



# LOUISIANA MARITIME ASSOCIATION

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Issue Date: August 2, 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 August 2, 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 intends to issue a bid solicitation on August 24 that will most likely be amended to include additional details related to the need for accurate hydrographic surveys of the utilities or pipelines that originally led to the cancellation of the last dredge contract. The amendment might use the term "utility investigation" – more details forthcoming. Due to the increased cost of the project to include inflation and funding for the additional hydrographic survey requirements the USACE now expects to restore the neglected shallow-draft channel to 10 feet although authorized to 14 feet (16 feet outer/jetty end). The USACE will utilize the FY 2023 P Bud funding to dredge Tiger Pass. Tiger Pass remains severely deficient the contract expects to 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. The USACE expects to utilize the FY 24 funds to award a cutterhead dredge contract to restore authorized dimensions across Baptiste Collette. Most of the removed sediment will be beneficially used with some designated to extend one of the 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 2.5 feet. The National Weather Service's (NWS) extended forecast issued today forecasts stages will remain steady a few days and crest at 2.6 feet on August 6 and then begin a slow extended fall to 2.0 feet on August 30 (2023).

**Baton Rouge Gauge:** the stage this morning was 9.0 feet. The NWS extended forecast indicates stages will continue a slow extended fall to 4.5 feet on August 30 (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 Baton Rouge Front (Mile 231 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.

The GLENN EDWARDS continues working on Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #1-2022 (FY 2023 Early Award) and will return to SWP later this month with the WALLACE McGEORGE staying on the Crossings.



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## **B. New Orleans Harbor:**

The cutterhead dredge CAPTAIN FRANK dredged under contract in the New Orleans Harbor from May 16 to June 15 (2023). The Harbor is typically dredged in the summer months during low water, expected for FY 2024.

## **C. Saltwater Sill:**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (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 U.S. Coast Guard removed all transit restrictions related to the sill's construction on July 27. Additional actions are not currently anticipated.

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

There are no dredges presently working in Southwest Pass but the hopper dredge DODGE ISLAND (Great Lakes Dredge & Dock) will return to complete hours remaining on Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #2-2022 (FY 23 Early Award). The DODGE ISLAND is expected to return to SWP later this month to complete about two weeks of work dredging in SWP.

The USACE is in the process of awarding the two Early Award Hopper Dredge Rental Contracts for use in FY 24, 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). The USACE will broadcast a bid opening tomorrow for a cutterhead dredge to begin dredging in SWP— another beneficial use of dredged material project with a start by September 2023 expected.

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

The USACE issued a scheduled bid opening earlier today for a cutterhead dredge contract to dredge material from the HDDA and beneficially use the sediment for wetlands restoration in an approved disposal site. Weeks Marine is the apparent low bidder, more details forthcoming.

## **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 USACE will ensure the contractors host pre-construction meetings to coordinate on impacts with navigation industry, pilots, and the U.S. Coast Guard. The work in SWP is a priority and will start over the next few months and then move to South Pass – estimates are the contract will take one year to complete.

## **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 Contact #1-2020 from April 3, 2021, to February 8, 2022.

## **4) Next Meeting:**

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

*Sean M. Duffy, Sr.*

Sean M. Duffy, Sr.  
Maritime Advocate  
Executive Vice President

Attachment