Public Meeting Summary

Individual Environmental Report 13
Hero Canal and Eastern Tie In
Wed., April 29, 2009

Location	St. Paul's Benevolent Association Hall 128 E. St. Peter Oakville, LA 70037
Time	Open House 6 p.m. Presentation 7 p.m.
Attendees	Approx. 191
Format	Open House Presentation Discussion
Handouts	• Presentation • Status maps • Borrow handout
Facilitator	Jim Taylor, public affairs

Jim Taylor, public affairs

If this meeting is too crowded for you, Monday night at 6:00 p.m. we're having a meeting at the Belle Chasse Auditorium discussing the same topic. We added the meeting in Belle Chasse because we found out so many people was coming here. So, there will be a meeting Monday night at the Belle Chasse Auditorium, if you prefer to have a little bit more room.

Mark McGee, Oakville Community Spokesperson

Obviously, everybody wants to start the meeting. Hi, I'm Mark McGee, the spokesperson for the Oakville Community. Our President Allen Green is unable to attend this evening. At this particular point, I would like to introduce Rev. Rev. Curtis Carroll for the evening prayer. Thank you.

Rev. Rev. Curtis Carroll

Amen. Oh, Father, we thank you Lord, that you've allowed us to sit here and assemble ourselves in a peaceful manner. While we come concerned about the things that are going to be engaged in shortly, we just ask you to touch the hearts of those that are in authority today and as you touched their hearts and their decision making, Lord, that this as a community, Lord, and what's best economically as well, Lord, with that is best for the people, as well. We just ask that you

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would invoke your presence in their minds and their thoughts in the things that we'll do here today, and that this will stay peaceful assembly. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

Mark McGee, Oakville Community Spokesperson

Before we get started, I would like to bring you up to date. This is about our third meeting locally, discussing this levee, the enlargement and the gating of the highway, etc. There are many new faces are here tonight that have some renewed interest in this project. Representatives of the Corps of Engineers are here to answer all of your questions. They have been very attentive in making sure everybody gets their questions answered. The answers they give may not be what you want, but you will get your answers. I would like to introduce Mr. Jim Taylor, a representative of the Corps of Engineers and the facilitator for tonight's meeting.

Jim Taylor, public affairs

Thank you. We're going to re-do this meeting Monday night at the Belle Chasse Auditorium and cover everything we're covering tonight. There we'll have the opportunity to get into more detail on the non-federal levees further down in Plaquemines Parish. Monday night we'll really get into those details if that's primarily what you're interested in. Again, everything we are covering here tonight we'll cover Monday night at the Belle Chasse Auditorium. I want to thank the St. Paul's Benevolent Association for allowing us to meet here tonight. The parish president couldn't be here tonight but Janice Acosta, his administrative assistant and Lynda Banta, the Parish Council Chairperson, is here. I want to introduce everybody from the Corps, eventually; because, we have a lot of technical people here. We have:

Col. Alvin Lee	US Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District commander
Ted Carr	Hero Canal and Eastern Tie In project manager
Bill Maloz	Non-Federal Levees project manager
Ken Holder	Public affairs chief
Mike Honeycutt	FEMA representative

Col. Lee would like to say a few words.

Col. Alvin Lee, US Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District commander

Thank you. I appreciate everybody coming out this evening. The National Environmental Policy Act requires federal agencies to go through a public process to gather information. As stated earlier, this is the third meeting we've held in the Oakville community to discuss the project and its intended purpose. Tonight is to give an update on the progress of the project. This project has

been in the works for a while with interaction between members of the community, local and state governments to come up with the preferred alternative. The preferred alternative is what will be presented tonight and later tonight there will be an opportunity for public input. As Jim discussed, you'll be able to come to the microphone and give us comments and ask questions about the project. In return we'll be glad to answer those. We have quite a few of our technical members here that can answer those questions and we encourage you to ask questions or make public comments. We'll stay here until we get finished and that's my commitment to you. I do want to introduce a couple other members, my peers, from other districts in our region:

Col. Bob Sinkler	Rock Island, Il. District commander
Col. Mike Wehr	Vicksburg, MS District commander

They're here to see what we're doing and how the public process works. I really encourage you to engage and submit your public comments. I know it will probably take some time to work through the crowd that's here tonight but that's okay. We're here to listen to you and it's important that your voice is heard. Thank you.

Jim Taylor, public affairs

Due to the amount of people here tonight it's going to be hard for people to hear. We ask that during the question and answer section, you come up to the microphone. If you can't make it up to the microphone then we'll try to get one to you. Please hold your questions until both Ted and Bill have finished their presentations. A couple of reasons to hold your questions: the presenter may answer your questions during the presentation or they may give you ideas for additional questions or comments. It won't take long, and then we'll open it up for discussion.

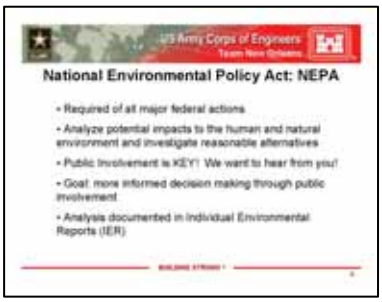
Ted Carr, Hero Canal and Eastern Tie In project manager

We're here tonight to talk about the proposed action to reduce risk to the communities of Belle Chasse, Oakville and other areas of the Westbank. The project will connect the Westbank Vicinity portion to the greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. This is the Westbank portion of the tie in to the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System. Ultimately, we call it the Eastern Tie In. This final project ties into the Mississippi River levee. We also have a brief status of the Plaquemines Non-Federal Levee project. We are here to get your feedback.

The Plaquemines Parish risk reduction features are authorized by separate Congressional authorities. The 1996 Water Resource and Development Act authorized the Westbank and Vicinity project to provide hurricane protection to areas east of the Algiers Canal, extending from Belle Chasse to and including Oakville in

Plaquemines Parish to tie-in to the Mississippi River levee system. The 2006 Congressional authorized the New Orleans to Venice project known as the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee project. This was to reduce risk from Oakville to about two miles north of St. Jude, LA.

There are two systems in the area. Tonight, what we're talking about is here in Oakville [pointing], and there's IER 13 [pointing] which is out for public review at this point. It will be open to public comments until May 4th, which is this coming Monday. It's made up of two projects: one that is on the north side of the existing Hero Canal that is raising a portion of the levee and the other project is what we call the Eastern Tie In. This new project ties into the Mississippi River levee through the community of Oakville.



Col. Lee mentioned the need for the process and it is a very important part of what we do. The National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, is required of all federal actions. We want to make sure that we've analyzed the potential impacts to the human and natural environment and investigated reasonable alternatives. Public involvement is "key" and that's why you all are here tonight. Your input is the key to this process and it's designed around your input. The goal is to make an informed decision through public involvement and in the end having a better system and a better project. I'm going to show you a good example of how public involvement changed the IER 13 document with this process from our last meeting.

This slide is intended to show there are a number of steps to buy down risk. The important part of this slide is down here that shows there will always be residual risk because you can never eliminate risk but there are steps to take to minimize the risk.

I'd like to talk about IER 13. We've already mentioned the two portions of the project: here is the GIWW West Closure Complex [pointing], here is the Hero Canal levee [pointing], and this is the Eastern Tie In [pointing]. This is the Mississippi River [pointing]. The proposed action is to raise and expand the existing Hero Canal levee. The 2057 design elevation for 2011 is 10 ½ feet and to construct the tie in levee to the design elevation of 10 ½ feet. This will connect to the GIWW West Closure Complex which is right here [pointing]. We go from the GIWW West Closure Complex, connect to IER 13 and end here at the tie in to the Mississippi River levee.

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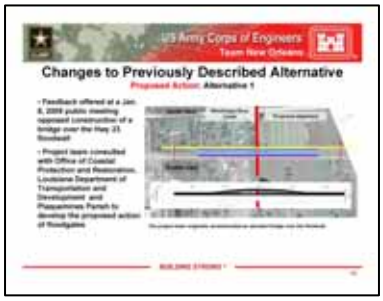
Last time we were together, we talked about the seven different alternatives. What I want to discuss today is alternative one which is our proposed action described in IER 13. I'll walk through some of the features of this project. The Hero Canal, in the proposed action is a 56 foot stoplog closure that would be closed in a storm event. From the Hero Canal to the back of the landfill and running along the landfill down to the trailer park, that is all reinforced earthen levee. In this [pointing] corner there is a small pump station at about 150 cubic feet per second. It's small by standards but it is designed to remove the water that accumulates behind the system. From the pump station to right about where Captain Larry's is located there is reinforced earthen levee. At this point [pointing], it transitions to a floodwall. Then we cross Highway 23 with floodgates, cross the railroad with a floodgate and transition back to a levee to tie into the Mississippi River levee. That's the basic system. I'm going to give you some more details on the Hero Canal stoplog structure and the gates across Highway 23 and the railroad.

A stoplog gate is constructed in the canal. It's a concrete structure with a 56 foot opening. Traffic would transition through and in the event of a storm this permanently mounted crane would install these stoplogs. They're not wooden stoplogs but metal box trusses. There are two or three stoplogs placed into special slots that would close the canal.

This is at the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, we did a de-watering project earlier in the year and it gives an idea of how a stoplog would work. If you look in this lock there are some recesses in the concrete walls. This is a stoplog [pointing]. The ends fit into the recesses of the walls. Through a series of seals, and piling a stoplog on top of a stoplog, it would be like a damn in the Hero Canal. The proposed action includes the construction of a stoplog gate across Hero Canal. There will be two to three metal stoplogs used to close the canal and they would be placed 72 hours prior to an event. Once we're notified of an event, 72 hours before we would begin placing the stoplogs.



For those who were here last time, we talked about a bridge and a ramp with a series of access roads at Highway 23 as part of this project. Based on input received, in close coordination with the Coastal Protection Restoration Authorities, CPRA, Department of Transportation and Development, and Plaquemines Parish the alternative was examined and everyone arrived at a proposal to put in these gates instead of a bridge. That's a great example of how public comment can influence a project.

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Here's Highway 23 heading south [pointing] and here's Highway 23 going north [pointing]. This is the Mississippi River levee [pointing]. This [pointing] is part of the levee system that transitions to a floodwall. This [pointing] is part of the floodwall on the other side of the railroad tracks that goes into a floodwall then transitions into the Mississippi River levee system. There are two designs we're looking at in this project. We're looking at swing gates and roller gates. This swing gate would be stored on the back of the floodwall and then as indicate would swing closed during a storm event.

The gate across the highway has swung closed. The railroad gate also swings closed effectively closing off the system. This [pointing] is an emergency evacuation route. We wanted to provide access to authorized vehicles when the gates are closed by creating an emergency bypassing. There's a private road, on Mr. Landrum's property and there's a road near the railroad gate. The road would transition up onto the Mississippi River levee system and come down on East Oakville Street. When the gates are closed that road would be a bypass around the gates allowing authorized vehicles to get around the closed gates.

A roller gate is a little simpler. This [pointing] is the roller gate. It is stored on rollers with a series of seals on the bottom that effectively make the closure. Since we've been through this, let's go ahead and close it. The roller gate transitions across on rollers as opposed to swinging across to create the closure. The railroad gate is still a swing gate and when that closes it effectively closes the system. There will still be the same emergency bypass.

Bill Maloz, Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levees project manager

Let me briefly give you a status and general description of the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee project. The status of the Plaquemines Parish levee is that there are multiple alignments under investigation using these criteria: risk reduction for people and infrastructure, protection of Highway 23, and concern for the potential adverse impacts to the environment. The authorization limits the potential of the alternatives to repair or modify the

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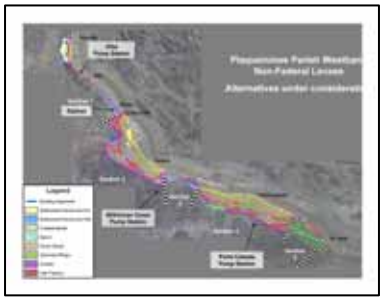
existing alignment.



For those that came to the Jan. public hearing on this project, this map will look familiar. This is the trace of the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee project. The existing levee is in blue on the outside rim and then there are no levees in the last two miles. There will be 34 miles of levee, 32 miles currently exist and there are two miles to be constructed.

The draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is in progress. We discussed this in length at last public hearing. The next item would be the record of decision, then the project partnering agreement would be negotiated, and the acquisition of a right of way. Construction would begin, and we'd look for construction to be complete in late 2013 or early 2014. This completes the status and the general description of the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee project.

Ted Carr, project manager

In the modeling we've separated the two projects. What is the impact of these projects on each other? The Eastern Tie In floodgates reduce storm surge associated with wave risk to the Belle Chasse area. The Westbank and Vicinity project, including the Eastern Tie In floodgate, would not create additional flood risk to lower Plaquemines Parish when the parish's non-federal levee project completed.

Jim Taylor, public affairs

Let's start with the question and discussion. I would ask that you come up to the microphone and try to keep your comments to three minutes. This way everybody has a chance to make a comment or ask a question. Once everyone has finished then you can come back up and ask more questions that have developed. That way everybody has a chance to speak tonight. Please state your name we attribute the comments to the right person.

Question 1. Dinah Thompson: I live about four miles down the road, in Belle Chasse. Some call it Jesuit Bend, but it is Belle Chasse. What is the height of the non-federal levee? The 100-year levee is 10.5 feet, for 100-year protection? In Jesuit Bend, what is going to be the height of the levee behind that neighborhood?

Response 1. Bill Maloz: Two miles of the 34 miles does not have a levee. The height has not yet been determined but at the initiation of the NOV Hurricane Protection at St. Jude is 12.6.

Question 2. Dinah Thompson: So, you're saying 12.6 by Jesuit Bend.

Response 2. Bill Maloz: It has not been determined above Jesuit Bend.

Question 3. Dinah Thompson: And, then 10 ½ feet here. Why not tie it in, continue, and put the gate where the wave problem is down the road.

Response 3. Bill Maloz: That's a hydraulics pump.

Question 4. Dinah Thompson: That's a what?

Response 4. Julie Vignes: Are you asking why go forward with the floodgate and not consider moving it further south?

Question 5. Dinah Thompson: That's not my question. My question is what is the height difference? I work in engineering and I know that if you add on to a project, you've got labor there already building the levee, and what's two more feet? Then a gate down the road will stop the wave action. I got flooded from a wave action. Oakville did not get a wave action. Why are we protecting them from a wave that doesn't exist?

Response 5. Julie Vignes: We don't know the final elevation of the non-federal levee will be when it is improved and brought into the federal system because it's still under design. We're still in the environmental process.

Question 6. Dinah Thompson: We are in the final design, according to Billy Nungesser.

