



LCA Beneficial Use of Dredged Material

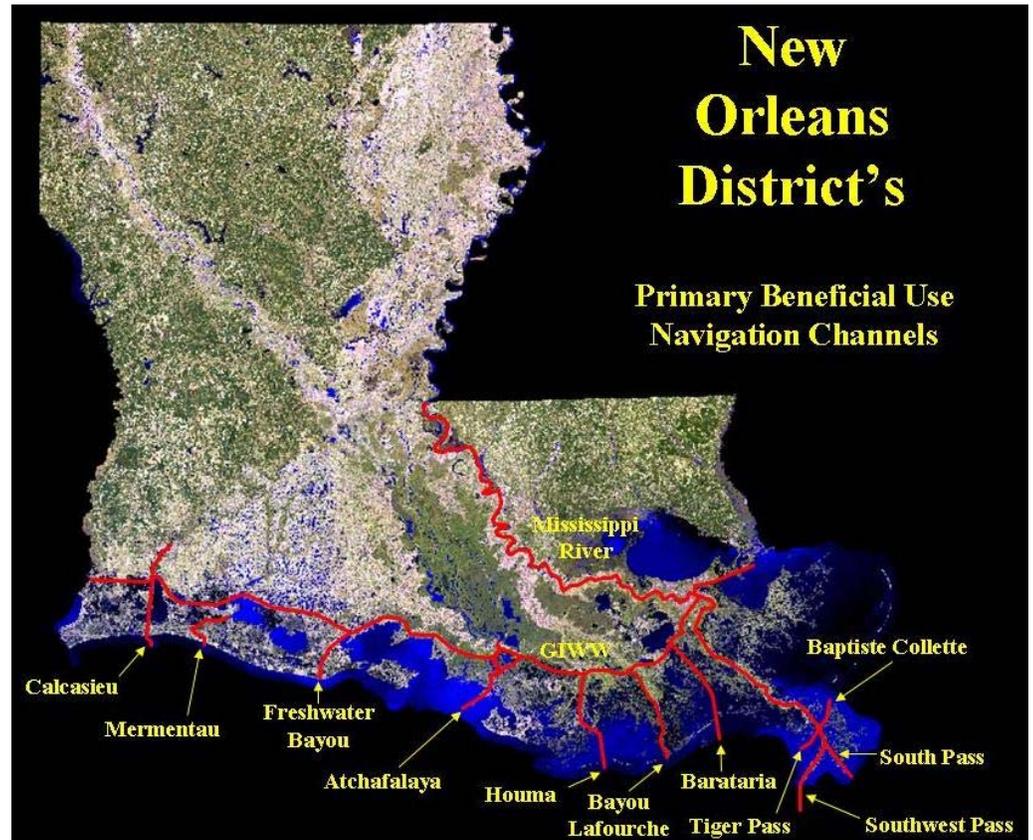
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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Louisiana is losing coastal wetlands at an alarming rate. Restoring these wetlands is imperative to protecting the state's abundant resources from devastating storms and hurricanes. A very promising option for restoring coastal wetlands and reducing land loss is the beneficial use of dredged material.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley, New Orleans District (CEMVN) has the largest annual navigation channel Operations & Maintenance (O&M) program in the nation and dredges an average of 64 million cubic yards (mcy) of material annually during maintenance dredging of navigation channels. Currently, approximately 24 percent (15.4 mcy) of the material dredged under CEMVN's O&M program is used beneficially within the Federal standard, which represents the least-cost environmentally acceptable disposal alternative. There is a reasonable potential to use an additional 20 mcy of material beneficially annually if sufficient funding were made available.



The Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Program Study is authorized through Resolutions of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate Committees on Public Works, 19 April 1967 and 19 October 1967. Implementation of the BUDMAT Program is authorized by the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007 - Section 7006(d) within the Louisiana Coastal Area program. The State of Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority is the cost-share partner in the study.

Project Location

The study area is Louisiana's coastal area from Mississippi to Texas.

Project Goals

The goal of this project is to reverse the trend of land loss in the coastal Louisiana area.

Objectives

The BUDMAT Program objectives are:

1. To cost effectively increase the beneficial use of material dredged from federally maintained waterways at a total cost of \$100 million over a ten year period.

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2. To address the critical needs of the LCA Program by using material dredged from the federally maintained waterways to solicit, select, plan, design, and construct individual beneficial use projects that:
 - a. Restore and create coastal landscape features such as, but not limited to, marshes, ridges, and islands that provide wildlife and fisheries habitat with emphasis on ecological and hydrologic functions that support the ecosystem of coastal Louisiana.
 - b. Reduce the loss of existing coastal landscape features such as, but not limited to, marshes, ridges, and islands to help sustain the ecosystem of coastal Louisiana.
 - c. Provide protection to Louisiana's coastal infrastructure.

Project Features

The BUDMAT Program Study programmatic report will develop and evaluate alternative processes for solicitation, screening, selection, design, and implementation of future site-specific beneficial use projects to be constructed under the LCA BUDMAT Program. These future site-specific projects are to be selected and implemented as the program proceeds over a 10-year duration. Therefore, no actual beneficial use sites or site conditions are being evaluated within this programmatic study document.

Funds from the BUDMAT Program would be used for disposal activities associated with separate, cost-shared, individual ecosystem restoration beneficial use projects that are above and beyond the disposal activities that are covered under CEMVN's O&M dredging Federal Standard base plan. The base plan is determined by applying the Federal Standard which requires maintenance dredging and disposal activities to be conducted in the most cost effective, environmentally acceptable manner based on sound engineering.

Project Status

The 30-day public review of the final study report and programmatic environmental impact statement ended on 22 February 2010. The report was submitted to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) in March 2010 and to the Office of Management and Budget in April 2010, respectively. A Record of Decision was signed on 13 August 2010, and the BUDMAT Study report was transmitted to Congress on 13 August 2010.

Currently the Corps is developing a programmatic design agreement and Project Management Plan for the design of the BUDMAT projects over the 10-year duration. During the first year of the BUDMAT Program emphasis will be on completing designs on beneficial use projects that are ready or that can be ready for construction within ten months from the execution of the programmatic design agreement. Additionally, the BUDMAT Program will begin the annual process of soliciting, screening, selecting, planning and designing beneficial use projects for implementation in FY13 once the programmatic design agreement is executed.

Anyone seeking additional information on the LCA Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Program Study can visit the Louisiana Coastal Area program website at www.lca.gov.

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