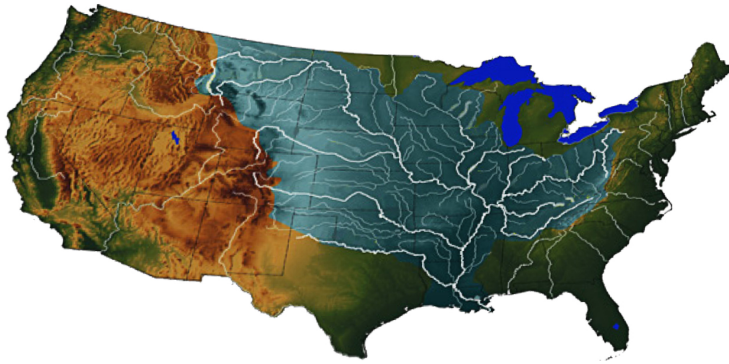


# BIG RIVER COALITION



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Date: November 6, 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 November 6, 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 will require a future cutterhead contract to dredge from Mile 9.75 to the jetty end after the pipeline or anomalies are addressed.

**Baptiste Collette:** The USACE expects the ROBERT M. WHITE will start work at Baptiste Collette in 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 at 3.5 feet this morning but had dropped to 2.02 feet by 1400 hours (tidal impact). The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Weather Service Extended Streamflow Prediction (28-Day) for the Carrollton Gage issued today forecasts that stages will continue a slow fall to 3.2 feet on November 12 and will then rise to 4.5 feet on November 18 and will then begin a slow fall to 2.7 feet on December 4 (2024). Impacts of tides and winds are a new phenomenon on the Carrollton Gage that can predict quick spikes of 1-2 feet per day, especially during low river stages.

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## 3) Mississippi River Conditions Update: (continued)

**Baton Rouge Gauge:** The stage at Baton Rouge this morning was 5.5 feet. Today's NWS extended forecast indicates stages will continue a rise to 13.7 feet on November 18 and will then resume a slow fall to 6.3 feet on December 4 (2024).

### 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 continues dredging the Crossings with the industry dustpan dredge WALLACE McGEORGE (Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel) presently working on assignment at Baton Rouge Front (Mile 232 AHP).

### B. New Orleans Harbor:

The cutterhead dredge J.S. CHATRY (Weeks Marine) completed channel maintenance and harbor deepening dredging in the New Orleans Harbor on October 14, 2024.

### 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 dredge completed the construction of the saltwater barrier to the height of -55 feet on September 26 (2024). The USACE continues to keep the dredge on standby but does not expect to have to raise the height of the saltwater barrier unless unexpected stage changes occur.

### D. Southwest Pass (SWP):

There are currently no dredges working in Southwest Pass, the channel is in relatively good condition.

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

The USACE awarded the HDDA Cutterhead Dredge Contract to Weeks Marine, dredging is expected to start on Friday, November 22, 2024, with the cutterhead dredge R.S. WEEKS. See the attached email on the scheduled channel closures and transit restrictions to install the submerged dredge pipeline across the Ship Channel.

### 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 and expects all work to be completed by the end of the year.

### 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, December 4, 2024, this meeting will be conducted virtually only.



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