Response 6. Julie Vignes: As we continue to engage the public we will inform you when we know what the elevation will be. At this time, we don't know what the elevation will be in that area. What we have completed is the other project, the Westbank and Vicinity project. I understand doesn't protect specifically the Jesuit Bend neighborhood but that project was authorized by Congress many years ago. Congress is who gives the Corps its authority. Without Congressional authority we will not complete the construction of that piece of the Westbank project. When the hurricanes hit in 2005, Congress appropriated funds to complete that project. That's why you're seeing the movement and the progress on the Westbank project. Then there is the non-federal levee project being brought into the federal system. They're two separate projects and we manage them as different authorities and funding. They're both working themselves through the NEPA environmental compliance process.

Question 7. Dinah Thompson: Different authorities, do you mean who's going to let the projects for these levees?

Response 7. Julie Vignes: No, when I say authority, I mean the way the Corps of Engineers gets permission to expend dollars and construct projects is specifically through Congressional authority.

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Comment 8. Dinah Thompson: Okay. I think we can save a lot of tax money if you hold off for a little while before building millions of dollars worth of floodgate that's not going to protect a lot of the population down the road. In all these things that I've read, in IER 13, I'm being called a cow. I'm not a cow, I don't live on a farm, and I pay big taxes here. That's all I have to say.

Question 9. Stanley Gaudet, Jesuit Bend: When I look over some of your literature and the quote from Col. Lee's letter, I understand that in order to comply with the 100-year risk reduction, elevations and design criteria, the Eastern Tie In project must cross Highway 23 to tie-into the Mississippi River levee to close the system. Then it has to be certified for participation in the National Flood Insurance program. This indicates that everyone on the outside of the levee is being told we're going to keep our flood insurance. Then in this letter, the perception is rates are going to be better for the people north of the levee.

Response 9. Mike Honeycutt: You've got me at a loss because I'm not sure what letter you're talking about.

Question 10. Stanley Gaudet: A letter from Col. Alvin Lee to President Nungesser.

Response 10. Mike Honeycutt: Okay. So, that is not a letter from FEMA?

Comment 11. Stanley Gaudet: No.

Comment 12. Mike Honeycutt: Good. Let me explain FEMA's side of it. Flood insurance is available to anyone no matter if you're at the one percent or not. Flood insurance is available to anyone.

Question 13. Unidentified woman: What if you can't afford it?

Response 13. Mike Honeycutt: Depends on what your risk is. FEMA has been working very closely with the parish with the flood maps. Billy Nungesser and the council have been terrific in working with us. FEMA has not required Plaquemines Parish to adopt anything from the maps we have provided to them because we know the levees are not there. The parish decided to continue to use their advisory base flood elevation on the upper portion and to leave Plaquemines with its current maps. That does not affect your current insurance. It will affect insurance in the future which could be 2011, 2012, 2013, etc. It's difficult because I can't give an answer to if your flood insurance would go up or down. Many of these individuals with this flood protection may have cheaper flood rates but some may not. You're going to have better insurance and lesser rates with a better system. There's not going to be higher rates because of a better flood protection and I doubt seriously if you're going to have higher rates. You're going to have the current existing rates right now. If you're in an A-flood zone, currently, and continue to be in an A-flood zone, your rates are not going to change. The elevations may differ when somebody builds a new building but it's not going to change your flood rate. It'll only change your flood rate if you go from an X zone into a higher risk zone of A. To my knowledge, everything in lower Plaquemines is an A. I don't know if anybody's a B. If you do live in a B zone and it changes to an A, then yes, your flood insurance is going to increase.

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Question 14. Stanley Gaudet: You're going to be tying this into a non-federal levee while we are in the process of getting our non-federal levee adopted. The Corps moves exceeding slow because they started in 1985 and a lot of the decisions were based on data that is no longer pertinent. If we can tie into a non-federal levee here, why can't we tie into a non-federal levee south of the Alliance Refinery? Then we would be protecting one of the major refineries in the United States?

Response 14. Julie Vignes: We've been authorized by Congress, and it is our goal to provide protection authorized in the Westbank project. That project is moving forward. We don't want to not construct the project but at the same time we're moving on an additional project. The answer is both projects are moving forward. They're not on identical timelines but both projects are moving forward.

Question 15. Stanley Gaudet: That is one of our concerns. On May 4th when we have the final meeting is our comments going to be taken seriously and will we impact or change the project? I found dealing with the Corps of Engineers, having worked with FEMA, that common sense even if it might dictate moving this levee down the road is not that common.

Response 15. Julie Vignes: The reason we've not made the final decision on the project described in IER 13 is that we're still in the public input period currently scheduled to close on May 4th. We'll evaluate the comments we receive at this point and if we have enough information we'll move to a final decision or we'll continue to gather information. The final decision on IER 13 has not been made. Our goal is to continue moving forward because we don't see the construction of that project having an adverse affect on the future protection or the existing situation in the parish.

Question 16. Louis Hammer, Jesuit Bend: Probably a million people want to make comments about this levee. I'm a volunteer fire department member and everything south of Port Sulphur is gone for any major hurricane. When you put that gate up, how are we supposed to respond to anything south of the gate? As a volunteer, I will not take a truck holding 500 gallons of water weighing four to six tons on a levee that's saturated with water and could break.

Response 16. Julie Vignes: We're going to automate or power the operation of the gate where it will not be shut until the event is about to happen. Then it'll be able to operate when the winds are blowing at 100 miles per hour. One thing we've done to address the situation is, the gate is going to stay open as long as we can, with consideration for the folks that have to operate it and be evacuated safely. Secondly, we are putting this emergency road.

Question 17. Louis Hammer: I'm addressing the emergency road. It's a gravel road leading to the top of the levee. Right now, when we have to do something on the battering side, it takes very careful maneuvering to go down the levee. During the last hurricane there was major flooding over the levee and now you're asking us to use a service road to rescue people by going over a levee that may flood and not handle a heavy pumping truck.

Response 17. Jim Taylor: Well, that's important information, and part of the reason we're having this meeting. We can take that back and include the comment in our analysis.

Question 18. Louis Hammer: That just hurts us down there.

Response 18. Jim Taylor: Okay. Thank you.

Question 19. Butch Kelly, Jesuit Bend: Were there any type of impact studies done after Hurricane Katrina concerning the areas south of the Oakville floodgate and the impact to property values? This area's have grown quite a bit since 1996 with a large influx of people. I haven't read anything where the people south of Oakville have been taken into consideration of the impact of this floodwall. Can somebody answer that question? When was the last study done by the Army Corps of Engineers or by anybody concerning property values? Have you done anything recently or is this all based the original 1985 impact study?

Response 19. Julie Vignes: I don't know that we've done any additional studies. We normally conduct a study to evaluate the benefits of a project. The situation we have is Congress acted in absence of a study. Congress took a position and said, let's provide additional risk reduction and raise the non-federal levees without performing a survey.

Question 20. Butch Kelly: Okay. That's fine, but…

Response 20. Julie Vignes: In other words, there was no need to prove the benefits outweighed the cost to construct it. Congress just said you are authorized.

Question 21. Butch Kelly: Reasonable people are going to ask questions. Why hasn't it been an ongoing study? Things change; things don't remain the same as 1985. You can go back and do a study in 1910 and say, well, we're going to do it because we studied it in 1910. Now, why isn't something going on as far as impact study currently, considering the population?

Response 21. Julie Vignes: You're talking about a study for the property near Jesuit Bend or below Oakville?

Question 22. Butch Kelly: Everything below Oakville, all the way down to Venice, LA.

Response 22. Julie Vignes: We're going to move into the construction phase on both of these projects. There are still other programs…

Question 23. Butch Kelly: Well, you've got to answer my question. When was the last impact study done concerning the population and property below the floodgate? Now, you're saying this was authorized in 1985.

Response 23. Julie Vignes: The IER document does that for the Eastern Tie In project.

Question 24. Butch Kelly: But, I have not seen anything where there was an impact study done concerning the population or growth of the Jesuit Bend area.

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Response 24. Julie Vignes: The SEIS, or Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, the first milestone that Bill Maloz talked about, is currently being developed. It will be put out for public review in the summer of 2009. The SEIS will have that assessment information in it.

Question 25. Butch Kelly: Well, wait, but that's not going to help. When are you going to break ground on this thing?

Response 25. Julie Vignes: Is the question, when will construction of improving the non-federal levee begin?

Question 26. Butch Kelly: No, no, Oakville.

Response 26. Julie Vignes: Okay. The Oakville, Eastern Tie In project, is currently scheduled to start construction this Sept.

Question 27. Butch Kelly: Okay. Where is the impact study that's going to affect the people after Sept. 1, 2009, south of the Oakville floodgate? What kind of things are we going to have to be prepared for if we are impacted by a major hurricane? It sounds to me; nobody can answer the question because there hasn't been a study done since 1985. Is there somebody who can answer the question? Just tell me yes or no.

Response 27. Julie Vignes: There are two reports that are being published. One is IER 13.

Question 28. Butch Kelly: How does that help us being published? We need to know now.

Response 28. Julie Vignes: It's accessible on our Web site. We can provide you a hard copy of that document.

Question 29. Butch Kelly: What does that document say?

Response 29. Jim Taylor: We'll give you the link to the Web site.

Question 30. Butch Kelly: I don't want a link to the Web site; I want somebody to tell me what does this impact study say? Are we being sacrificed? Is that what's going on here?

Response 30. Gib Owen: I work in the Environmental Group and I'm the chief of Ecological Planning. We have two separate projects. You're talking about the 1985 studies that were done for the Westbank and Vicinity. That study has been done. After Katrina, Congress said here's the money, go build. They also said here's the money, now go build and bring that non-federal levee system into the New Orleans to Venice federalized system. That study is ongoing. We're preparing an EIS for it. Our anticipated release date is late summer and it will take into account the analysis south of Oakville.

Question 31. Butch Kelly: Don't you think we ought to put this on hold until the study comes out to see what the affects are to us?

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Response 31. Col. Lee: I think Julie tried to answer your question and it gets back to the authority question. These are two separate projects and we've tried to communicate that to you. The Corps of Engineers does not build any project without Congressional authorization. That's our permission. There is an authorization that gives us permission to build projects. Congress gave us permission. This slide shows Congressional authority and it is what gives the authorization. Authorizations give limitations within those authorizations, also. They give you permission first and then they tell you where you can do it. Authorizations are never outdated. There are authorizations that are dated back to 1927. Whenever Congress passes an authorization, is the date of the authorization, it has nothing to do with today's date. These authorizations specify where the Westbank project is located to provide hurricane protection. Then it specifies the areas east of the Algiers Canal extending from Belle Chasse to and including Oakville in Plaquemines Parish. This is Oakville in Plaquemines Parish and that is where the authorization gives us authority to tie in the levee to the Mississippi River levee, which is the Eastern Tie In part of this project. There is a separate authorization for the non-federal levees and the New Orleans to Venice levees. The New Orleans to Venice levees is a separate project authorized by Congress in 2006. After Hurricane Katrina and Rita, both were funded by Congress giving us authority and funding to complete both projects.

Question 32. Unidentified woman: You're still not answering our question.

Response 32. Col. Lee: I'm sorry. That is how we operate within the authority. That's our authority and permission Congress gave us to build the projects.

Question 33. Mary Jo Hebert, Port Sulphur: I think everyone in this room understands the way you get your authority and funding. The question most people have in this is, since authority was given in 1996, what have you done since 1996 to prove to Congress it's still necessary to put a floodgate in Oakville? That's my first question. Is the floodgate necessary because there are parts of our levee system that are not federalized or at the federal standards? They do not meet the 100-year protection levees. Wouldn't it make more sense to bring all of our levee system up to the 100-year levee protection height before you build a floodgate? Once you get the levees up to the height that's necessary to give us the flood protection we need, then your floodgate may be unnecessary. If you put the floodgate before the levees are in, what you're doing is trapping all the water south of Oakville. That includes the people in Jesuit Bend, Oakville, and everything south. Contrary to what people believe, there are many people living down there.

Response 33. Julie Vignes: There's just one small point I want to clear up because I know there's a letter circulating that the Corps didn't produce saying the Eastern Tie In was authorized in 1986. The Westbank project is large, 66 miles of levees and floodwalls. A piece of that was first authorized in 1986 that stopped at the Harvey Canal. That's the 1986 study and authorization. In 1996 Congress added everything east of the Algiers Canal. Since 1996 when we were authorized, there's been construction along the Algiers Canal and the Hero Canal and that has been raised. Now it needs to be further raised to bring it up to the 100-year but every year Congress appropriates a certain amount of money. With those monies, we start constructing the

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whole system. The Eastern Tie In was one piece that no construction had taken place. Then in 2006 Congress fully-funded the amount of money to finish what was already authorized. That's why we're now able to finish the system first authorized in 1986 and added to in 1996.

Question 34. Mary Jo Hebert: Okay. If it took that long to get funding, do you really think it would affect Congress that much to hold off on construction until you did another study or until the rest of the non-federal levees are up to 100-year protection?

Response 34. Julie Vignes: Right now, because there's nothing here, that's a gap in the system. Everything in this whole area is at risk of flooding and so is everything south. We're going after this with two projects concurrently. The first project says, you have to close this system at this point to protect all the property which is solely in Plaquemines Parish against that 100-percent levee protection, and then to address the risk south, moving forward with that second non-federal levee project.

Question 35. Mary Jo Hebert: That's great, except if we get a major hurricane in between, you're starting the federalizing the levees long after you're starting construction on this floodgate. What you're doing is you're leaving the entire lower end of this parish open to flooding.

Response 35. Julie Vignes: There are two different timelines and this is the reasons why: authorization already existed, funding was provided, and we were allowed to expedite certain processes for NEPA. In other words, funded permission and environmental compliance was expedited so we could move forward with the projects because there had to be more evaluation, study and environmental assessment to this area where there was no construction done before. That process is trailing behind the other project by several months to a year. That's why you're going to see the supplemental EIS document later this year. Then construction will come online in six months to a year after we start construction of the other project.

Question 36. Mary Jo Hebert: You said six months to a year behind but according to the papers you passed out, the floodgate will be completed in 2011, and the levees won't be completed until 2013 or 14, so that's not six months to a year behind.

Response 36a. Julie Vignes: Right. I was speaking in general terms as far as where we are in the process. You're correct. Our current schedules are 2011 for the Eastern Tie In, and late 2013 for the other project. That is correct.

Comment 37. Mark McGee: I'd just like to explain to all of you that it's getting a little loud in here and that it's very important to get your comments documents accurately. This is a comment period. Being associated with the Oakville Community Group, I can tell you these comments will have some positive input with the Corps and those people above their chain of command that could possibly have some positive benefits for you. You need to be accurate and quick on your comments. There could be some positive things come about. Thank you.

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Question 38. Robin Zuvich: First, I've been trying to educate myself within the last few days on IER 13 in section 3.1 of the environment report. My husband came in with me and we would like to present our question as a PowerPoint that goes with it but we were told when we walked in from somebody in the Corps that this is a public building and it's your public meeting. We never did this before, so could someone override that person and allow me to be the first one to do something like this? I will keep it under three minutes, my husband can set it up while others are talking and I can get back in line. Would that work? No?

