



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

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

April 15, 2005

Planning, Programs, and
Project Management Division
Environmental Planning
and Compliance Branch

NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY

An Environmental Assessment #406 (EA #406) titled Morganza to the Gulf Reach J1 Levee and a draft Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, are available for your review.

The proposed project, Reach J1 levee, is part of the greater Morganza-to-the-Gulf hurricane protection system and would consist of construction of a new levee linking a gap between existing levees. The Reach J1 levee project is located on the west bank of Bayou Point-aux-Chenes along Louisiana Highway 665 to Parish Road 73, approximately 16 miles south of Houma, Louisiana. The Reach J1 levee is described as a 2.7 mile reach consisting of a segmented flood side borrow canal, a dual purpose marsh platform and levee berm, a consolidated fill levee, a T-wall at the pipeline crossing, a protected side berm, a protected side fishery access trenasse, a temporary construction access road, and improvements including culverts to the old board road to make it a permanent access road.

The levee would be constructed in two lifts, with the final height built to a design grade of +13 feet North American Vertical Datum 1988 (NAVD 88). Approximately 1.5 million cubic yards of fill would be used in the first lift, and 350,000 cubic yards in the second lift. The fill would come from two sites, one adjacent to the levee, and the other from a site near Montegut, Louisiana. The adjacent borrow canal for fill material consists of a segmented channel at a depth of 26.5 feet, with a 58-foot bottom width, a 202-foot top width, and 1-foot vertical (V) and 3-foot horizontal (H) side slopes. Each segment of the borrow canal would be approximately 1,550 feet in length, separated by a 200 foot long segment of marsh. The dual-purpose marsh platform would be approximately 50 feet or 119 feet wide (extending up to 121-240 feet from center line of the levee) and constructed to an initial elevation of approximately 2 feet, which would be conducive to the development of long-term wetlands. Where there is no adjacent borrow canal, the marsh platform would be 50 feet wide, and adjacent to the borrow area, the platform would be 119 feet wide. The platform would provide new marsh habitat as mitigation for this project and would provide wave protection to the levee.

The levee itself would be built on geotextile fabric with compacted soils coming from adjacent local borrow and trucked in from an off-site borrow field. The wave berm / marsh platform on the flood side would have 1-ft V on 12-ft H side slopes. The levee would have **1-ft V on 4-ft H** side slopes and would be built to a height of 14 feet with a 10-foot wide crown. On the protected (land) side of the levee, the side slope would **be 1-ft V on 4-ft H** and built to the +6 ft elevation. From that point it would have a 1-ft V on 16-ft H side slope to the +2 foot elevation, then taper to natural ground. Each end of the new levee would connect with existing levees.

A pile supported concrete T-wall would be constructed where a 20-inch high-pressure gas pipeline crosses the proposed levee alignment. The wall would be built to a height of +14.0 feet, would be approximately 120 feet long, and would tie into the levee at each end. To ensure water drainage and to allow continued fisheries access on the protected (land) side of the levee, trenasses would be cut across existing solid marsh peninsulas where they intersect with the levee. The trenasses would be dug to a depth of 2 feet and would be 3-10 feet wide. Six 24-inch culverts would be installed in the old board road to assure continuation of drainage and water circulation. After construction, but no longer than one year, the temporary construction access road would be degraded to marsh height and a 10-foot wide by 2-foot deep trenasse would be cut where the road joins the new levee.

Additional borrow materials for levee construction would be excavated from a 100-acre site located off Aragon Road and adjacent to Bayou la Cache, near Montegut, Louisiana. Materials would be trucked to the levee site in standard 14-20 cubic yard dump trucks or 24-30 cubic yard trailer bed trucks. The first lift is estimated to take 12 months, and the second lift is estimated to take 9 months, with approximately 4 years between lifts. Approximately one million cubic yards of fill (of the total 1.5 million cubic yards) would be taken from this site in the first lift, and approximately 350,000 cubic yards in the second lift.

Copies of EA #406 and the draft FONSI are available upon request. Please contact Ms. Elizabeth McCasland; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Planning, Programs, and Project Management Division; Environmental Planning and Compliance Branch; CEMVN-PM-RS; P.O. Box 60267; New Orleans, Louisiana 70160-0267; to request a copy. Request also can be made by calling (504) 862-2021, by E-Mail to Elizabeth.L.McCasland@mvn02.usace.army.mil, or by fax to (504) 862-2572.

The public review and comment period for EA #406 and draft FONSI will end 30 days from the date of this letter.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David F. Carney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "C" at the end.

David F. Carney
Chief, Environmental Planning
and Compliance Branch