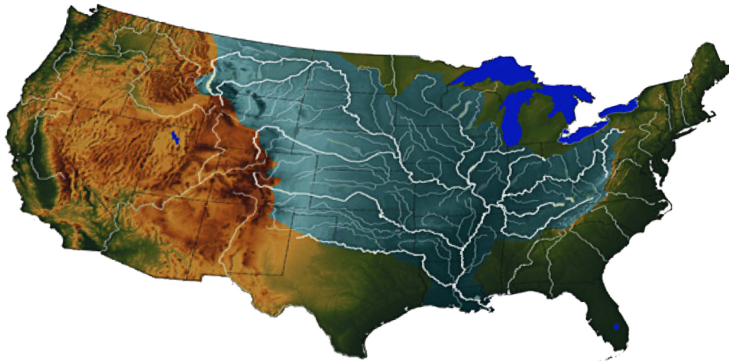


BIG RIVER COALITION



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Date: December 4, 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 December 4, 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 Construction is utilizing a sub-contract awarded to Encore Dredging Partners for the work on Tiger Pass. Encore has responded with their 24' cutterhead dredge NIMITZ that is on scene in Tiger Pass and is expected to start dredging by this weekend. The NIMITZ will dredge from Mile 6.5 to Mile 9.75.

The NIMITZ 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 located.

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 3.0 feet this morning but had dropped to 1.95 feet with a 24- hour change of + 0.08 feet by 1500 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 slowly or sporadically fall to 2.7 feet on January 1 (2025).

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3) Mississippi River Conditions Update: (continued)

Baton Rouge Gauge: The stage at Baton Rouge this morning was 9.4 feet. The NWS 28-Day extended forecast indicates stages will remain at 9.4 feet tomorrow and then resume a slow fall to 5.2 feet on January 1, 2025.

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 completed dredging on the Crossings with the industry dustpan dredge WALLACE McGEORGE (Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel) finishing work at Sardine Point (Mile 219 AHP) this morning. The WALLACE McGEORGE worked on the Crossings from June 14 to December 4, 2024. The dredge will work one shallow-draft location north of Baton Rouge before completing Fiscal Year 2024 dredging.

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. 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, Weeks installed a submerged dredge pipeline under the Ship Channel in two scheduled channel closures. The dredge began work in the HDDA on the morning of November 25, 2024. The contract is for 4 million cubic yards (mcy) in the base with an option for an additional 4 mcy, an approximate timeline is that 2-3 months will be required to remove 4 mcy. The pipeline will be removed upon completion and will also require at least one scheduled full channel closure.

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, January 8, 2024, this meeting will be conducted virtually only.



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Executive Director