Response 38. Jim Taylor: We want to keep this up but we can get to the slides as soon as we're done, at the end of the meeting.

Question 39. Robin Zuvich: No, I want it now when my people can see it, sir.

Response 39. Jim Taylor: Well, then, maybe we can do something separate but we're not going to stop the meeting for that, now.

Question 40. Robin Zuvich: I don't want to stop the meeting. I want to get it set up, I will go back in line, and I will wait my turn again, sir.

Response 40. Jim Taylor: Go ahead and ask your question, if you have a specific question.

Question 41. Robin Zuvich: My question pertains to my PowerPoint. I'm a school teacher.

Response 41. Jim Taylor: Okay.

Question 42. Robin Zuvich: I believe the visual will help all these people.

Response 42. Jim Taylor: We can do that once we get all the verbal questions. We're not going to do this now. Let's keep this orderly, please, and we will do it at the end.

Question 43. Robin Zuvich: I would like it to go down that I have been refused to comment.

Response 43. Jim Taylor: We'll be happy to do it after the verbal section.

Question 44. Robin Zuvich: A question in section 3.1 in the environmental section. I want it to go down that I've been refused.

Response 44. Jim Taylor: And we're perfectly happy to do that.

Question 45. Benny Rousselle: Thank you. A couple of points that I believe need to be clarified. There's a lot of confusion, a lot of misinformation circulated. First, I want the public to understand that this gate has not been in the works for 10 years. This gate has been in the works, for perhaps, the last six to nine months because of the authorization we keep talking about going back to 1986 and then 1996. In the original project, the levee terminated at the local levee on the other side of the Highway 23. The gate is something relatively new, in the last six to nine months, as an alternative trying to tie in the 100-year protection. Now, I think that it's crucial and

I was in here six or nine months ago saying exactly the same thing about the two projects need to talk and work together. All of these trips made to Washington needs to emphasize that we need 100-year protection all the way to Myrtle Grove. As we said a little while ago, there was no alternative on the levee alignment in Jesuit Bend, unless you go to the northern part of the property, the southern part where there is no levee, below La Reussite. I believe we could have skipped and taken the $215 million dollars first allocated and used it on that levee. We would have been hauling dirt a year ago but, the main thing is Col. Lee and staff doesn't have the authority. You can't go to 100-year protection at this point, below the Oakville tie in. I think it's important to have the local government seek the authorization for 100-year protection through Congress to give you the authority and not just make trips but ask for what is needed. The budget has gone from $215 million to $600 million for this project. All of this has been done by authorization and appropriations through Congress. Each time money was added, the language could've been added to extend 100-year protection from Oakville to St. Jude. Now, I'd like to make sure that the public comes to the Monday meeting. Put on your thinking cap over the weekend, and create some constructive criticism or at least questions. Construct some questions and get direction so we don't get into a contest of pointing fingers. The solution is, Congress needs to authorize and tell the Corps that we want 100-year protection of the $600 million plus to extend the system to Arlington or Myrtle Grove, for many reasons including the refinery and the community there. We shouldn't be distributing misinformation. When I read this first letter it says this project was started in 1986 and the path had already been finalized. We wouldn't be here if this was finalized. This is a public meeting to get input, we're not here to mislead the public. We're not here to say that it's finalized or we're wasting our time. I am hoping that we will be able to get Congress to give the authority to be able to complete the project. As we talked about the elevation not being very different between the northern tie in and the southern tie in, the money that could be used for the gate could actually be used on the levee. I want to thank you for being here. I also want to thank you for mentioning the two projects in the same meeting because before tonight, we couldn't talk about the two projects in the same meeting. We are making some progress where we are talking about the same project. Even though it's been a miniscule amount of information on the non-fed levee project, at least it's being discussed. With those comments, I hope that you can go back and take into consideration the comments of the public tonight and look at the possibility of that happening. Do interim protection so we don't have to build the gate at this time. Thank you.

Response 45. Jim Taylor: I can guarantee you; we will take all these comments back and consider them. That's why we're here, and the more focused and factual the comments are, the easier it is to incorporate them in the ongoing studies.

Question 46. Jean Guerrera, Jesuit Bend: You know, we're trying to show you all this is not cow pastures or citrus groves that you have written down in your report whether it's in the 1980s or the 1990s. We were able to build down here, why didn't they stop us then from building? There are beautiful expensive houses here. We're not talking about little shacks that my family grew up in down the road. We're talking about $300 to $600 thousand homes. First, don't start the floodgate until you have the levees up, then consider a floodgate. This floodgate is really for the Corps, a quick and easy thing that was authorization back in the 1980s. Authorization can be stopped. It can't go on when you have people here. Studies should be done now to show that we

have people and businesses down here. Most of us grew up down here, and that's why we moved down here. Had I known that they would've had a floodgate up across the road, I would not have moved from Algiers Point. I moved from Algiers Point to get away from the crime and be where my family came from and that's why we did. Why should this go on? Why can't you all just give an answer because we don't have an answer? It's simple. Stop the floodwall, stop this floodgate. For one, it's going to devalue our homes. There isn't a sensible person whose going pass through a floodgate to buy a home once this ridiculous floodgate is in place. To have it started now in 2009 with us having no levee protection, well, that's ridiculous.

Response 46. Jim Taylor: Okay. Thank you. You have a lot of people standing behind you.

Question 47. Jean Guerrera: And, you know what?

Response 47. Jim Taylor: Wait and speak.

Question 48. Jean Guerrera: We can be here until 12 o'clock at night. We don't care.

Response 48. Jim Taylor: Go ahead and ask your question.

Question 49. Jean Guerrera: You said you paid for this building? The tax payers paid the money for you to rent it. Another thing, everybody in here is not going to leave until they are able to show their aerial view up there.

Response 49. Jim Taylor: Absolutely.

Question 50. Pete Stavros: First, is there anybody in the Corps here that lives south of this gate? Is there anybody here that did the economic assessment portion of the IER? This past week, there was a comment in that the area on the environment of this proposed IER 13, the term says there are cows and fruit trees there. The answer was, you only looked at a mile within the structure. Was that something that appears in the engineering regulation or was that just an arbitrary number?

Response 50. Gib Owen: The section you're referring to was written to refer to the property directly adjacent to where the levee is being planned in Oakville. Now, it was not a description of all of Plaquemines Parish or lower Plaquemines. I'm one of the principle authors of that document and the intent was to discuss the area directly adjacent. I'm talking, right up and touching it, which is Mr. Perez's property.

Question 51. Pete Stavros: The problem is, it talks about economic impact. According to your old regulations, you have to follow the National Economic Development plan or was that waved in lieu of this project.

Response 51. Gib Owen: The NED has been waived on both of these projects since Katrina.

Question 52. Pete Stavros: That's a problem for all of the people who found out two weeks ago that their economic development has been affected.

Response 52. Gib Owen: But, it is being addressed in this second study. That's the purpose. Congress recognized that there was a need to look further south and they gave us that authority. Then they went one step further and actually funded the project.

Question 53. Pete Stavros: I understand. The problem is that Congress reads a report that says the only thing south of that project is cows and fruit trees. They read that; they do not come down here to see for themselves.

Response 53. Gib Owen: Congress already authorized this project and funded it.

Question 54. Pete Stavros: That's a problem.

Response 54. Julie Vignes: The NED you're referring to is a process the Corps typically has to go through to justify spending federal dollars on a project. That's been decided already, the money has been appropriated for both projects.

Question 55. Pete Stavros: The problem is how it has been used. That money needs to be used to protect these people down here and to develop the economy. Not to gate us up and impact our safety. Is there a hydrological person?

Response 55. Julie Vignes: Yes.

Question 56. Pete Stavros: Okay. What we got, over the phone calls that happened this week, was that there was no hydraulic or hydrologic impact due to the construction of the 16-foot levee on the Hero Canal and this terminus. The problem is I didn't see any of the documents on the Web site, if there was a hydrological study. It's not being published. I am not a hydraulic engineer, but I am smart enough to know that any water that comes into the Barataria Basin and we restrict the flow from any of the areas inside that 16-foot area, add to it the closing of the Intracoastal Waterway, shut off the Hero Canal and pump at 150 cubic feet per second, that's going to affect the static level on this side of the levee. That level is going to be higher. Not to mention, any sort of dynamic action against that levee is going to double back on us two miles south of here when the levee is only five feet tall. We came within one foot, because I was pitching sand bags in the last storm. That levee, with all the HEBSCO baskets is not going to hold even for one semi-serious storm that hits over in Texas. Between the time that thing is closed and the time our federal levee is built will be terrible.

Response 56. Nancy Powell: That is the reason Bill Maloz indicated in his presentation that the non-fed levee elevation has not been determined because we do have to take into account any impact from the West Closure Complex.

Question 57. Pete Stavros: I will tell you, right now, that project has induced risk of flooding to my property. You are by law required, by NEPA, to do an EIS and show me what that impact is. You either avoid, reduce, mediate, or scrap it.

Response 57. Nancy Powell: Yes, I agree.

Question 58. Pete Stavros: That hasn't been done and that's why I'm angry. That's why everybody else here is angry is because we're at risk.

Response 58a. Gib Owen: In the case of the EIS, we have the authority since Katrina to do these IER's. That is taking the place of an EIS. We are meeting the full NEPA compliance. We are doing a full EIS on lower Plaquemines for the non-federal levee.

Response 58b. Jim Taylor: And, we will take your comments back and evaluate them. We still have some hydraulics to do.

Question 59. Pete Stavros: For the record, I personally think this is a substantive comment. This affects me now and will affect me when I flood. Then I can't get National Flood Insurance because we're on the outside of a levee and that project is scrapped because they could spend $700 million somewhere else.

Response 59. Jim Taylor: Okay. Thank you.

Question 60. Frank Renatza: I live about eight miles south of here. My family has been here almost 70 years. We've been around a long time and we've seen many hurricanes. We had some damage from other hurricanes but Katrina opened the eyes of everyone. We are in trouble. The back levee where I live is about seven feet high and it's not enough because it was a foot from coming over the levee. What happens if another hurricane comes and hits Houma, Louisiana? The water builds, backs out of our levee and pours over the back side of that levee? We're going to get flooded. Insurance, I heard this gentleman with FEMA talk about insurance. After Katrina my insurance tripled on my home? What happens to people who have fixed incomes, retired, or don't have money? What are they going to do about insurance on their homes that they already paid for? They can't afford the insurance of what they're being charged.

Response 60. Mike Honeycutt: You're saying your flood insurance tripled? Flood insurance did not go up. Homeowners are a different story and I wish there could be something we could do about homeowners.

Question 61. Frank Renatza: I've been with this insurance company for 47 years. They called me on the phone and said, Mr. Renatza, you bring me a check for $1600 right now or we're going to cancel your insurance. I said, why? He said, because we're going to have to change your policy. Now you're going to have three policies. I said why do I need three policies? I got insurance for wind, hail and flood. My wife and I are retired and living on a fixed income. I got a beautiful home that I worked for years to own. Nobody gave it to me. We don't know if we can continue to pay the insurance on what we own. What happens when you put this floodwall up here? The floodwalls are going to close 72 hours ahead of the hurricane and you all will go around the bypass to get out of here. You are creating a mess that we're going to have to put up with when you people leave here. I bet none of you live here. Every person here, these folks live here. This is our home. We all live below what you all are going to propose to be a floodwall. You're going to put it there, spend all this money and create a levee and a floodwall to separate

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lower and upper Plaquemines Parish. We are all Plaquemines Parish people. You should not separate the people of this parish with a floodwall. You're creating a mess.

Response 61. Jim Taylor: Those comments we will definitely take back to consider.

Question 62. Frank Renatza: I know you want to cut me short, but I have one more thing to say.

Response 62. Jim Taylor: Okay.

Question 63. Frank Renatza: You showed where the levee came and the air base was located. Look at where the levee comes and how it goes around the air base. That was put there purposely to protect the air base. We have protection right here by the back door but that's the reason why the levee was put there. They don't care about anybody else or any other part of the parish that goes below there. Instead, they have to put that floodwall up there.

Response 63. Jim Taylor: We absolutely do care about what's important to you and that's why we're here.

Question 64. Frank Renatza: No.

Response 64. Jim Taylor: That's why we're recording these comments and taking them back. We do care.

Question 65. Frank Renatza: Once you put this floodwall up, I don't know if I'll be able to get insurance on my house, once FEMA gets finished with my insurance.

Response 65. Jim Taylor: I understood.

Question 66. Frank Renatza: This is my first meeting and I apologize that I'm not knowledgeable on what's going on. I can tell you, it's not going to stop because everyone in this place is going to work to stop this program.

Response 66. Jim Taylor: Okay. Thank you.

Question 67. Kevin Johnson, Sheriff's Office District Commander: This is my district from Belle Chasse to Myrtle Grove. I have three beautiful daughters, I just built my house in Jesuit Bend, and I worked very hard to get here. Instead of having to scrape, scratch and live in other parish's that are disgusting as far as the way they treat their people. I'm touched with the turnout. It makes me so proud to live here. Sir, everything in me wants to believe that all these recorded statements are really going to do something.

Response 67. Jim Taylor: They are.

Question 68. Kevin Johnson: I'm an educated man and I tend to do a lot of speaking events. I was in a lot of debates and a police officer for 14 years. I can read body language well. Sir, you're talking like a man that's carrying a big stick that says, people its coming we got the

authority. I understood what you were trying to explain. To my townsfolk, I get privy to conversations that really aren't open to this and the conversations behind closed doors where the truth is spoken. I have friends in higher up positions and they confide in me. What I am being told is this is done. I am being told that these next few meetings are lip service, and come May they're looking to shut the books hard. The people who told me this was three of them. They told me it's worth fighting for! You need to at least make a statement. We're making a statement by being here. I'd like to know what your meetings are like before this building filled up. The parking lot is filling up with many angry people. Do you think we have a chance? I'm not talking projects and getting into details. I think we've made it blunt. You have a lack of being able to answer questions. We don't want the floodgate. Now, I'm asking your opinion, do you believe we have a chance? I don't want to hear, a one millionth chance because that's not what I'm talking about. A legitimate chance that this floodgate, come May, is not going up? Or do you believe it is more probable than not. People in this room and people who are stuck outside, is it coming and is it done? What is the tone? Can you share that?

Response 68. Col. Lee: I think we've tried to communicate the purpose of the meeting, which is to present the preferred alternative. This is the proposed action.

Question 69. Kevin Johnson: This is what's going on again. I'm not getting frustrated, I'm trying not to get frustrated the best I can. Sir, I understand what the purpose of your meeting is. Unfortunately, this is not everyone who showed up for tonight's purpose. They already know what you're putting up the floodgate. That's why everybody's here. Their motivation for being here is to make that not happen. Not to try to fall in love with it, they already hate it, nobody wants it. My question to you is what is the chance? Is there a chance? You're in those meetings. When you spoke about your authority, were you really showing me the facts and that it's coming? I felt like you were saying let's drop the financial bomb on the island to save the townsfolk up north.

