



September 2019

THE PONTCHARTRAIN LEVEE DISTRICT
UPDATE

Mississippi River & Tributaries Project – Background and Pontchartrain Levee District Funding Requests for Consideration

Background:

The Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) project was authorized by the 1928 Flood Control Act. In the wake of the devastating 1927 flood, it was deemed necessary to put into place a comprehensive, unified system of public works within the lower Mississippi Valley that would provide unprecedented flood risk management and an equally efficient navigation channel.

The MR&T project has four major features: Levees for containing flood flows; Floodways for the passage of excess flows past critical reaches of the Mississippi; Channel Improvement and Stabilization for stabilizing the channel in order to provide an efficient navigation alignment, increase the flood-carrying capacity of the river, and for protection of the levee system; and Tributary Basin Improvements for major drainage and flood control, such as dams and reservoirs, pumping plants, auxiliary channels, including Atchafalaya, Bonnet Carré, Birds Point-New Madrid and Morganza. These features work together to provide risk management and navigation and foster environmental protection and enhancement.

Pontchartrain Levee District Needs:

It was not until August 14, 2019 that the Mississippi River fell below 11 feet at the Carrollton Gage in New Orleans ending a 292-

day Mississippi River flood fight in South Louisiana and bringing to a close the longest flood fight in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) New Orleans District history. The flood authorities, levee districts, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), the USACE, and the port authorities endured 170 continuous days of on the ground levee inspections to address issues before larger problems arose. Again, the MR&T system performed as designed.

The return on the MR&T investment is undeniable; however, PLD, as a multi-jurisdictional levee district, has an extensive list of priorities for MR&T project sustainability.

Seepage Priorities

The following are areas of significant concern. PLD is seeking funding for underwater surveying to be conducted to understand what is going on below the water line. These areas should be addressed as soon as possible.

East Baton Rouge Parish

Levee Station 0+00 – Levee Station 280+00: Seepage in levee toe ditches, on or near River Road, in parking lots and soccer field on LSU's campus, and on private property including a 20' long x 10' wide x 4' deep sink

“The incredible work undertaken over the last eight years (since the 2011 high water event) by so many has paid off immensely. We experienced fewer instances of seepage, sand boils, erosion and slides this year despite the fact that the levees were under so much pressure for so long... Our focus moves now to resetting and repairing a system that was subjected to nine months of continual stress. As the river recedes, we will continue to evaluate, catalog, and prioritize the areas in need of repair. Certainly, resetting the system will not occur overnight, but I am confident that we can and will be ready for the inevitable next high river.” *Colonel Stephen Murphy, Commander & District Engineer New Orleans District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*



Iberville Parish

Levee Station 810+00 – Levee Station 1080+00: Seepage in levee toe ditches and adjacent residential yards

Erosion Points of Concern

After the recent historic high water event, the following areas have been identified as erosion points of concern:

St. John the Baptist Parish

Levee Station 4795+00: There is 20’ section on the flood side levee toe that has eroded completely and three additional spots of erosion in the same area

St. Charles Parish

Levee Station 5147+00: There is an erosion area and hole on the front side along pipeline and backside around water lines.

Levee Station 5411+00: There is 2-3 feet of erosion at the flood side ramp

Slope Pavement Needs

Slope pavement is needed in all six parishes in PLD’s jurisdiction.

Approved and Pending Project Credits and PLD Cash Contributions

Based on a 2016 interim accounting of the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana and Vicinity (LPV), Hurricane Protection Project, St. Charles Parish as conducted by USACE, PLD has made excess cash contributions to USACE of \$6.7 million. Additionally, PLD has accumulated project credits (USACE approved and pending) of \$17.1 million. PLD is seeking appropriations for excess cash contributions and accumulated project credits to be used as a funding source for other federal and local projects within PLD’s six parish jurisdiction.

Description	Approved for Credit
Corps Approved Project Credits -Project Management and Lands, Easements Rights of Way, Relocations and Disposal Areas (LERRDs)	\$10,579,810.39
Project Credits Pending Corps Approval-Project Management, LERRD’s and Construction	<u>\$6,529,682.37</u>
Total Project Credits - Approved and Pending	\$17,109,492.76
PLD’s 30% Share of Project Costs	\$20,855,479.05
PLD’s Actual Cash Contributions to Corps	<u>\$29,081,131.16</u>
Excess Cash Contributions made by PLD	\$8,225,652.11
Corps Refund issued in 2016	<u>\$1,510,919.73</u>
PLD Excess Contributions to Corps	\$6,714,732.38
Total PLD Project Credits (Approved and Pending) and Excess Cash Contributions	\$23,824,225.14



West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane & Storm Damage Risk Reduction Project, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Charles Parishes, Louisiana

Project Description and Scope

- The alignment is approximately 23 miles in length, consisting of 22 miles of levee and 1 mile of T-wall

St. Charles Parish = 0.5 miles

St. John Parish = 18.0 miles

St. James Parish = 4.5 miles

- The project includes pump stations, drainage structures, gated road crossings, railroad gates, utility relocations, culvert valves / gates, and raising / floodproofing of a limited number of structures.

- Approximately 7M cubic yards of embankment material will be required for levee construction.

- In excess of 1,000 acres of new right of way will need to be acquired.

- Habitat impacts will require compensation for approximately 1,090 Average Annual Habitat Units (AAHUs).

- \$760M appropriation for the project includes funding for real estate, design, construction, etc.

Current Project Status

- Surveying work, including clearing a 100' wide section of the levee footprint, has proceeded. Soil borings are currently underway.

- USACE is in the process of reissuing the first contract to stockpile material from the Bonnet Carré Spillway for bid after previously cancelling the first solicitation on September 19, 2019.



A 100' wide section of the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain levee footprint is being cleared for surveying activities, including soil borings and other investigations



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Mission

- To maintain the existing levee systems in a condition that will ensure their integrity and capability to withstand river stages and hurricane tidal surges, as anticipated by their design and condition;
- To improve, by construction or supporting construction by others, of new or enhanced levels of protection as design parameters change or higher levels of protection are authorized; and
- To anticipate weaknesses in the system as and before they develop, and to respond actively with necessary emergency measures when the levees are being subjected to river stages or hurricane tidal surges that would cause flooding within the jurisdiction of the Pontchartrain Levee District.

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