



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 60267
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

January 30, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Operations Division
Eastern Evaluation Section

(504) 862-2045
Project Manager
Jennifer Burkett
SUBJECT: MVN 2011-3337 EBB

PUBLIC NOTICE

Interested parties are hereby notified that a permit application has been received by the New Orleans District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to: [X] Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151; 33 USC 403); and/or [] Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (86 Stat. 816; 33 USC 1344).

**MAINTENANCE DREDGING AND PILE CLUSTERS IN THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER,
SOUTHWEST PASS IN PLAQUEMINES PARISH**

NAME OF APPLICANT: Hilcorp Energy Company c/o Tim Morton & Associates, Inc. at 730 E. Kaliste Saloom Road, Lafayette, Louisiana 70508.

LOCATION OF WORK: On the left descending bank of Southwest Pass, Mississippi River, at a point approximately 7.5 miles below Head of Passes, in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, as shown on the attached drawings.

CHARACTER OF WORK: To install and maintain four three-pile clusters and dredge 2.72 acres of an oil offloading area for an existing transfer station. The work zone will extend about 300 feet into Southwest Pass, which is approximately 2,000 feet wide at this location. Spoil will be placed on barges oriented parallel to the dock and removed to an upland site for disposal. The dredging operation will take five to seven days. No wetlands would be affected; no compensatory mitigation is required.

The comment period for the Department of the Army Permit will close **30 days** from the date of this public notice. Written comments, including suggestions for modifications or objections to the proposed work, stating reasons thereof, are being solicited from anyone having interest in this permit must be mailed so as to be received before or by the last day of the comment period. Letters concerning the Corps of Engineers permit application must reference the applicant's name and the Permit Application Number, and be mailed to the Corps of Engineers at the address above, **ATTENTION: REGULATORY BRANCH.**

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public, federal, state, and local agencies and officials, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether to make, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

No properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are near the proposed work. The possibility exists that the proposed work may damage or destroy presently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistorical, historical sites, or data. Copies of this notice are being sent to the State Archeologist and the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Our initial finding is that the proposed work would neither affect any species listed as endangered by the U.S. Departments of Interior or Commerce, nor affect any habitat designated as critical to the survival and recovery of any endangered species.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal would result in the destruction or alteration of 2.72 acres of EFH utilized by various life stages of red drum and penaeid shrimp. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

If the proposed work involves deposits of dredged or fill material into navigable waters, the evaluation of the probable impacts will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Also, a certification that the proposed activity will not violate applicable water quality standards will be required from the Department of Environmental Quality before a permit is issued.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

The applicant has certified that the proposed activity described in the application complies with and will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program. The Department of the Army permit will not be issued unless the applicant received approval or a waiver of the Coastal Use Permit by the Department of Natural Resources.

You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.

Michael V. Farabee
Chief, Eastern Evaluation Section

Enclosure