Response 69. Col. Lee: Before this public meeting we received many comments this week. That's why we are having another public meeting Monday night. We had an internal discussion in our organization because we heard there was a lot of public comment that needed to be heard.

Question 70. Kevin Johnson: Please give your opinion on my question.

Response 70. Col. Lee: This is our proposed action.

Question 71. Kevin Johnson: Is it probable or not that this will not happen?

Response 71. Col. Lee: I would say its probable right here. This is the proposed action.

Question 72. Kevin Johnson: There you go. This is what I want to explain to everybody. This is not a let's throw it out to you and talk about it situation. It's at the end.

Response 72. Col. Lee: I told you this is a proposed action and it doesn't say a final action. A final action means, since I am the decision maker, I've signed the document stating this is the way it will be built exactly as specified here. I have not done that. I won't do that until after May

4th when the public comment period ends. Once all the comments are received, we assess and evaluate the comments. Then, that's where the decision is made. The decision has not been made.

Question 73. Kevin Johnson: Who is the final authority?

Response 73. Col. Lee: I am.

Question 74. Kevin Johnson: You are the final authority?

Response 74. Col. Lee: I am the final authority.

Question 75. Kevin Johnson: That's good to know. I didn't know that the man with the final authority is right here. I applaud you and thank you for being here.

Response 75. Col. Lee: Thank you.

Question 76. Kevin Johnson: Honestly, if it doesn't, would you buy my house?

Response 76. Col. Lee: I really appreciate you coming, and I thank everybody for coming. The purpose of this meeting is for you to tell us how you feel. We need to know what you're thinking, what you like about this project, what you don't like about this project. Then we can consider all the comments as we make a decision. That's the whole purpose of why we're having the public meeting. Thank you.

Question 77. Vaughn Boudreaux, Jesuit Bend: I'm not going to sit up here and chew you out about it but, to your hydrological person, what affect does blocking off the Hero Canal have on that surge coming in? I know during Rita, where the levee was five foot, the water was coming over into Jesuit Bend. My neighbors and I spent 20 hours sandbagging to keep the water out. I can tell you the Hero Canal saved us. They were able to open the locks to the river and a lot of that river went up the Hero Canal. It drained and took the pressure off. At one point the water was coming up about 6 inches an hour. It was topping that levee and we were bagging it as fast as we could while parts were washing out. Then the parish president got in touch with Jefferson Parish and they opened some of the floodgates or locks in the river, allowing the water to start dropping. That's what saved Jesuit Bend is the coordination the parish with other parishes and the opening up those gates. How does the Hero Canal being blocked affect that ability? Does it or does it not? How does the Jefferson Parish line tie into the blocking of the Hero Canal? The levee coming from Jefferson Parish, there is going to be a wall across there, correct? So, the water is not going to be able to go up the Hero Canal anymore?

Response 77. Nancy Powell: When this project is finished it won't go up to this terminus here.

Question 78. Vaughn Boudreaux: It has nothing to do with the hydrology in Jesuit Bend or the ability of Jesuit Bend to drain, correct?

Response 78. Nancy Powell: Correct.

Comment 79. Matt Zuvich: I did come earlier today and asked about the PowerPoint. The girl I talked to said she never had anybody want to do anything like that at a public meeting. I said, well there's always a first, and I know she has her own computer. I told her I had my own equipment. What I want to tell people is, before these people go out and spend millions of dollars to do another study on what we have below Oakville, get on Google Earth for about 15 minutes and look at what we have down there. You can see the middle school, the nursing home, the refinery, all of our subdivisions, and all the people who live down in this area. You're talking about doing another study which is going to cost a lot of money and wasted time. Those aerial shots probably were taken off the same place I got mine. One other thing, it's not just about the people that are in the room tonight, we have kids, and what do you think their future is going to be behind this wall? You think they're going to raise a family down here? Do you really? It's your decision to make, you told us that. You're going to make the decision that's going to affect our kids whether they want to stay in this parish below. When you make the decision, think about if you had kids living down here, how they'd feel. Thank you.

Comment 80. Amos Cornier: My family is from Plaquemines Parish, dating back to the 1700's, and I would like you to carry one message back to Congress about the historical corporation of Plaquemines Parish with the Corps. We have sacrificed our land and our livelihoods through orchids and groves we have given and you have taken for set backs from the river. Now, if you will go back and check in 1927, you busted a levee at Myrtle Grove and Plaquemines Parish was sacrificed. You blew up the levee at Caernarvon and the east bank of Plaquemines Parish was sacrificed. If you put this up, then the entire parish would be sacrificed, again. Thank you.

Question 81. Ryan Martinez, Jesuit Bend: I'm almost at a loss for words because Kevin took the words out of my mouth. Who is going to have the authority to close this gate?

Response 81. Julie Vignes: It will be constructed by the Corps of Engineers and we have a partnership with the state of Louisiana. Once the construction is complete, it's turned over to the state of Louisiana to operate and maintain. The Corps of Engineers will provide them an operations and maintenance manual. As we design the gate, we will put forth perimeters that describe when the gate should be closed but the actual operation of the gate will be by the state of Louisiana.

Question 82. Ryan Martinez: So, there's no local input on when the gate should be closed?

Response 82. Julie Vignes: We have a coordination team that meets through the planning and design of this project. Plaquemines Parish government participates in that coordination.

Question 83. Ryan Martinez: I'm still a little confused because this gentleman says that our comments are going to be taken back to Washington and reviewed. Then this gentleman says that you all already have the authority. Is this a done deal? Yes or no?

Response 83. Julie Vignes: The final decision on what will be constructed for IER 13 has not been made.

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Question 84. Ryan Martinez: So, there's still a chance that this wall may not be built at all? Yes or no?

Response 84. Gib Owen: I can't give an answer that easy. We are in the public phase. As soon as it ends, the environmental group will put together a packet with the team and we'll work through it. We'll look at all the comments and the team will make a recommendation to Col. Lee who will weigh the comments, review them, and make the decision.

Question 85. Ryan Martinez: So, it's not a done deal?

Response 85. Gib Owen: It's not a done deal until he signs the paper, but that decision has not been made.

Question 86. Ryan Martinez: I want to make sure we're not wasting our time and that our comments are going to be reviewed.

Response 86. Jim Taylor: Your comments are going to be incorporated in the final decision, absolutely.

Comment 87. Ryan Martinez: Well, I want my comment to go on record that, I think I speak for everybody in this room, we don't want it.

Question 88. Donald Landry: I don't know how the public was notified that we were having these public meetings, but I found out about it Sunday. I've lived down here for 25 years. I grew up in Belle Chasse and I've lived in Plaquemines Parish all my life. It seems like somebody dropped the ball. An issue this important should have been house to house letting us know you're building a floodgate. I did pull up Google Maps and I counted the houses as best I could. There are over 600 houses from the proposed floodgate to the Alliance Refinery, where a Salt Water Diversion Project crosses the highway. There's well over 600 houses and 50 trailers. I counted 50 trailers in the two trailer parks. I didn't count individual trailers that are spotted within the radius, but 600 plus families you're impacting. I'm a little confused as to your 1996 authorization. Did it or did it not include this floodgate?

Response 88. Julie Vignes: What was authorized in 1996, is a project and its alignment. The project is not through its final design phase. Now, it doesn't identify this area as 1,000 feet there will be a levee or in these 1,000 feet will be a floodwall or a floodgate. It identified the area. I know it's difficult to see on this map, but his area, the east side of the Algiers Canal and the community of Oakville, is the authorized area to provided hurricane protection.

Question 89. Donald Landry: I'm confused, Benny Rousselle read a document and said that the levee was going to tie in with the non-federal levee and not include a floodgate. It sounds to me, the answer is no. The original authorization did not authorize a floodgate.

Response 89. Julie Vignes: The original authorization language did not describe a floodgate. That's correct. It said provide protection, go forward and design how to accomplish that.

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Question 90. Donald Landry: When protecting property and people, my comment on the issue would be not to build the floodgate. I would like to recommend that the final date of May 4th be postponed by one month to give the uniformed people in this room a chance to read it and comment. I think we need a better study. I don't see anyone here representing the local and state government. They're supposed to be our representatives that give direction in what your project should include. Is that correct? You get direction from Congress, right?

Response 90. Julie Vignes: We get our authority which describes the permission from an act of Congress, yes.

Question 91. Donald Landry: I would recommend a postponement for at least a month to get our state and local authorities involved with our congressmen and get this impact looked at.

Response 91. Jim Taylor: We have at least one council member here but it would be good if all of them could show up.

Question 92. Donald Landry: Billy Nungessor said he couldn't come. I called Charlie Melancon, he couldn't make it tonight and he's not going to make it to the May 4th meeting. We don't have representation here.

Response 92. Jim Taylor: And, you need that.

Question 93. Donald Landry: They need to be here. I would recommend postponing this deadline because construction isn't going to start on this floodwall for probably another year, right? I would recommend, September. Is this project going to increase our risk, i.e. flood insurance premiums south of Oakville? According to this man, by placing a floodgate across there it is going to increase our risk?

Response 93. Julie Vignes: The construction of the floodgate, based on modeling we've done, will not have any noticeable appreciable increase to the amount of storm surge that would come to those areas south of the floodgate. With any amount of increase, we're going to continue to do modeling to define what that potential increase is.

Question 94. Donald Landry: After the gates are built or before it's built?

Response 94. Julie Vignes: That's ongoing work now. If we can indicate that there is an increase, then the design of the levee behind the Jesuit Bend area will incorporate that.

Comment 95. Donald Landry: Okay. I guess that answers all my questions. Thank you. Thank you for coming out tonight and at least hearing us. I appreciate it, thank you.

Question 96. Victoria Taylor: I want to know why you didn't decide to put the floodgate further down where properties have been destroyed and residence are not as plentiful as we are here in this room tonight?

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Response 96. Julie Vignes: The short answer is if I move that gate any significant distance, I don't have the environmental compliance. It's out of my permission that I have from Congress. I would've had to get additional authority. Now, that can still happen in the future but we're just moving forward with what we're already authorized to do. To move the gate would've taken additional Congressional authority.

Comment 97. Victoria Taylor: Did you get our permission to invade our homes and our livelihoods here with your decision making? Did you do that? I built my house in 1993 and you're telling me on that paper that in 1996, you made this authority happen. I wasn't ever notified by certified mail. I was never sent anything in writing and the first time I hear about this is tonight when I got home. I got a flyer in the mail about my flood insurance may not be eligible for FEMA assistance. I made a phone call to my insurance agent and he told me, if I'm not eligible for FEMA and flood insurance, my homeowners insurance will sharply increase. I'm a single mom and I can't afford all that! What are you all going to do about it?!

Question 98. Jean Guerrera: You're closing the MRGO, right? You opened that. That's my friend's families, begged you not to do in the past. Now, it's created a mess. You ruined a whole parish over there. What are you going to do? Is this what's going to happen now? It looks like your attitude is you don't care, you got authorization and money. Congress blows money out of their you know whats all the time without any thought or anything of what's going to happen. That's the reason why you have a lawsuit right now with the MRGO which is making you close it. The MRGO is taking more money to close it.

Response 98. Jim Taylor: And, that relates to this?

Question 99. Jean Guerrera: Yes, it does. Why wouldn't it relate to it? That's what's going to happen right here. You all are not studying anything. Why don't you try to use common sense for a change? The people, right now, can't stand the Corps of Engineers. Why don't you try to work with the people? My husband's cousin worked for the Corps of Engineers. I know what goes on with them. Who's going to pay the people to evacuate when they don't have the money all the time, when it's time to close these wonderful looking floodgates? Who's going to pay the people who cannot afford to evacuate all the time? Because you know how often storms come. Rita came, Katrina came, and all of them came. Many people couldn't evacuate and that's why they all had to go to the Superdome. Who's going to pay for all the people here to evacuate when they cannot evacuate, you or Congress? Where is this floodgate? Once the water gets in this floodgate, when you close it, what will happen because you don't have the levees done? Instead of doing the levees first and then the floodgate, how are you going to get the water out of here? That's another question.

Response 99. Julie Vignes: The question is, once we close the gate and water is accumulated behind it, how will it get out? The existing local drainage system will continue to work, and that pump station Ted mentioned will be part of our system. We will provide an additional pump to pump it over the gate. The existing conditions will be maintained.

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Question 100. Jean Guerrera: May 4th, you all think is the last time, it's not. Let me tell you, everybody is here with me? If they keep this going, we can file a class action lawsuit or file an injunction to slow them down or stop them. It can be stopped, let me just tell you that. Is everybody behind me with that?

Response 100. Meeting attendees: Yeah!

Comment 101. Jean Guerrera: If you think it's a done deal, it's not a done deal. You had better study some more and do something else. Go down there to Conoco Phillips and connect there. Talk to these oyster fisherman because they know much more than the Corps of Engineers, you all don't have any common sense.

Question 102. Denise Buford: I am new to the Parish. I know it's coming across as anger, tonight, but it really is fear. When I say I'm new to the Parish, I own commercial property on Walker Road. I'm very familiar with what you're doing on Walker Road. I was not aware of the floodwall that was coming across. I have to say tonight, I feel unfortunate that my husband and I purchased a prime prestige piece of property just two miles down the road. Not to throw numbers but I might have two millions dollars worth of property that we purchased in this parish in the last year and a half. To think this investment could be hampered by a floodwall. We understand that you have two projects going on. We just wish that the two projects would be working together. We want protection, we're glad you're here to give us protection, we need it. We know that but that is what we want instead of the floodwall to cross over at the highway to tie into the back levee. If it's taken this long to get to this point, can't it take a little bit longer to tie them both in? That's all we're asking for. What we're afraid of, is not only flooding from the back, which I think that will be solved when you raise that back levee, but the floodwall across that's going to detour people. I don't know if I would have spent that kind of money on a property a mile past a floodwall. I really don't. I'm afraid of what the property value is going to be after this floodwall comes? The other thing is I don't need flood insurance. I couldn't believe that I didn't need flood insurance; of course, I purchased it for $300. What happens, eventually, is once your floodwall goes across and the back wall is raised, FEMA will come out with another map. We know that's going to happen. When it's going to be, no one knows. What's going to happen, do we now need flood insurance? What is the cost of that? That's what everybody is afraid of now. Insurance is steady rising like everything else and for us to be hit in three or four years, what will be the cost of flood insurance? I want to leave here tonight feeling like the books are not going to be closed on us Monday. We're just getting educated on this situation and maybe it's our fault for not being more involved with the community. I think everyone is going to leave here being much more involved. I ask that you give us a little more time to have our concerns met and maybe for you to have more time to do studies. I think everybody would feel more comfortable if we didn't think Monday was it and the decision was being made. We have been told by the parish president that he was going to have the authority to open and close those gates. I'm the one who asked the gentleman to ask that question because I was too embarrassed to stand and talk in front of you tonight. He said that he was going to have the authority, and now it's the Corps with the state and local sponsors. That scared us, too.

