dustpan dredges HURLEY and JADWIN were both previously released to address shoaling at sites north of Baton Rouge during the extended low water emergency event.

#### B. New Orleans Harbor:

The cutterhead dredge CAPTAIN FRANK dredged under contract in the New Orleans Harbor from May 16 to June 16 (2023). The USACE expects to dredge the Harbor in the summer of 2024 during low water.



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## **C. Saltwater Sill:**

The USACE contracted Weeks Marine to build the saltwater sill at Mile 63.8 AHP with the cutterhead dredge J.S. CHATRY. Weeks completed the barrier's construction to the targeted elevation – 55 feet during dredging operation from July 11 to July 27 (2023). The USACE completed the augmentation of the saltwater sill to a higher elevation (-30 feet) to the height of (-30 feet) with a 620-foot wide deep-draft channel with one-way coordinated vessel traffic (depth of previous sill -55 feet) with dredging operations from September 24 to October 15 (2023). Additional actions are not anticipated but remain possible. The one-way traffic through the saltwater sill notch will continue for months until the river rises enough that the stage can wash away the constructed sill. The Crescent River Port Pilots requested that the upper end of the Alliance Anchorage be made available for vessel usage, the USACE is considering this request within managing and monitoring the effectiveness and stability of the saltwater barrier.

## **D. Southwest Pass (SWP):**

The cutterhead dredge ALASKA (Great Lakes Dredge & Dock) continues work under Southwest Pass Cutterhead Dredge Contract #1-2023 for channel maintenance dredging in Southwest Pass. The cutterhead dredge completed the assignment from 12 Below Head of Passes (BHP) to Mile 17 BHP on the western side of the Ship Channel and is now working from Mile 12 BHP to Mile 15 BHP on the eastern side of the Ship Channel.

The USACE also awarded the following two Early Award Hopper Dredge Rental Contracts for Fiscal Year 2024, Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #2-2023 to Manson Construction (GLENN EDWARDS) and Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #11-2023 to Great Lakes Dredge & Dock (ISLAND CLASS).

## **D. Head of Passes, Hopper Dredge Disposal Area (HDDA):**

The USACE recently awarded Head of Passes Hopper Dredge Disposal Area Contract #2-2022 to Weeks Marine to remove sediment from the Hopper Dredge Disposal Area (HDDA). The cutterhead dredge CAPTAIN FRANK continues dredging on assignment in the HDDA and has removed approximately 1.5 million cubic yards of sediment. The submerged dredge pipeline was installed during channel closures in late September, dredging operations started on October 1 (2023). The removed sediment is being beneficially utilized for marsh restoration in the West Bay Receiving Area.

## **E. Southwest and South Pass Stone Foreshore & Jetty Repairs:**

The USACE awarded a large rock contract to Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel for foreshore rock work protection in both Southwest Pass and South Pass. There are portions of this work where larger rocks (5,000 pound) will be used, the previous contracts used rocks that were reported to be 2,200 pounds. The rock construction will be trickier this time because of the larger rocks, the work in SWP started on October 4, 2023. The USACE, contractors and pilots report the rock installation in SWP is going fine due to communication with the navigation industry and pilots. The work in SWP is a priority – estimates are the contract will take one year to complete (6 million cubic yards).

## **G. South Pass:**

The cutterhead dredge ROBERT M. WHITE (Manson Construction) dredged under South Pass Cutterhead Dredge Rental Contract #1-2020 from April 3, 2021 to February 8, 2022.

## **4) Next Meeting:**

The next Forum meeting is scheduled for 0900 hours on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, this meeting is also expected to be conducted via the hybrid option (in-person with teleconference options).

*Sean M. Duffy, Sr.*

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Maritime Advocate  
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Attachment