

BIG RIVER COALITION



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July 15, 2015

Lower Mississippi River (LMR) Dredging Update 71515

Members,

The Corps' Mississippi Valley New Orleans (MVN) continues to prepare for historic stage levels for the LMR occurring during the month of July. Once the Carrollton Gauge reaches 15 feet that will mark the highest river stage recorded in the month of July since (at least) 1935 according to MVN records. The Corps' Headquarters approved the MVN's Red Flag Emergency request to utilize MVN's hopper dredge WHEELER for 30 days as no industry hopper dredges were available.

Lower Mississippi River Stage:

The LMR stage has remained high since mid-March with the last crest of 13.06 feet recorded on the afternoon of Friday, June 12, 2015. The MVN indicates the Carrollton Gauge at New Orleans read 14.94 feet at 1900 hours this evening (Wednesday, July 15, 2015) with a 24-hour change of +0.11 feet.

The National Weather Service's 28-day Forecast released today predicted the New Orleans gauge (Carrollton) would crest again at 15.5 feet on July 21, 2015 and then begin to slowly fall. The 28-day Forecast predicts the Carrollton Gauge reading 10.6 feet on August 11, 2015.

The Baton Rouge Gauge had a reading of 37.72 feet at 2000 hours this evening, with a 24-hour change of +0.32 feet. The 28-day Forecast now predicts the Baton Rouge Gauge remaining over 29 feet until at least August 11, 2015.

The Bar Pilots implemented the flocculation based transit restriction (details below) at 1400 hours on Saturday, June 13, 2015. This restriction will most likely remain in place until the Carrollton Gauge hits approximately 10 feet.

Navigation Transit Recommendation(s) in Effect at SWP:

The Associated Branch Pilots of the Port of New Orleans (Bar Pilots) have implemented the following flocculation (slush or fluff) based restriction for all inbound vessels with a draft of 38 feet or greater. Inbound vessels with a freshwater draft of 38 feet or greater can only enter SWP during a 7-hour window. The 7-hour period begins 5 hours prior to high tide as posted on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) website and ends 2 hours after the posted high tide. There are no restrictions for outbound vessels or for inbound vessels with a draft less than 38 feet.

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Industry Hopper Dredge(s) in SWP:

NEWPORT: The NEWPORT began dredging in SWP on June 14, 2015 and is presently dredging in the area Head of Passes (Mile 0 to Mile 1 Below Head of Passes [BHP]). The NEWPORT is expected to complete this contract on August 28, 2015.

STUYVESANT: The industry hopper dredge has completed its contract and departed the LMR.

Government Hopper Dredge(s) in SWP:

WHEELER: The MVN's hopper dredge WHEELER is presently dredging from Mile 10.5 BHP to Mile 11.5 BHP. The WHEELER will continue dredging in SWP under the previously referenced Red Flag approval until August 5, 2015.

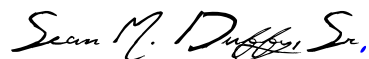
Industry Cutterhead Dredge(s) in SWP:

ALASKA: The cutterhead dredge ALASKA is presently dredging on the western side of the channel (right descending bank) from Mile 5 Above Head of Passes (AHP) to Mile 2 AHP. The MVN will continue to utilize this cutterhead dredge in this reach of the LMR until the contract is completed (approximately July 27, 2015).

Dustpan Dredge(s) on the Crossings Above New Orleans:

WALLACE McGEORGE: The cutterhead dredge WALLACE McGEORGE began dredging at Red Eye Crossing (Mile 224 AHP) on Sunday, June 7, 2015. The cutterhead moved to Belmont Crossing on Saturday, June 27, 2015 and is working to restore the central 250 feet of this critical Crossing. The MVN will place the dustpan on standby at midnight tomorrow (July 16, 2015) to await lower river stages.

Sincerely,



Sean M. Duffy, Sr.
Executive Director