Response 102. Col. Lee: What you said is true; the parish does have the authority unless the state changes that. Currently, every parish that has floodgates or any type of flood control structure in their system has the responsibility to close and open it. There's a lot of coordination that happens with the state. What Julie was saying is the state is what we call our non-federal sponsor. All of the work that is going on through the greater New Orleans area, they're the non-federal sponsor. CPRA, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority in Baton Rouge, they're a non-federal sponsor for this project. We build it, and then we turn it over to the state that has an agreement with Plaquemines Parish. Plaquemines Parish has the responsibility for the operations and maintenance of the floodgates. They will operate those in any event and provide routine maintenance on them if there is a decision made to build them.

Question 103. Rose Jackson, Vice President of the Oakville Community Action Group: I'm so happy to see so many of you here tonight in our position of the floodgates but as far as these meetings are concerned; they have been going on since 2006 or 2007. How I found out about the meeting is I read in the Times Picayune and the attorney that represents the Oakville Community Action Group called me because she saw it in the Times Picayune. The meetings were being held all over New Orleans and Jefferson Parish. How I found out about the first meeting was at Holy Cross College. I've been attending meetings since they first started. It was in the paper as a published notice to everyone. I read it in the Sunday paper. This is the important meeting. The first meeting was held in Plaquemines Parish at the Belle Chasse Auditorium by your local government officials. They should have notified everybody in the parish that this meeting was taking place. You can't blame the Corps of Engineers for the fault of your elected officials. Remember this, we go in those booths. We put these people in office and we need to look twice before we start punching those buttons. As far as Congress is concerned, you put those people up there in Washington. We put them there. They work for us. We don't work for them, they work for us. We are tax payers. We can't blame these people. Congress passes everything on to them. I worked for civil service and the federal government for 27 years, and whatever Congress says, it goes. If it didn't go the way Congress want it there would not be enough proficient funds to pay your salary. That's the way the systems works. They're our voice but they work for Congress, your elected officials. Everyone in here tonight needs to get on your computers and email your congressman and representatives. Let them know that enough is enough! If you don't do that, there's no sense beating up on the Corps of Engineers because they are paid employees of Congress. We are the government, the people, the body is the government, we vote to put them in office. We pay their salary. The wrong decision was made for Oakville after Katrina. The local government officials gave the call and told the Corps of Engineers to put everybody's debris out of Plaquemines Parish, Jefferson Parish, and Orleans Parish, into Oakville. I'm living next door to a 40 foot mound of garbage. Your old deep freezers, sofas, refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, and contaminated carbon are all here. Our local government officials were behind all of this because that decision should not have been made. I don't trust our local government officials. Trust me I don't trust the one that's up there in Baton Rouge. I worked up there with them five and six times a year. I went to Washington, D.C. in 1996 when it went into affect. I worked for Teddy Johnson. I know how it came about. That's the reason I organized Oakville Community Action Group because there are too many wrong things that are going on. We can't just blame these people. Let me tell you something, you all are talking about the floodgate. Guess what, that levee was coming through the middle of Oakville. I fought tooth and

nail, it was better to move that dirt than to move those families. It was going to affect those families. The floodgate, that's nothing, the last meeting held here they said they were going to put a wretched old bridge and divide this community. They were going to put a floodwall and elevate the highway so that when the school buses come out for the children, they would have to go almost around the trailer park to make a u-turn to get these kids on the highway. You blame your local government officials because they're supposed to notify the people and they're not doing it.

Response 103. Jim Taylor: Let me address the issue of notification. Make sure you signed up and after the meeting let me know some ways that we can improve communicating with you. What we do now, is we send out postcards and tape flyers to various stores around town. In some cases we even had people go door-to-door. If we're missing you, I want to know how I can ensure that we get the word to you. If you have ideas on that, I'll show you how to email them. You can talk to me after the meeting because we absolutely want to make sure that everybody knows about these meetings well in advance. Thank you.

Question 104. Anthony Buras, Plaquemines Parish Councilman: Thank you. I'm their local councilman and I have not done a very good job of notifying them. That will change. I want to ask one specific question. I've been to Washington five times since I took office in 2007, to talk with the Corps and our members in Congress. The federal government is like a dog chasing its tale. On the one hand, the Corps of Engineers says Congress has to authorize it. When I go to Congress and talk to them they tell me the Corps didn't tell us we need to authorize it. It's my understanding from the people who live in my district is that Congress authorizes projects based on information received from the Corps. I hope the ranking officers in the Corps will take this to heart. There are two people from the Corps standing up here, tonight, who I have attempted to call. I have left voicemails at your offices. My secretary got in touch with one of you gentleman last week and you told her I understand your boss is looking for me but I haven't had the time to call him back. I've called for two of you, left voicemails at your office with my name, my concern, and question. I think that's appalling. I think that policy needs to change. Thank you.

Response 104. Jim Taylor: After the meeting, tell me who those people are and I'll make sure we address that. Let me give you a quick civics lesson about how a project gets to authorization and construction. The first thing that happens is the community identifies a problem they want to fix. Then they go to the local government who goes to the state government and they go to your members of Congress. Congress then decides if we need to look into this and if it's appropriate. They'll turn to the Corps and say go and complete a reconnaissance study. The Corps goes in, looks at the issues and if there is an issue then it can be solved. Part of that process is meeting with elected officials in the community, individuals, and civic groups. Then it moves to the steps through the government as a feasibility study and the various other things. It has to start at the local level. Now, if somebody calls up the Corps and says, we think we have a problem here. We absolutely are going to sit down and talk to you about it to help you work through that process. That's this process and Congress has established that it works.

Question 105. Pete Stavros: I recommend they take more than a one mile trip south for the reconnaissance trips. Two days ago, we met with the parish president and we talked about both

of these projects together but what he told us was this is not going to be a bad thing. The protection levee goes across here and then you have your federalized levee that's well up to 14-feet here. You are going to be safer. You're going to be safer after that project is complete than you are if you took 16-feet all the way down. Now, I want to know if that is a true statement or not. What we want is to tie in here to a non-federal levee, federalize it and make a 16-foot levee down behind us to protect all of us instead of dividing the parish. If we go 16-feet and then we federalize at 12 to 14, will we be safer or not safer on this side of the levee?

Response 105. Julie Vignes: I'm not sure I understand the question but the answer is, once we complete the project you will be safer. The levees are going to be raised, I'm hearing to approximate elevation five to seven.

Question 106. Pete Stavros: If that is true, that we will be safer on this side of the levee, then let's go to the other alternative that brings it across Hero Canal and tie into Oakville on the safer side of the levee. Save $30 million or whatever it costs to include Oakville. Then we're safer with a 16-foot wall protecting Belle Chasse and a 12 to 14-foot non-federal levee going behind Jesuit Bend or are we safer tying into the existing non-federal levee, making it federal and building the project, tying the two projects together. Wouldn't it be better if I am inside the 100-year protection?

Response 106. Julie Vignes: Both projects are being built and I'm doing the best I can.

Question 107. Pete Stavros: We have heard the authority for these projects come from Congress. If we can successfully, as one voice, lobby Congress, and get them to tie IER 13 with the other existing non-federal levee, then build it into one project and get a timeline that fast track to get it prior to 2014, wouldn't we be better off with 100-year protection down south of Alliance, than a 16-foot, 100-year and a 12 to 14-foot levee behind us?

Response 107. Julie Vignes: If you get more protection, yes, you would be safer. If you're successful to get more authority, yes, you would be safer.

Question 108. Pete Stavros: The reason I came down south of Oakville is the executive order 12-8-98 that talks about taking care of some of your poorer neighborhoods. By law you did comply with that in the IER. You complied with executive order 12-8-98. There are similar settlements south of here that will be negatively affected, and you will violate 12-8-98 because you haven't done a benefit to cost ratio in your IER. I did not see a BCR because it's been waived. Again, these are problems when you're trying to affect this many people, when you're not doing an EIS and you're waiving a BCR.

Response 108. Julie Vignes: When this was authorized in 1996, an EIS, or an environmental assessment, was done that did comply with the environmental justice executive orders as well as all the NEPA compliances. That document is available for public review but an EA was done prior to this being authorized. There will be an EIS for the future project south.

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Question 109. Pete Stavros: NEPA is to protect us and when we waive that away we are not doing a full assessment. We are fast tracking something that needs to be studied. The first call I make is to Charles Melancon and Mary Landrieu. They are all getting letters and they're only being notified now because we are only being notified now.

Response 109. Julie Vignes: There was a chief report done in 1994 which documented the alternatives looked at for everything east of Algiers and an EIS accompanied it. During that process, a benefit to cost ratio was done and it was not waived then. What was waived is, when Congress appropriated money to finish building the system. They didn't require us to go back and re-look at the benefit to cost ratio.

Question 110. Pete Stavros: That is because of faulty information and no recon drive that showed the economic impact because we waived the regional economic development plan. We did not take into account this new evaluation and the new income produced by these people that are out here. We do not want to stop the gate we want to change the project to be tied into federalizing and bringing it up to the 100-year for everybody. Not for some and excluding others.

Response 110. Julie Vignes: What we do here does not change what has already been authorized. That additional authority can be sought. Congress did not require a benefit to cost ratio to be calculated before they gave us the authority to raise the non-federal levee.

Question 111. Pete Stavros: That cannot be good because if they did the benefit to cost ratio and annualized it, they would see when you increase our risk by not giving us 100-year protection, then you are hurting the community.

Response 111. Julie Vignes: I would suggest you work with local and state officials to ask them to look at increasing the level of protection.

Question 112. Pete Stavros: A phone call was made in February, by my wife, because she heard a rumor that this project was in play. She called the Corps, I can give you the names after, and she was told no that project is not in play and if that happened we know how badly we would affect you if it did happen. We would certainly need to compensate you by buying your loss, and I say that is completely wrong. We put it to bed because we figured that the greater good would prevail whenever we get the funding. We understand the civics, Col. Lee signs the decision document and that goes back to Washington. Does that go back to Gen. Van-Antwerp at the Corps of Engineers? Am I right? It does not go back to Congress through the chain of command within the Corps of Engineers. When we talked about going to Washington, we are not talking about, these employees of our representatives. When they say authorization, it is up to us to change the authorization with Congress. That can be done by holding off and doing a full EIS. While we notify our congressmen, they debate it, they figure out how to instead of bailing out my credit card company, they bail out this project here and fund it.

Response 112. Col. Lee: Thank you for your comments and we will take into account the comments here tonight and determine whether we will extend the comment period.

Comment 113. Lynda Ton, Jesuit Bend: I was previously a resident of Empire, LA which I still have a home there worth at least $200 thousand that survived Katrina. There are homes down there, not just shacks. Even if you live in a shack, it's your home. That is your home, that's where you live, and you deserve to be protected just like the person that's in New Orleans. Just like the bankers who sacrificed my grandmother in the 1800's, and it seems like that's what you're doing right now. You're going to sacrifice everybody past Oakville for the benefit of everybody north. That is unconstitutional, and it's just wrong. Number two, for the concerned people, if you have a concern, you should be here tonight and voice your concern. My brother is in Riverbend Nursing Home, he is crippled and blind. Almost 200 residences can't be here tonight. You are sacrificing these residence homes. They're not cattle, they're not pasture land, and they're people who have paid taxes to live here. How dare you sacrifice their home?

Question 114. Rev. Curtis Carroll: I've been a resident since 1995. This is a good meeting because I just met the new neighbor through the meeting. As I was sitting there I wondered about the neighbor down a little further from me, and they asked a question that you didn't answer. She asked, was there a notification in 1996? Was there a notification in 1996? Wait a minute, in 1986 you came up with this right then you made an amendment in 1996, right?

Response 114. Julie Vignes: That's correct. The NEPA process was followed in 1996. Those documents are still available for review.

Question 115. Rev. Rev. Curtis Carroll: So there was notification we just missed that memo. That's not a problem. I just wanted to know if that's protocol for you to send out in a public meeting notice and we missed it. I noticed that there were alternatives on the table over here, and I don't want to waste anybody's time but is there any alternative that will produce this gate passed the heavily populated residential areas that's on the table now?

Response 115. Julie Vignes: The alternatives that we looked at for the Eastern Tie In, is the southernmost alternative that was evaluated.

Question 116. Rev. Rev. Curtis Carroll: Col. you've heard a lot of great comments today. You said it lies in your hand. What suggestion, comment, or thought would make it possible to move this to an area that is less populated? Is there any?

Response 116. Col. Lee: This is the process, and we're listening to your concerns. We'll go back and evaluate your concerns to determine which recommendation is the right way to go. I mean, that's what this is all about.

Question 117. Rev. Rev. Curtis Carroll: Right. You're saying it's not a done deal, right? The FEMA gentleman with insurance, he made a comment that this is going to help us. Everybody in the community of Oakville is protected by that gate. It's the people in Jesuit Bend and further down that's going to be affected. I heard the guy from FEMA say that it's going to be better for us.

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Response 117. Mike Honeycutt: I said I couldn't tell right now because the project's not done. No, you cannot do modeling until a project is done. When you're looking at what is happening here, you're looking at the court telling you that they're going to give you one percent protection. When that one percent protection is given to you, then your flood insurance rates will drop. Right now, nothing will change with your elevations outside that levee protection system. Nothing is going to change there. I can't really say that your flood insurance will go down or up because nothing is going to change but your elevation.

Question 118. Rev. Curtis Carroll: That's fine but the water came over the levee for Katrina, right? My insurance is now, 40 percent higher but there was no elevation change. My insurance is higher.

Response 118. Mike Honeycutt: Your flood insurance from the federal government has not changed. Your flood insurance for your homeowners, I have no control of.

Question 118. Rev. Curtis Carroll: No, my flood insurance went up.

Response 118. Mike Honeycutt: Your flood insurance should not have gone up. If your flood insurance has gone up, give me your address and I'll check into it. I will check into it because your flood insurance has not gone up. Congress sets flood insurance rates and there have not been any changes.

Question 119. Rev. Curtis Carroll: We pay our house note on the escrow, right? Well, we do.

Response 119. Mike Honeycutt: Your flood zones have not changed for Plaquemines Parish.

Question 120. Rev. Curtis Carroll: I talked to the lady at the bank yesterday; she told me that, I have to pay the shortage on my escrow because the flood insurance went up. The storm surges, we're talking about a storm surge, correct? The gate is being put there for a storm surge?

Response 120. Julie Vignes: Right, this is to prevent the storm surge from moving further north, if it's already come over the existing levee or, in the future.

Question 121. Rev. Curtis Carroll: Hypothetically speaking the storm surge we're talking about is coming from Barataria Bay or is it coming this way? Which way are we talking about the storm coming? Worst case scenario, to where the whole Westbank is going to flood anyway? Is that what you're saying? Or, when it comes through the Barataria Bay?

