



LOUISIANA MARITIME ASSOCIATION

Issue Date: September 6, 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 September 6, 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 the bid advertisement yesterday for a cutterhead dredge contract to dredge Tiger Pass received three bids. However, none of the bids could be awarded because they were all significantly more than the Government Estimate, the path forward remains unclear. The USACE is considering options to respond to the three bidders, no resolutions have been provided, the path forward is complex. Previously the USACE indicated due to the increased cost of the project to include inflation and funding for the additional hydrographic survey requirements the USACE hoped to restore the neglected shallow-draft channel to 10 feet although authorized to 14 feet (16 feet outer/jetty end). The USACE intended to utilize the FY 2023 P Bud funding to dredge Tiger Pass. Tiger Pass remains severely deficient the 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. 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 3.5 feet. The National Weather Service's (NWS) extended forecast issued today forecasts stages will slowly rise to 3.9 feet over the next few days and will then resume a slow fall but remain between 3.9 feet and 2.8 feet over the next 28-days with a reading of 3.0 feet expected on October 4 (2023).

Baton Rouge Gauge: the stage this morning was 6.8 feet. The NWS extended forecast indicates stages will continue a slow extended fall to 4.0 feet on October 4 (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) that is dredging at Sardine Point (Mile 219 Above Head of Passes [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.



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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, summer Fiscal Year 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 anticipated.

D. Southwest Pass (SWP):

The hopper dredge GLENN EDWARDS is working on assignment from Mile 6.6 Below Head of Passes (BHP) to Mile 9.4 BHP in SWP under Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Rental Contract #1-2022. The cutterhead dredge ALASKA (Great Lakes Dredge & Dock) is expected to start work in SWP over the weekend on assignment from Mile 12 BHP to Mile 15 BHP.

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 awarded a cutterhead dredge contract to dredge material from the HDDA and beneficially use the sediment for wetlands restoration in an approved disposal site to Weeks Marine. The cutterhead dredge CAPTAIN FRANK is expected to start work on this project by early October, submerged dredge pipeline installation will be rescheduled over the next week or so with plans for two days of one-way transit and two full 12-hour channel closures from Mile 2 AHP to Mile 0.

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 is expected to start in October – 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, October 4, 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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Attachment