



LOUISIANA MARITIME ASSOCIATION

Issue Date: July 13, 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. The meeting yesterday was conducted both in person and via teleconference the agenda provided by the MVN is attached.

Maintenance Forum Notes July 12, 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 reaffirmed that it will issue a bid solicitation later this month with a bid opening expected in late August. The solicitation will include details on "utility investigation" to help accurately locate the multiple obstructions that lead to the previous contract being cancelled. The USACE expects adjustments to the scope of dredging due to the costs related to the utility investigation, dredging Tiger Pass will be a complicated assignment.

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 shoals near Mile 3.75, 4.6, and Mile 10.75. The USACE expects to utilize the FY 24 funds for the award of a cutterhead dredge contract for Baptiste Collette bid advertisement forthcoming.

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 yesterday morning was 2.7 feet, at 1300 hours today the reading was 3.5 feet with a 24-hour change of + 0.20 feet.

- The National Weather Service's (NWS) extended forecast issued today indicates stages will continue to remain steady over the weekend and will then resume a slow erratic fall to 2.4 feet on August 10, (2023).

Baton Rouge Gauge: the stage yesterday morning was 8.4 feet, at 1300 hours today the reading was 9.1 feet with a 24-hour change of + 0.47 feet.

- The NWS extended forecast indicates stages will continue a quick rise to 10.1 feet over the weekend and then slowly fall to 4.2 feet on August 10 (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) dredging at Sardine Point Crossing (Mile 219 AHP) and the hopper dredge GLENN EDWARDS (Manson Construction) dredging on assignment at Smoke Bend Crossing (Mile 175 AHP). The USACE dustpan dredges HURLEY and JADWIN were both previously released to address shoaling at sites north of Baton Rouge during the ongoing 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 15 (2023).



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C. Saltwater Sill:

The USACE provided an update on Weeks Marine's work to build the saltwater sill at Mile 63.8 AHP, the project begin with a test on Tuesday (July 11) and around the clock dredging operations started yesterday morning at 0700 hours. The USACE expects the construction to the first target elevation of – 55 feet to be constructed over the next two weeks, the impacts to navigation are that there is one-way way coordinated transits via a Contact Pilot and an adjusted buoyed channel. The USACE last measured the saltwater wedge on July 6 (2023) and identified the wedge at Mile 57.2 AHP, based on the forecast and insights from last year the USACE does not expect the sill will have to be constructed higher than – 55 feet. If a higher elevation is required there will most likely be a reduction in the maximum draft recommendation for the Mississippi River Ship Channel. This is the first time that the sill's construction was required in back-to-back years.

D. Southwest Pass (SWP):

The industry hopper dredges, PADRE ISLAND and DODGE ISLAND (Great Lakes Dredge & Dock) have both worked on the second Early Award contract Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #2-2022. The PADRE ISLAND was recently released to attend to an assignment in Galveston. The DODGE ISLAND is dredging from Mile 5.0 BHP to Mile 6.7 BHP. The DODGE ISLAND is expected to depart and undergo repairs on July 16, 2023. The USACE will work with Great Lakes to determine if either or both hopper dredges will return to complete the remaining hours on Rental Contract #2-2022.

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

The USACE expects to advertise a cutterhead dredge contract late this summer and continues to monitor the material building up in the HDDA from the active hopper operations near the Head of Passes. The USACE is ready to execute the HDDA contract when a threshold quantity of sediment material is confirmed.

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 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 work will be trickier this time because of the larger rocks, the USACE will ensure the contractors host pre-construction meetings to coordinate on impacts with navigation industry, pilots, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

G. South Pass:

The USACE reported funding dedicated to dredging in South Pass was included in the FY 24 President's Budget Request. 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, August 2, 2023, this meeting is also expected to be conducted via the hybrid option (in person and teleconference options).

Sean M. Duffy, Sr.

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Attachment