Response 121. Nancy Powell: What she is referring to is the storm surge that has the potential of overtopping this levee and coming this way.

Question 122. Rev. Rev. Curtis Carroll: Right, Barataria Bay which has the potential to inundate the whole Westbank anyway.

Response 122. Nancy Powell: There are some events, yes.

Question 123. Rev. Curtis Carroll: What kind of storm surge are we talking about? Cat 1, cat 2, cat 3, what are we talking about?

Response 123. Nancy Powell: Just to make sure you understand, categories and storm surges are not equal, so don't try to equal storm surges and categories.

Question 124. Rev. Curtis Carroll: Wave height, can we do wave height? It is already predicted or calculated with a cat 1 and the Corps already knows but it's not etched in stone but there is a forecasted storm surge with a cat 1. They said when Katrina hit; Katrina had a cat 4 storm surge. They needed to throw cat 4 out because they didn't know, you're telling me they don't know.

Response 124. Julie Vignes: A hurricane category, cat 1, cat 2, is determined primarily or exclusively by wind speed. When we predict storm surge it's based on many perimeters: size, intensity, projected path, and wind speed of a hurricane. Wind speed does drive waves. It's much more complicated how we determine what the predicted surge will be than to equate it to a category 1, 2, 3.

Question 125. Rev. Curtis Carroll: That's why I asked which way the storm was coming because you do a project based on the geographic location. When you say that there's going to be a wall right here and it's going to protect northern Belle Chasse, we're left to fend for ourselves, right? Then you say you don't know what the tidal surge is; you can't give me how high it's going to be?

Response 125. Nancy Powell: The 10 ½ foot levee along the Hero to Oakville reach is designed based on a storm surge that has a one percent chance of occurrence each year. That number is about, and don't quote me exactly, it's about seven to seven and a half feet of surge.

Question 126. Rev. Curtis Carroll: Okay. So, it's going to top the levee. A 15-foot surge is going to inundate everybody, it don't matter anyway. What's going to happen when you close the gate, what's going to happen to us? Are we going to have some pumping stations put down there that's going to help? What is the contingency plan for us?

Response 126. Nancy Powell: All right. Are you in here or are you down here? You're down in Jesuit Bend.

Question 127. Rev. Curtis Carroll: I'm one mile down. What is on the table for us? Even if the gates pass, are you going to do anything to protect up here. If you do put that gate there, are you going to do anything for the people on the southern side of that gate?

Response 127. Nancy Powell: Yes.

Question 128. Rev. Curtis Carroll: What are you going to do?

Response 128. Nancy Powell: That's Bill Maloz's project and that's the project that the house has underway right now and has nothing to do with the gate.

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Question 130. Kenny Stuart, Jesuit Bend: I also happen to own the landfill. I disagree with the proposed alignment. I think you should simply come straight across and tie in. I understand there'd be rocks you have to go through, but if you didn't have all this big jig-jag coming back to the highway and didn't have to put the gate in, you'll save $50, $60, or $80 million dollars on a project. Is it possible to divert the money allocated for that to go ahead and give the protection behind Jesuit Bend? That money could be spent simultaneously. You wouldn't need to even put the gate in. I'm saying if you could come straight across, tie into what you call existing non-federal levee, then go straight across and stop all this zigzagging. The Corps gives specifically the environmental portion of it; the foot print that you use for the levee is not being impacted any differently. You have direct and indirect wetlands and what they're talking about is people. The width of that levee is impacting the wetlands. How many feet does it take to build the levee. You're not impacted if you're shortening that up; you're not impacting more wetlands. What they do not want to do with this design is have more indirect impact on wetlands. That's what it all boils down to. Is that not correct? Wait a minute, is that not correct? That is the law. It is indirect impact. That is not direct impact.

Response 130. Julie Vignes: Part of the process is we are required to avoid, minimize, compensate, and mitigate for environmental impacts. The process also examines how we affect the human environment.

Question 138. Kenny Stuart: That is an impact because you're building a levee on that property, you're impacting the wetlands. What we're saying is the law is not exactly on indirect impact. If you're not impacting the wetlands, just because there's a levee in front of it and it still flows then you're not impacting it. That's your interpretation.

Response 138. Julie Vignes: One of the reasons why we're not proposing an alignment that goes straight across and stops here is because it is our responsibility to close this system. For us to comply with Congress's intent, not authorization, we have to provide a system that can be certified. This way the residence in that community can participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. I recognize that many of the residences are here tonight. I get that. I'm just asking you to understand. We're working under two separate authorities. We can't re-nig on our responsibility to address our mandate here but we're doing a second thing to address and minimize risk south.

Question 139. Kenny Stuart: If you can prove an economic savings, there's no way no way to change it? Even by showing you're saving a significant amount of money that can be forwarded to the next project, is there no room there?

Response 139. Julie Vignes: I would just say there's a process by which Congress can act if they want to authorize the 100-year protection to the communities south of Oakville.

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Comment 140. Kenny Stuart: Concerning the floodgate, I'm opposed to your proposed 54-foot floodgate. You have several businesses, besides mine, that are on the canal. Our opinion is that the locks are 75 feet wide in the river and we're having commercial traffic come in and out. We have barges that come in up to 100 feet wide. We're losing all of this because you want to put a 56-foot wide gate in when the locks are 75-foot wide. I think it's an unfair economic impact to the individuals who have businesses. The savings of money from a 56-foot gate to a 75-foot gate is not that much. I've been able to supply my letters of objection and I appreciate the time but I want to go on the record tonight that I'm against the 56-foot gate and I'm against the current alignment. Thank you very much for your time.

Question 141. Victoria Taylor: How many times do you have to flood before you're no longer eligible for FEMA assistance or the flood program?

Response 141. Mike Honeycutt: There's no amount.

Question 142. Victoria Taylor: No amount.

Response 142. Mike Honeycutt: The question was about federal assistance. The question did not ask about a non-compliant home that you would have to elevate which is a different question.

Question 143. Victoria Taylor: You'll be able to get flood insurance as many times as you want to pay for it, after you've been flooded umpteen times?

Response 143. Mike Honeycutt: That's correct.

Question 144. Victoria Taylor: How do you think your homeowners insurance is going to be affected by that?

Response 144. Mike Honeycutt: Ma'am, I don't know.

Question 145. Victoria Taylor: Because, they do go together.

Response 145. Mike Honeycutt: Your flood insurance does have an ICC benefit.

Question 146. Unidentified man: How much? What's the limit?

Response 146. Mike Honeycutt: Thirty-thousand.

Question 147. Unidentified man: Thirty-thousand. I have a 3,000 square foot house and they're going to jack this thing up in the air?

Response 147. Mike Honeycutt: There are federal programs that do have funding available. You don't have to get a loan. There are some federal programs for that.

Comment 148. Victoria Taylor: Most of these people have mortgages on their homes, some of them are fortunate enough to have worked all their lives to pay for it, while the rest of us are

enjoying the same thing and following their example. We contribute to the rest of the states around this country with our refineries and our citrus. Why are you going to affect us when we're, living people here, we're paying our taxes and doing what we need to do to help everyone else out? Put the gate at the waterway where the water is, not here, we're there is not any waterfront property, yet.

Comment 149. Unidentified man: I just have a question. I went to a meeting a month ago at the middle school, and Billy was going over some of these things with the maps. After the meeting, he said, they have a desk over there, you all can go see the FEMA reps and they'll take a satellite Google Earth pinpoint of your address. I think it was FEMA, who does the flood maps? I asked when the new flood map is going to be available. The reply was when the gate's built, the new flood maps are going to come out. I said what zone? He said, you're right now, currently A, I believe, you're going to be in an A-E zone. I said, what does that mean? He said, well you're grandfathered in, son, you have nothing to worry about, as long as you keep your insurance, you can pass that on. I said, well that's good. What happens to my neighbor, he's got an empty lot next door to me and they want to build a house, what is my flood elevation going to be? It's going to go to 10 feet. If this floodgate is so good for us, are they going to change this FEMA map, so my neighbor can go that high? If I wanted to go 10 feet high, we'd go to Myrtle Grove or Venice. This is the last place we can go here. Do you realize when this is gone; the rest of this parish's property value is going to diminish. I can have a million dollar house but if somebody is going to give me $100 thousand, that's what its worth. Now, everything north of this, their property has gone up exponentially or whatever. That's going to go up through the roof. My house is worth more than $250,000. You all need to go up on your insurance, that's crazy. They don't have a regular house for $250,000 anymore. Right now, when I get flooded I'm going to have to go to 10-feet, if I want to stay in this parish. I don't know if I do anymore. I love this parish. I love it here. I love my big backyard. I like my neighbors. I love my fishing, I get in my boat and I go right down the road. I'm out there fishing. When I come back home, my kids are all over me what'd you catch, what'd you catch? You are going to make us give up our home equity that we sweat for, that we pay for everyday. I apologize for everybody here. Obviously, we're not intelligence enough to read the paper and because all the people here didn't see this notice. They have people here that can read and write and we didn't see it.

Question 150. Unidentified male: But, are you going to change that A-E zone? Will that change the zones?

Response 150. Mike Honeycutt: Let me tell you about you're A-E zone. You're A, your flood elevation is not going up right now. It doesn't, we don't know how it will go as of yet.

Question 151. Unidentified man: Why did your employee write on there your new flood elevation is going to be 10 feet? He wrote that, where'd he come up with that?

Response 151. Mike Honeycutt: That's a preliminary proposed map right now. You need to look at what the Corps is presenting. You need to look at the projects that Bill has working with Congress. After that is done, these maps will be re-done. That 10 feet may drop to five feet, we don't know but it depends on what those elevations come out to be after the work is complete.

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Question 152. Unidentified man: If we're in such good shape, why is my flood elevation going to go up?

Response 152. Mike Honeycutt: It may not.

Question 153. Unidentified man: You should say when they build this wall that my flood elevation will change. When somebody new comes in and buys a house that flood elevation is going to be where I'm at right now?

Response 153. Mike Honeycutt: That's correct, right now. Yes, it will.

Question 154. Unidentified man: No, not right now. When that gate it built.

Response 154. Mike Honeycutt: No. Plaquemines Parish had the option to use those new maps. What they did at their last council meeting is they chose not to use those maps. They're using the current ABFE maps and they're using the old maps from 1984, I believe. You don't have a 10 foot elevation right now and that's your parish government choosing that, not FEMA.

Question 155. Jesse Meerscheidt: As compared to most of the individuals that are here today, I am transient to this area. I'm military. I understand and appreciate the responsibility and the purpose of the Corps of Engineers, both civilian and military. The issue that I have is the documentation. My notification on this issue arrived just a couple days ago via a flyer set out by the action group in my mailbox. That's how I was notified. I did arrive last summer but that's how I was notified. Now, I am here representing the homeowner because she's currently stationed in South Carolina. She is going to be impacted by this situation. Her home was built after the 1996 act and the 1986 stuff. What about the timeliness of the information on this portion? The problem is when you're having that kind of impact upon the public; the information has to be timelier. That is something that needs to be brought up from within the agency that's conducting the work. I can't go build a new range with information from 1904. You're facing that situation right now. Your information is completely outdated, and that is strictly from my outsider's perspective. I was asked the question about the pumps. Apparently, on the last hurricane, there were problems with those pumps working. Now, I understand, as with the floodgates, those will probably be passed down to the parish to be maintained and operated but if that's the case, and these new pumps are placed both within the levee is there going to be new pumps installed? How are we going to be able to insure that those pumps are maintained? I understand that's a parish issue, what about better pumps? What about a better pumping facility? Anything to that affect.

Response 155. Julie Vignes: This project, the Eastern Tie In project is only going to add one additional pump. The reason the pump is being added is that the local drainage is handled by the local drainage district. The Corps has no role in the operation of a local drainage district. The construction of our project is not going to intercept or block the flow of some of that drainage. We don't want to induce flooding or trap it, so we're going to add a pump to move it over the system to flow south as it did before we built the wall. All the other pump stations are local pump stations.

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Question 156. Jesse Meerscheidt: Okay. That'll move it into the area without levees?

Response 156. Julie Vignes: The same place it's discharging to at this time.

Question 157. Jesse Meerscheidt: Personally, I agree with the enclosure of the landfill for this wall. If that sucker gets hit by a surge, then all of that nasty stuff is going to get everywhere in everybody's business. That makes a lot of sense to me. The issue is there are so many homes and people who have established south of here. People buy homes as a legacy, to pass down to their children, and this is being endangered badly. The perception is that it is not being addressed in a quantifiable way. The information that you all are stressing, you keep saying the 1996 act, the 1996 information. All these studies are archaic because the home that I'm living in and renting was built after Katrina. Many people are in the same boat. Why is there not an update or projection of population growth? I didn't see that in the IER 13. I didn't see anything to that affect. Not saying it wasn't there, I just didn't see it.

Response 157. Gib Owen: It all goes back to the authorities, again. We looked and we updated our information on the alignment that we have authorized. We have a second project that we're investigating in the economics and everything will be looked at as part of that project.

Question 158. Jesse Meerscheidt: If you're authorized at one point to send your five year old to school and your five year old is now 15, you're not going to put him in the same grade level that you're authorized to put him in when he's five. You're facing that situation here. You've got hundreds of people that are down south that are not included in the initial report.

Response 158. Gib Owen: That's what we're trying to tell you all tonight. Congress recognized that and that's why they authorized a second project.

Question 159. Jesse Meerscheidt: Is there going to be a potential impact between the finalization of the first project and the finalization of the second project?

Response 159. Gib Owen: We don't believe so.

Question 160. Jesse Meerscheidt: Okay. Well, I know the insurance companies, being money makers that they are, they're going to see that new wall and they're going to go, these guys out here aren't as protected. Then they're going to want to raise rates.

Response 160. Gib Owen: This wall only comes into play if this area is flooded. That wall plays no part in any of this unless this area floods. Only if the non-federal system or the federal system, after it's built, overtops does this wall even come into play. It has no impact, whatsoever.

Question 161. Jesse Meerscheidt: The house that I'm living in is about 200 feet from the canal. Being that close to that drainage canal with the non-federal levee that's back there, would you be interested in it? I have no stake as a property owner but I've got personal property. I have real property, my family. That's a concern that I have. I send my family packing when a hurricane comes, I have to ride in a five-ton to take my gear and get out of here. In the mean time, as many other people, my livelihood and my goods stay home.

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Response 161. Jim Taylor: And we are going to consider those. Those are important.

Question 162. Jesse Meerscheidt: Okay. Will Congress listen to you when you tell them that the information used to get this act in place is outdated and it is no longer valid?

Response 162. Jim Taylor: Yes, that will be in the report. We've got some people coming back and right behind you, so if you want to come back around again.

