

BIG RIVER COALITION



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October 2, 2012

SOUTHWEST PASS HOPPER DREDGE PUMP-OUT PLAN

Following is an updated Plan that was developed several years ago by a stakeholder group, which was chaired by the undersigned. This stakeholder group consisted of representatives from the Bar Pilots, the Corps' Mississippi Valley Division (MVN), dredging contractors, deep-draft navigation consultants and members of the state of Louisiana's Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration (now the Coastal Protection Restoration Authority). This Plan was revised in an effort to include current conditions and also because of the potential for additional funding from the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund and/or as part of the legislation recently proposed by Congressman Cedric Richmond to deepen the Lower Mississippi River channel to 50 feet in the DREDGE Act of 2012.

The Plan, in simplest terms, is to place a secured barge in close proximity to a channel bank in Southwest Pass (SWP) on either side and to affix a pump on the barge. The pump would then be attached to the hopper dredge's manifold in order to pump the hopper's contents into the immediate marsh on the backside of the foreshore rocks in SWP. The MVN believes that the best operational practice would be for the assist barge and pump-out equipment to be included in the hopper dredge contract, thereby allowing each dredge to utilize proprietary equipment specifically designed for that hopper dredge.

The stakeholders believed the most opportune time to conduct a hopper dredge pump-out demonstration project is during a low river stage equivalent to a reading of 8 feet (or less) and falling on the Carrollton Gauge (New Orleans). The remaining parameters are listed below:

- The Bar Pilots believe the best location to try an initial test project is between Mile 10 to Mile 11 Below Head of Passes (BHP) on the right descending bank (western side).
- This location would help reduce the dependence on the usage of the Hopper Dredge Disposal Area at the Head of Passes, which will reduce the need to handle the material in the HDDA.
- If conducted in Southwest Pass, the Bar Pilots and Corps' New Orleans District believe the pump-out barge could be safely placed alongside wingdams.

Considerable discussions have been held regarding this Plan, and the Coastal Protection Restoration Authority has requested the stakeholders group reconvene.

Best Regards,

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