



# LOUISIANA MARITIME ASSOCIATION

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Issue Date: January 6, 2016

Members,

## **RE: CORPS' MISSISSIPPI RIVER MAINTENANCE FORUM MEETING NOTES**

The Corps' 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. LAMA encourages our members to attend these meetings, which are open to the public. The agenda for this meeting as provided by the MVN is attached.

### **Maintenance Forum Notes January 6, 2016**

#### **1) Introductions**

#### **2) Southeast Waterways Update**

The MVN surveyed Baptiste Collette on December 16, 2015 and new shoaling related to the latest high-water event revealed a controlling depth limited of 8.5 feet Mean Low Gulf (MLG) near Mile 9. The previous surveys showed 11 to 12 feet in the reach from Mile 8 to Mile 9.5 after the channel was dredged to reduced dimensions in mid-October (2015). The MVN surveyed Tiger Pass in mid-December 2015 and the identified controlling depth was 1.5 feet MLG the previous surveys from December 2014 indicated a controlling depth of 5.5 feet MLG near Mile 10. Tiger Pass has not been dredged since 2012. Although, the channel remains deficient, funding to dredge the channel or to preform the required jetty repairs has not been appropriated. The MVN intends to preform new surveys over the next few months.

#### **3) Mississippi River Conditions Update**

Current Stages: New Orleans 14.55 feet (Predicted rise to 17 feet on January 12, 2016)  
Baton Rouge 36.44 feet (Predicted rise to 44 feet on January 18, 2016)

##### **A. Crossings Between Baton Rouge and New Orleans:**

The latest survey results for the Crossings are included in the attached agenda. The channel on the Crossings is now benefitting from the recent channel maintenance of the dustpan dredges and the near flood stage river levels. The MVN has identified 10 to 15 feet of shoaling across the majority of the Crossings and acknowledged that funding limitations could hamper their ability to restore authorized channel dimensions when the stage levels at Baton Rouge recede below 20 feet.

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

The MVN has identified up to 10 feet of shoaling near the Cruise Terminal and significant shoaling near the Napoleon Avenue Intermodal Terminal. The MVN will be unable to dredge the New Orleans Harbor in FY 16 unless significant funding is received above the President's Budget Request amount.



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## C. Southwest Pass (SWP):

The channel in SWP is in fairly good condition due to the work of the two hopper dredges (NEWPORT and GLENN EDWARDS) as aided by the high-water levels. **The updated [National Weather Service's River Watch](#) long-range stage projections indicate a crest of 17 feet in New Orleans from January 12 to February 2, 2016 based on the expected opening of the Bonnet Carre Spillway (Mile 128.8 to Mile 127.3 Above Head of Passes).** The MVN expects to let a hopper dredge contract tomorrow (January 7, 2016) and a cutterhead dredge contract next week (tentative January 14, 2016) to begin working to maintain the channel as the water levels recede. Once the stage level at New Orleans (Carrollton Gauge) falls to 10-12 feet and falling maintaining fully authorized channel dimensions in SWP will be hard to impossible without significant funding over the \$85.8 million from the President's Budget Request. **Efforts have begun to detail the funding levels required to restore the channel at SWP, in the New Orleans Harbor, on the Crossings Above New Orleans and to dredge the Hopper Dredge Disposal Area (Head of Passes).**

## D. South Pass:

The MVN plans to update surveys over the next few months to ensure it is prepared to issue a dredging contract if funds become available. The channel remains deficient and, based on limited funding there are no plans to dredge South Pass.

## E. Coastal Zone Consistency Determination:

At the last Forum meeting there were significant discussions about the status of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR) decision on whether or not the MVN's dredge material disposal operations would be determined to be consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program. Since that time an agreement has been reached and Conditional Consistency was granted by the LDNR. The MVN shall continue to utilize cutterhead dredges in Southwest Pass and to promote the associated sediment recycling program in the bird's foot delta.

## 4) Next Meeting:

**The next Forum meeting is scheduled for 0900 hours on Wednesday, February 3, 2016, at the MVN District Assembly Room A.**

*Sean M. Duffy, Sr.*

Sean M. Duffy, Sr.  
Maritime Advocate  
Executive Vice President

Attachment