Comment 163. Vaughn Boudreaux: You keep talking about authorization and what you're hearing from us is it doesn't make sense. Our parish president told us that this state is getting somewhere around $11 billion for levees, two billion here in Plaquemines Parish but that money has to be spent and our projects have to be finished by 2011. Can you finish by 2011? You're building it because you can get it done and it's authorized. It doesn't make sense to do it and keep going forward just because you can. It's not the right thing to do. It's not going to help them and it's not going to help us. It's not going to help anybody. Like the gentleman said before, if the Barataria Basin overflows and comes in, that isn't stopping anything. You put a 16 foot levee from there all the way down, it might slow it down. That is being built just to be built because you have to spend the money by 2011. You can't build that other levee until 2013, that's what you just told us. That's why you're doing it because that's authorized, you don't have to go pick on nobody to get them to approve it. You're going to go do it because you can make your deadline and can spend the money. It's about spending the money on time. That's all I have to say.

Question 164. Donald Landry: Will the delay of the deadline of May 4th impact any physical work that is currently being done by the Corps on this project?

Response 164. Julie Vignes: There's ongoing work, for us to move forward to construction, we have to complete the environmental process.

Question 165. Donald Landry: I heard you waived that.

Response 165. Julie Vignes: No, we abbreviated it. That was all done to try to get protection in place as soon as possible. Yes, there are certain activities that cannot begin. We cannot acquire property, we cannot start construction but we're very sensitive to waiting until the time is right, when we've received all the comments we need to receive to make a decision. There is an urgency to move forward, against, a willingness to keep the comment period open.

Question 166. Donald Landry: I guess my question really was from a physical point. The current work the Corps is doing, will that be impacted if we get this May 4th deadline postponed?

Response 166. Julie Vignes: The answer is, yes. Until we get to that milestone certain things can't begin or end.

Question 167. Donald Landry: So, will it impact the end date?

Response 167. Julie Vignes: Yes.

Question 168. Donald Landry: So, you've got a critical path that if you don't start on May 5th, you can't complete by 2011?

Response 168. Julie Vignes: Sir, I can tell you that the goal is to finish. The answer is, yes. We have lots of tasks that have to be completed in this critical path.

Question 169. Donald Landry: Everybody in this room appreciates all the work that the Corps is trying to do in a limited amount of time. Don't get us wrong, there are many heightened personalities right now but we really appreciate your efforts. How can we get these two projects tied together and alleviate this final floodgate across the highway? It's not the increase in the levee heights or anything else, it's this floodgate. Our fear is once you put this floodgate across the road, Congress may never fund the project. We're funding to federalize the levees all the way to Alliance? Federalize?

Response 169. Julie Vignes: Yes. Yes.

Question 170. Donald Landry: Okay. So, that's been approved?

Response 170. Julie Vignes: Yes.

Question 171. Donald Landry: Is the money approved, to fund that?

Response 171. Julie Vignes: The property to construct this project or the non-federal levee has not taken place, yet, and that cannot take place until the environmental processes is complete.

Question 172. Donald Landry: Somebody can stop it, is what you're saying? In other words, this man said, it's approved, it's a done deal, we're going to get federal levees down to Alliance, is that what you just said?

Response 172a. Julie Vignes: What is said is the project, Bill Maloz talked about, they're still looking at alternatives but the money has been appropriated. There has been $670 something million funded to expend on raising those non-federal levees and in putting them into the federal system. That's done. Where we're at is choosing the right alignment to move forward into construction but the funding is there.

Response 172b. Gib Owen: One second, I would like to address the environmental question. We are working on an alternative arrangement which is very new, it's the first time the Corps of Engineers every one in place or ever asked for one. We are not shortcutting the environmental compliant process. It is full and complete. What we were allowed to do under the normal process was an EIS from this point to this point. To get all those pieces arranged, designed, and everything to the point we had finished it, it would've taken years. What we got authority to do is to break it into pieces, and we did that. We broke this Westbank piece into nine pieces, and we moved forward but we did not shorten the environmental compliance process. No. It's under an EIS. It's under a separate authority and a separate study. That project has been underway for two years. We have not been able to finish it because we can't get 16 million yards of borrow to it.

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Question 174. Nadine Parker, Jesuit Bend: My family and I moved here back in November 2008. We had no idea there was a floodgate going up. When I got home from my trip on Sunday and I saw that this floodgate was taking place, I was a bit concerned. When I hear the people that have stepped up today as well as the information that I read on the internet from the Corps of Engineers and others, I'm very scared. I'm scared for the safety of my family, property, and of the economic impact. My question is to you, sir, it is my understanding that you have to sign off on this floodgate. Is that correct, on this project? What can we do? I understand the authorization, I understand the process. I've been in the government. I've worked for the government. I understand that more than anybody because I was in the process business. That's what I did I wrote this process, not the ones you're working on. I understand the processes and I understand the importance of following processes. What can I do to get you to go back to Congress and say, maybe this isn't such a great idea? What other comments do you need? I cannot put together all this, do research and say here it is on a platform. I think that it's obvious this is not necessarily the best thing for Plaquemines Parish. What can I do to convince you to at least stand up and say maybe we should re-think this thing?

Response 177. Col. Lee: I think earlier, somebody covered it but I'll reinforce it. The most efficient way for you to address this is through your local and state representatives, your local parish, and then the comments that you provided tonight for us to consider when we're making a decision. It's not a done deal. I'm the one that makes the decision; I haven't seen a piece of paper on this project that asks me to approve it. That's what I want people to understand and this is a process. I've heard comments here tonight that people want to extend the process, and I will consider those and make a determination on whether we need to extend the public comment process. My commitment is to evaluate and that's why I came tonight because I knew it was important. I don't come to all the public meetings but I knew this was an important public meeting and that's why I'm here.

Question 178. Nadine Parker: We're definitely working through our government. I think everyone here are probably going to be flooding emails and letters or whatever the case to our politicians. The point is this is important to Plaquemines Parish, this is important to the people who live here, and we should do something about his.

Response 178. Col. Lee: I hear that loud and clear and it's very effective in everybody's comments tonight.

Question 179. Nadine Parker: What is your opinion after hearing this tonight?

Response 179. Col. Lee: Well, I mean, I've go to evaluate all the comments. I've heard some of them and they're compelling comments for us to look at this a little more. I'm considering those.

Question 180. Jason Kaliszeske: First, I'm a recent new homeowner in Jesuit Bend and I can promise you when driving around looking for houses, if I would've driven past a 17 foot floodwall, or however high it's going to be passed Captain Larry's, I would've made a u-turn and gone back north. There is definitely an economic impact on myself and my family. My other comment was on that pump that you say is not very large. Where exactly is that pumping to? Is

there an existing canal there or is it pumping into the back of the canal and then will be pumped out by our Ollie pump station?

Response 180. Ted Carr: The current location of the pump station is right about here. Also a 48 inch drainage ditch goes into the canal that runs along Mr. Perez's property.

Question 181. Jason Kaliszeske: The discharge of this pump is going to go into the canal and is going to have to be pumped out with the Ollie pump station?

Response 181. Ted Carr: That drainage is going to the Ollie Canal, just like it currently does.

Question 182. Jason Kaliszeske: I understand that but looking at the map, it's common sense that it probably does drain that way, now. Instead of the Hero Canal, is there another possible choice of where the water could drain? Instead of hurting the Ollie pump station that's already hurting now. Why even hurt it more by putting more water in the system to be pumped out twice? Pump out once on the other side of that 56 foot levee.

Response 182. Ted Carr: But it is right now.

Comment 183. Alan Martin, Jesuit Bend: I am against the floodgate; I do want that stated for the record. What you're leaving us with while we're out fighting for our homes is worthless real estate as of July 1, 2004, there's a disclosure act. I can't sell my property without telling them this. I will be stuck with a piece of property that no one will want to buy. Technically, if this goes through, you're telling me that what I have is what I have. In 1996, had I been aware of any of this, I would've never built in Jesuit Bend. If I wanted to live down the road, I would've moved down the road. I don't appreciate in IRE 13 being referred to as lower Plaquemines. I'm not considered lower Plaquemines. There's a big difference. You have to live here to understand it. My address is Belle Chasse. Thank you.

Question 184. Alan Green, Oakville Community Action Group president: My question is to the Corps of Engineers, now, we know that what took place from the previous administration, what can we do, what can our parish do, right now, to put the lower part of the parish within the 100-year protection plan?

Response 184. Julie Vignes: I think we spoke a little bit to it earlier but I'll state it again because I know folks have joined us. Contact your local government and your state government as well as your congressional representation to ask them to look into giving additional authority to provide 100-year protection to those areas.

Question 185. Alan Green: In other words, you're saying we still have a possibility that having this levee going to the lower part of the Parish?

Response 185. Julie Vignes: I'm saying we're trying to move forward with the two projects that we described tonight but beyond that, there's a process of additional authority. Things that can be done to make more protection be authorized and constructed in the future are working with your local, state and congressional delegation.

Question 186. Alan Green: Okay. So, if we talk to our parish president, we still need congressmen? We got to go further?

Response 186. Julie Vignes: Right. I didn't make that clear. Congress would have to authorize against the Corps' permission to put a 100-year protection in all the communities south of Oakville that we've heard about tonight. The process isn't that it comes from the people. The people have the right to request, through their Congressional delegation. Now, the Corps' responsibility, when asked by Congress to assess that inquiry, is to produce a report. Even for us to study the feasibility of doing a 100-year project, Congress has to tell us to do that. I know we all have Congressional representation; the way all these things happen is people work with Congress to get it authorized or to ask the Corps to write reports to inform them on the science and the engineering. I understand there are lots of folks that live in that area.

Question 187. Donald Landry: Okay. My first comment is to say that we should be included in consideration of the Westbank because when the original authorization was made in 1986 in Jesuit Bend. I moved down here about that time from Belle Chasse. I moved down here to the country. They did have a lot of cattle pastures and a lot of orange groves, in fact, the property I'm on now were once an orange grove. When you got your marching orders authorization on this project there were just pastures but now there's over 600 homes down here. I don't know why we can't amend or include this in that objective.

Response 187. Ted Carr: About the numbers and homes, and other property and things like that, that's what we're here for, to get your input.

Question 188. Donald Landry: There are 263 houses between Oakville and Ollie Canal.

Response 188. Col. Lee: We encourage you to leave that with us and we'd be glad to put that in the records.

Question 189. Donald Landry: So, my comment would be to include all of the residence because of the increased population growth since the 1996.

Response 189. Jim Taylor: I can guarantee you, we got that.

Comment 190. Donald Landry: Before the floodgate would be built, raise the levees and all. Do a true EIS study of the impact on the residence and properties? I counted houses, there's business down there and the evaluation of that land is phenomenal.

Question 191. Murray Armstrong: First, a lot of what everyone is alluding to the population increase. I'm from Buras; my family doesn't live in Buras anymore, either by choice from years ago after Camille. They got their teeth kicked in a couple years ago by Katrina and then by all of the insurance stuff that came after that. If this project process is going to be slowed down, if these comments don't get wrapped up by May 4th, how much time are they going to give you to look at all of our feedback so this thing can go forward on May 5th? Are they going to give you your cup of morning coffee and say, we need your answer, what's the deal?

Response 191. Col. Lee: It's all based on a number of factors. One is how many comments there are. Some of the IER's we've got have had very minimal comments. I'm projecting they'll be quite a few comments here. They have to take all the comments and we have to evaluate them and the project team has to make a recommendation to me. There is nothing we're doing that will jeopardize the public input and evaluation of the comments. May 4th is a marker right now, as of today, the public comment period ends on May 4th. It's only a date. That doesn't mean I make a decision the next morning with a cup of coffee, that's not what that date's about.

Question 192. Murray Armstrong: Well, that being said, I've heard at least 10 people stand up here tonight and ask for more time to consider including Jesuit Bend all the way past Alliance, and even consideration to federalize levees further down into the parish into this same project. Instead of putting up a wall and saying it ends here. If this 100-year storm comes again and hits us in this period, we're sorry it happened in 2012; the project is to be completed in 2014. The last thing I have is this pump station they're going to put back out over here. It's going to pump down to us and it's got to come through the Ollie pump station which is not a large pump station. It probably is stressed enough during a storm to handle rain, much less to handle the storm water from Jesuit Bend. Now we've got to deal with this bilge pump up here that's going to pump everything though this canal. Did anyone do a study on the capacity of the Ollie pump station to see what it handles now, what its load is, and what the affects of this additional load would be on it because I don't think in this additional tie in, this non-federal project, that there's anything in it for an additional pump station. I haven't seen anything. Is there?

Response 192. Julie Vignes: We're still working on the design of the pump station that we're proposing. Right now, this area drains through a ditch, south.

Question 193. Murray Armstrong: On the outside of a levee.

Response 193. Julie Vignes: Right. The water drains this direction south. When we build this levee, we cut off that water's ability to flow south. We don't want the water to start staking up behind the levee system.

Question 194. Murray Armstrong: No, ma'am, it's not. It is going to the outside of the existing non-federal levee. When you put a pump station on the corner of where that non-existing, non-federal levee meets where this current project is coming, you're going to pump it into Jesuit Bend.

Response 194. Julie Vignes: It's being discharged here.

Question 195. Murray Armstrong: No, like I'm saying. Your new pump station is pumping it behind my house.

Response 195. Julie Vignes: Let me say this we'll take that comment into consideration and we will look at that but the information we have tells us so the water is already flowing in an open ditch in that direction, and we're going to just pump it over what we build. Based on your

comment tonight, we're going to look back at that, if that's not that case, we're obligated to make adjustments to address that concern.

Comment 196. Murray Armstrong: Well, if you're obligated to make adjustments to address that, maybe you want to add a little time in to make adjustments to this whole project and incorporate it all together.

Comment 197. Charlene Martin, Belle Chasse: I'd like to applaud this lady for getting her action done. I don't agree with this. Maybe we need to put a 16 foot wall of people across the highway, get a little national coverage then someone will listen and not smile at me saying they're listening to me. How can this go to another meeting on the 4th and then all of the sudden on the 5th you're going to make a decision? Who's listening to what we're saying? We need somebody to see what we're saying. Yeah, let's stop the seafood, let's stop the refinery, 16 feet of people, arrest us all, and then maybe somebody will listen.

Question 198. Unidentified man: What's the email address of all these concerned citizens with the Corps?

Response 198. Julie Vignes: Yeah, we do have a slide that shows the ways you can [contact us].

Question 199. Unidentified man: Do you have a handout?

Response 199. Julie Vignes: Yeah.

Question 200. Unidentified man: A lot of people don't have paper and pencils.

Response 200. Julie Vignes: We do have handouts in the back, yes.

Question 201. Unidentified man: Make sure you get a handout. The email address is on the handout?

Response 201. Julie Vignes: There's a Web site, there's a mailing address, some phone numbers, and an email address. We have handouts with those in the back.

