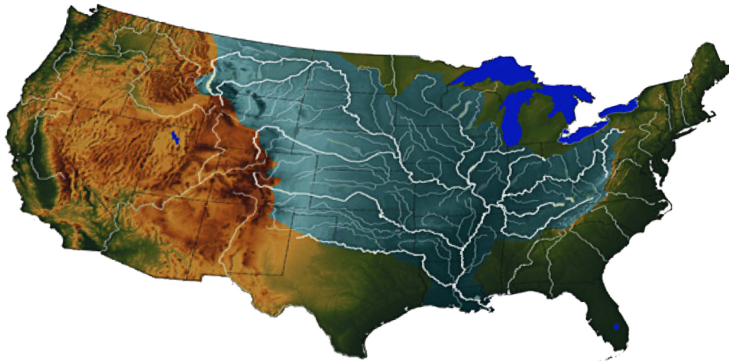


BIG RIVER COALITION



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Issue 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 continue to conduct these meetings virtually only for the time being. 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 responded with their 24” cutterhead dredge NIMITZ that began dredging on Tiger Pass on December 7, 2024, and is expected to complete the assignment from Mile 6.5 to Mile 9.75 by mid-February 2025.

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 later this month (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.

3) Mississippi River Conditions Update:

New Orleans Gauge (Carrollton Gauge): The river stage at New Orleans was at 6.4 feet this morning. 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 remain steady new 6.6 feet until January 19 and will then slowly fall to 5.4 feet on February 5 (2025).

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3) Mississippi River Conditions Update: (continued)

Baton Rouge Gauge: The stage at Baton Rouge this morning was 22.4 feet. The NWS 28-Day extended forecast indicates stages will remain near 22.5 feet until January 18 and will then begin a slow fall to 19.0 feet on February 5 (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 expects to begin dredging on the Crossings this summer or after high river stages begin to recede as usual.

B. New Orleans Harbor:

The USACE will plan to dredge in the New Orleans Harbor after highwater stages have receded, typical summer dredging schedule.

C. Southwest Pass (SWP):

There are currently no dredges working in Southwest Pass, the channel is in good condition. The USACE has two early award hopper dredges schedule to arrive in February and March (schedule included in the attached Agenda).

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, the first 4 mcy should be completed the first week of February 2025. The USACE will determine prior to that if it will award the option on the contract for another 4 mcy. The pipeline will be removed upon completion and will also require at least one scheduled full channel closure. The USACE reported that about half of the contracted 4 mcy has been removed (47% complete first 4 mcy).

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

The USACE advised that Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel completed the foreshore rock and jetty repairs in South and Southwest Passes in December 2024.

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, February 5, 2025, this meeting will be conducted virtually only.



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