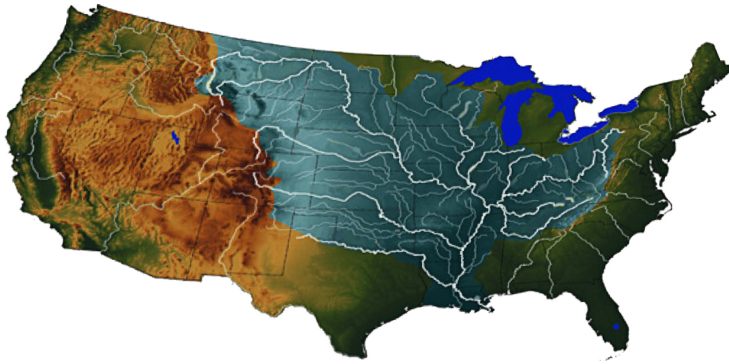


# BIG RIVER COALITION



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Date: October 3, 2024

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. This meeting was conducted via teleconference only the USACE will conduct these meetings virtually only until later this fall due to room limitations at the USACE New Orleans District. The agenda provided by the MVN is attached.

### Maintenance Forum Notes October 2, 2024

#### 1) Introductions

#### 2) Southeast Waterways Update:

**Tiger Pass:** The USACE awarded the combined cutterhead dredge contract to dredge both Tiger Pass and Baptiste Collette to Manson Construction. Manson is expected to use their cutterhead dredge ROBERT M. WHITE on this cutterhead contract to dredge at Baptiste Collette (first assignment) and Tiger Pass from Mile 6.5 to Mile 9.75. The cutterhead dredge will dredge from east to west up to the first utility obstruction previously identified at approximately Mile 9.75 feet (Phase 1). Beyond Mile 9.75 the USACE will issue a contract advertisement for Phase 2 to work with a bucket dredge or similar equipment to remove material over the obstructions with a coordinated utility location survey effort included in the contract as a critical component of Phase 2. The USACE believes the scope of work will restore the channel to Mile 9.75 feet to 12 feet Mean Lower Low Water. The USACE expects Phase 3 to be a future cutterhead contract to dredge from Mile 9.75 to the jetty end.

**Baptiste Collette:** The USACE expects the ROBERT M. WHITE will start work at Baptiste Collette in early January 2025. The USACE advises mariners transiting this shallow-draft channel to utilize the online channel surveys. Most of the removed dredged material will be beneficially used along the channel boundaries and to continue creating additional islands near the jetty end. The islands are designed to create new shorebird habitat like the recently created Gunn Island.

#### 3) Mississippi River Conditions Update:

**New Orleans Gauge (Carrollton Gauge):** The river stage at New Orleans was 2.7 yesterday morning and read 2.66 feet with a 24-hour change of + 0.10 feet. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) Extended Streamflow Prediction (28-Day) for the Carrollton Gage issued today forecasts stages will continue to rise to 4.9 feet on October 10 and will then begin a slow fall to 3.0 feet on October 31, 2024.

**Baton Rouge Gauge:** The stage at Baton Rouge yesterday morning was 5.7 feet, the gage is offline this morning. Today's NWS extended forecast indicates stages will continue a rise to 11.8 feet on October 9 and to then resume a slow fall to 7.3 feet on October 3 (2024).

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## **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 released the two government dustpan dredges (JADWIN and HURLEY) from work on the Crossings to respond to the low water emergency on the shallow-draft channel. The USACE continues dredging the Crossings with the industry dustpan dredge WALLACE McGEORGE (Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel) working at Red Eye Crossing (Mile 224 AHP) and the industry hopper dredge PADRE ISLAND (Great Lakes Dredge & Dock) working at Sardine Point (Mile 219 AHP). The industry hopper dredge NEWPORT (Manon Construction) was released to respond to emergency dredging on the Atchafalaya River with shoaling linked to the impact of Hurricane Francine.

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

The USACE also released the cutterhead dredge CAPTAIN FRANK (Weeks Marine) for emergency work on the Atchafalaya channel. The CAPTAIN FRANK did not complete the full assignment in the New Orleans Harbor and may return after completing work near Morgan City (LA).

## **C. Saltwater Sill:**

The USACE issued an emergency dredge contract to Weeks Marine to construct the saltwater sill with the cutterhead dredge J.S. CHATRY. The J.S. CHATRY completed the saltwater barrier to the height of -55 feet from September 14 to September 26 (2024). The USACE has the dredge on standby but does not expect to have to raise the height of the saltwater barrier but continues to monitor the saltwater wedge to determine future actions.

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

There are currently no dredges working in Southwest Pass, the channel is in relatively good condition. The USACE has awarded the Fiscal Year 2025 Early Award Contracts. Southwest Pass Hopper Dredge Contract #1-2024 was awarded to the Manson Construction for the large hopper dredge GLENN EDWARDS. Manson was also issued the Gulf Coast Regional Hopper Dredge Contract expected to be completed by the hopper dredge NEWPORT.

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

The USACE awarded the HDDA Cutterhead Dredge Contract to Weeks Marine, the start of work on this contract is unknown as Weeks has multiple dredges working under contract on Louisiana waterways.

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

The USACE advised that Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel continues foreshore rock and jetty repairs in South and Southwest Passes.

## **G. South Pass:**

The USACE does not expect to dredge South Pass in Fiscal Year 2025 based on inadequate funding.

## **4) Next Meeting:**

The next Forum meeting is scheduled for 0900 hours on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, this meeting will be conducted virtually only.

*Sean M. Duffy, Sr.*

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