Comment 202. Jean Guerrera: You need to take all your Corps and Congress people and put yourselves in our shoes. If somebody was coming in your subdivision, in your community, to put a floodgate up that we think is ridiculous, how would you all feel? Could you all sleep? I just want to say, if you all can sleep at night after what you all have been doing to us, I want to thank you for this because a lot of people have lost sleep, a lot of people are sick. People have stopped doing things right now to get involved with this. It's really upsetting to us and we would thank you to look into it a lot more than what you are doing. A class action lawsuit will stop you. If we can't get any other help, we'll have to do it that way. Or, drape ourselves down across the roads.

Comment 203. Jamie Stavros, Jesuit Bend: I moved there about the Katrina timeframe, my husband could have retired from the military and we didn't. We were told to come back, be a part of the community, and fight to bring everything back up. This wall is going to be tearing us

back down. I'm just learning about the Corps, through education now, but you are a military member, right? I've never known the military trying to break-up communities. I thought you're suppose to fight for America, fight for communities, and bring us together, not try to tear us apart. I hope you see the passion here tonight from everybody in this room. I respect people in the military and I hope you respect us, too as a group, a community, and as Plaquemines Parish. We want to stay together and we want you to help us stay together because this is what we're about right here. Please go further than one mile in the future to see what is there because we have a big vivacious community here that you can see tonight. I don't know how it got ignored. I don't have any more words but please fight for us. That is your job as a military member. You guys are supposed to be looking out after us.

Comment 204. Julie Olsen, Belle Chasse: I own property in Jesuit Bend. I appreciate that everyone here had a rough job having to face us. I know you had your talking points, they started to sound like repeated rhetoric to us, and we were starting to tune you out because we felt like you were tuning us out and not giving us any direct answers. I wanted to go on the record that I am also against the floodgate. I believe Jesuit Bend to Conoco Phillips should be included in the protected area, it should be protected. I want to second Mr. Landry's recommendation of the proposal for the deadline to be extended beyond May 4th, and along with that extension to postpone the meeting that is scheduled at the auditorium this Monday to allow time for us to get our elected representatives to that meeting. If we have the meeting on Monday, and we don't have the representatives there because he's already tried to get them, that really won't help too much in that aspect. We understand we need those people to help fight for us. I wanted to let you know my opinion on it.

Comment 205. Stanley Gaudet: I'm very concerned about the people north of the floodgate. I don't think there was a study done. You're putting a pump, a small pump station and when we have a major storm and a major rain event you could create a lot more flooding, especially here in Oakville and north of the floodgate. Have you done a study on the impact that it would have on a major rain event of 14 inches, when we have a southeast wind blowing the head pressure against a small pump or have you considered if you are going to do it putting a pump to pump the water in the river? You could create more problems north of the floodgate as well as south of the floodgate. The floodgate is not a good idea. We don't want the floodgate. I don't think it will impact the community in a positive way and I think you all need to consider that.

Comment 206. Robin and Matt Zuvich's presentation

We're trying to educate ourselves on IER 13 and this pertains to the environment, section 3.1, in particular we want you to consider our families and children. We have our school in this area, a nursing home, and many of the people from Oakville other parts of Belle Chasse are there.

This is what we have to do. United we stand, divided we fall. If the wall comes up, people on the south side, we fall. We don't have a choice; we have to try to read the IER 13. This is your proposal which everybody has seen; you had it posted on the internet.

I want you all to look at this section. This is what really caught my eye when I was trying to learn about this in such a short time. Section 3.1.2.2, Oakville. This is what they say about us. It says, currently the FEMA trailer park has been decommissioned, however, the landowner is allowing recreational vehicles to use this site. This is what they say about us, adjacent areas to the south of Oakville are comprised of pasture lands and scattered citrus groves. Adjacent has three meanings and can be interpreted many different ways. It could be the local area, near a certain point. I would like you to see, the local area near this point. There are various subdivisions, businesses and churches. Plaquemines Parish's citrus industry, agricultural nurseries, and Riverbend Nursing Rehab Home, we are so proud of that home because we don't have to send our elders out of our community. We fought for that for many years. Plaquemines Parish's only nursing home. Belle Chasse's middle school, Conoco Phillips refinery, the refinery is only seven miles south of here.

This is where we start right below Oakville. This is residential areas the study doesn't cover and the people who live on Highway 23. I just took random.

This is going up just a little further. Yes.

To show you people what is there.

This is all the developed areas.

This will all be flooded if that gate goes up. The first major hurricane we have.

These homes range from $350 thousand to over one million. This is more subdivisions. This is all these subdivisions that have been developed since 1989, when it began. This is our middle school. There's our nursing home, its right by the river, it's a beautiful place. There are oak trees, and our old folks can sit outside and feel the breeze. It's a little piece of heaven on earth. This is residential areas, citrus industry.

One thing about this, you all say it's scattered orange grove. This is a major industry of Plaquemines Parish.

The oranges are the best navels in the world. Tomatoes are coming soon. The Creole tomatoes, you can't beat those Creole tomatoes.

Robin Zuvich: Petroleum industry, Conoco Phillips refinery which services and employs many people in our Parish. That's where we would recommend the levee going.

This is right across from my house.

We're struggling.

It's a place where our children can run and have fun and we feel safe in our neighborhoods. No crime. It's the best place in the world to live and we don't want to give it up.

The following notes were recorded by USACE contractors. These notes are intended to provide an overview of the presentations and public questions and comments, and are not intended to provide a complete or verbatim account of the meeting. This account is not intended to be a legal document.

That's a local little business right across the street from my subdivision.

There are a lot of churches on the other end, too, that are going to be affected by this.

There's our firehouse. That's one of the nurseries. That's the nursing home. You see the beautiful setting? You can't even see it real well, it's oak trees and it's by the river.

This is one of our local churches. It may be a historical site, I don't know, I'll have to check into that. This is a new church being built. Cemeteries which have been there a while, which is another site to check out.

We know this is your public meeting but we're here to tell you that there's more to this meeting than what you have seen in the past.

We won't stop here. If our local officials don't help you, we'll go to Congress, we'll go to Washington. We'll form a group, raise money, and do whatever we have to do but we're hoping that you can guide us in this. We want your help. We don't want to be enemies; we want you to help us.

You look at this slide, if we get this, if we don't stop this IER 13, this is what we're going to look like. This is Jesuit Bend after post-Katrina.

We didn't get flooded but see how close it was. Some did.

Now, this is showing that we don't want that.

That's Buras, where, and that's where I originally lived, so I've grown up in this area. My parents lost in Betsy, they lost in Camille.

This house, right here, had water 8 foot in the top section. What you're seeing right now is probably five foot deep.

You're probably thinking, well, why would they stay in this area? This is our home.

A 20 foot tidal surge, I don't care what you do, is going to hurt us. By having a 12 foot levee on this side and 16-foot here that is definitely going to hurt us.

Thank you for allowing us to do this, and we can have a copy for you if you would like. We appreciate it.

One more comment. The only people who can help us are our congressmen. I don't have faith in our local government, I don't have any faith, I'm sorry.

Comment 207. Pete Stavros: For those who have not seen the Web site, www.plaquemineslevee.com, will be the way we pass out information about the next meeting. I encourage everybody, if we're going to leave now, to make sure you're here Monday.

Comment 208. Jim Taylor: Yeah, don't leave just yet because we're going to give you the contact information, if you don't have it. It's on the flyers in the back, the e-mail, phone numbers, etc. If you don't find it there, we're going to get the screen up but just come up and see me and I'll make sure you get that.

Comment 209. Ted Carr: There are handouts in the back of the room. Feel free to grab one on your way out if you need to get one, and the information is on the Web site if you need to access that.

Comment 210. Jim Taylor: All right. Everybody, we enjoyed your company. You've got a lot of information to digest. We all look forward to seeing you Monday at the auditorium unless there's some further development about a postponement. Good luck. God bless. Thank you much.

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Greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System

Westbank and Vicinity Projects

Individual Environmental Report 13
Hero Canal and Eastern Tie In

Mr. Ted Carr, Project Manager
Mr. Bill Maloz, Project Manager
St. Paul's Benevolent Association Hall
Apr. 29, 2009

Why we are here tonight

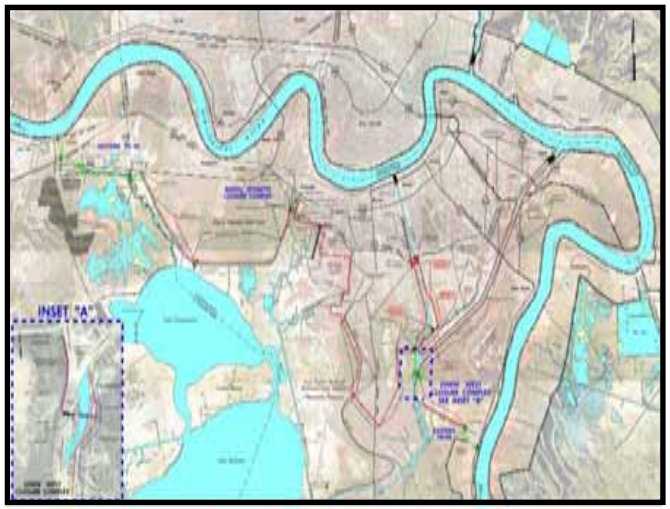
- To discuss the proposed action that will reduce risk to communities from Belle Chasse to Oakville and other areas of the Westbank. The project will connect the Westbank and Vicinity portion of the Greater New Orleans Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System to the Mississippi River levee in upper Plaquemines Parish

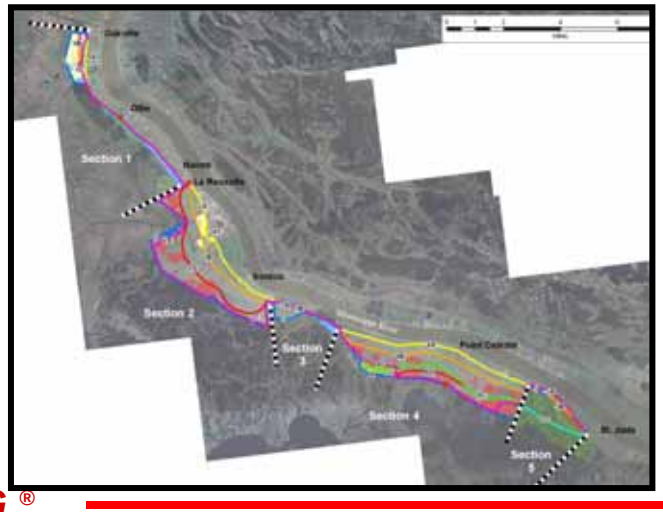
- To provide a brief status of the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee project

Congressional Authority

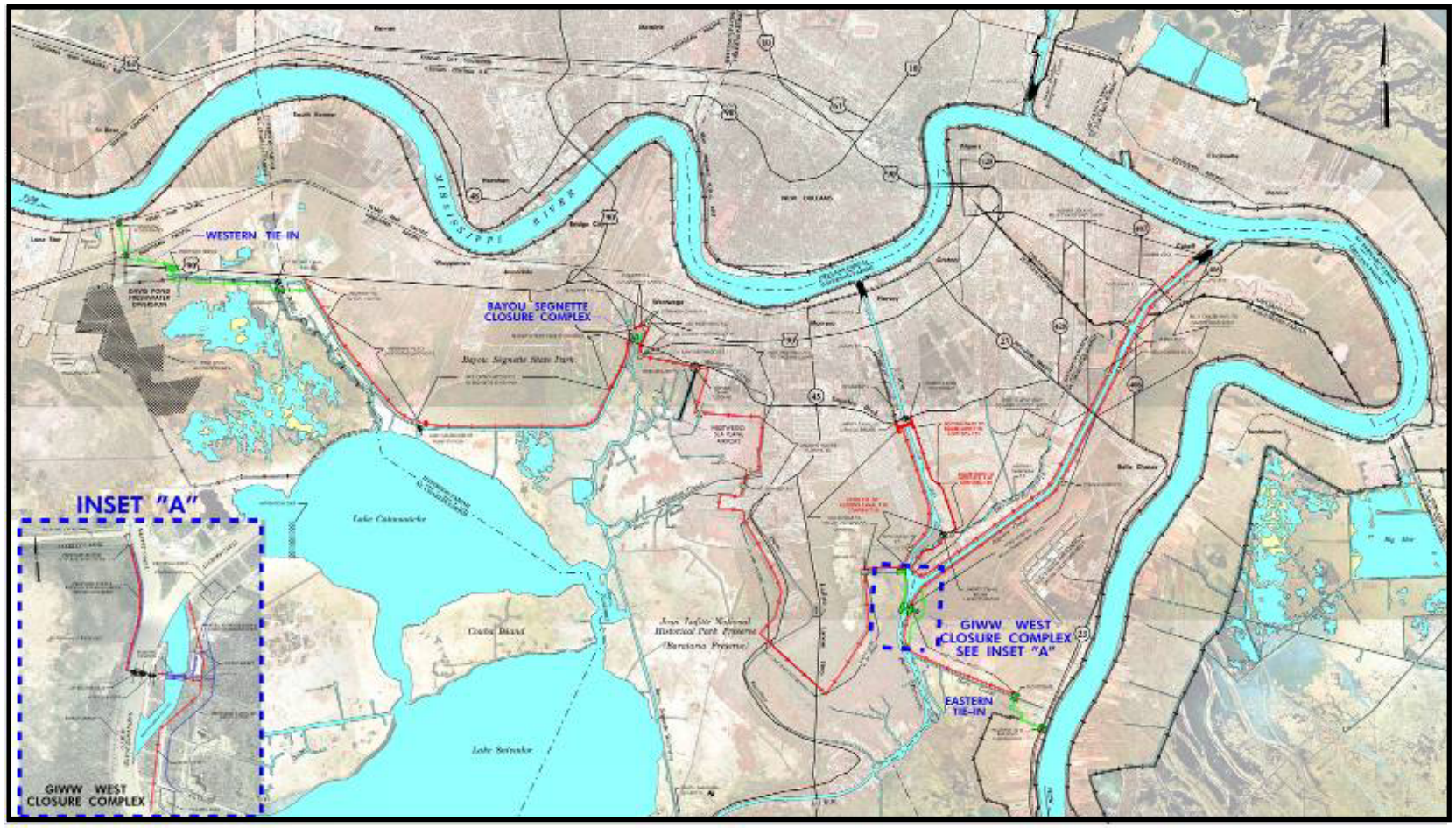
Plaquemines Parish risk reduction features are authorized by separate Congressional authorities

- **1996 Water Resources and Development Act amended the previously authorized West Bank project to provide 'hurricane protection" to areas east of the Algiers Canal extending from Belle Chasse to and including Oakville, La in Plaquemines Parish**
- **2006 Congress authorized the New Orleans to Venice (Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levees) to reduce risk from Oakville to two miles north of St. Jude, LA**





Westbank and Vicinity Risk Reduction



Current or approved alignments

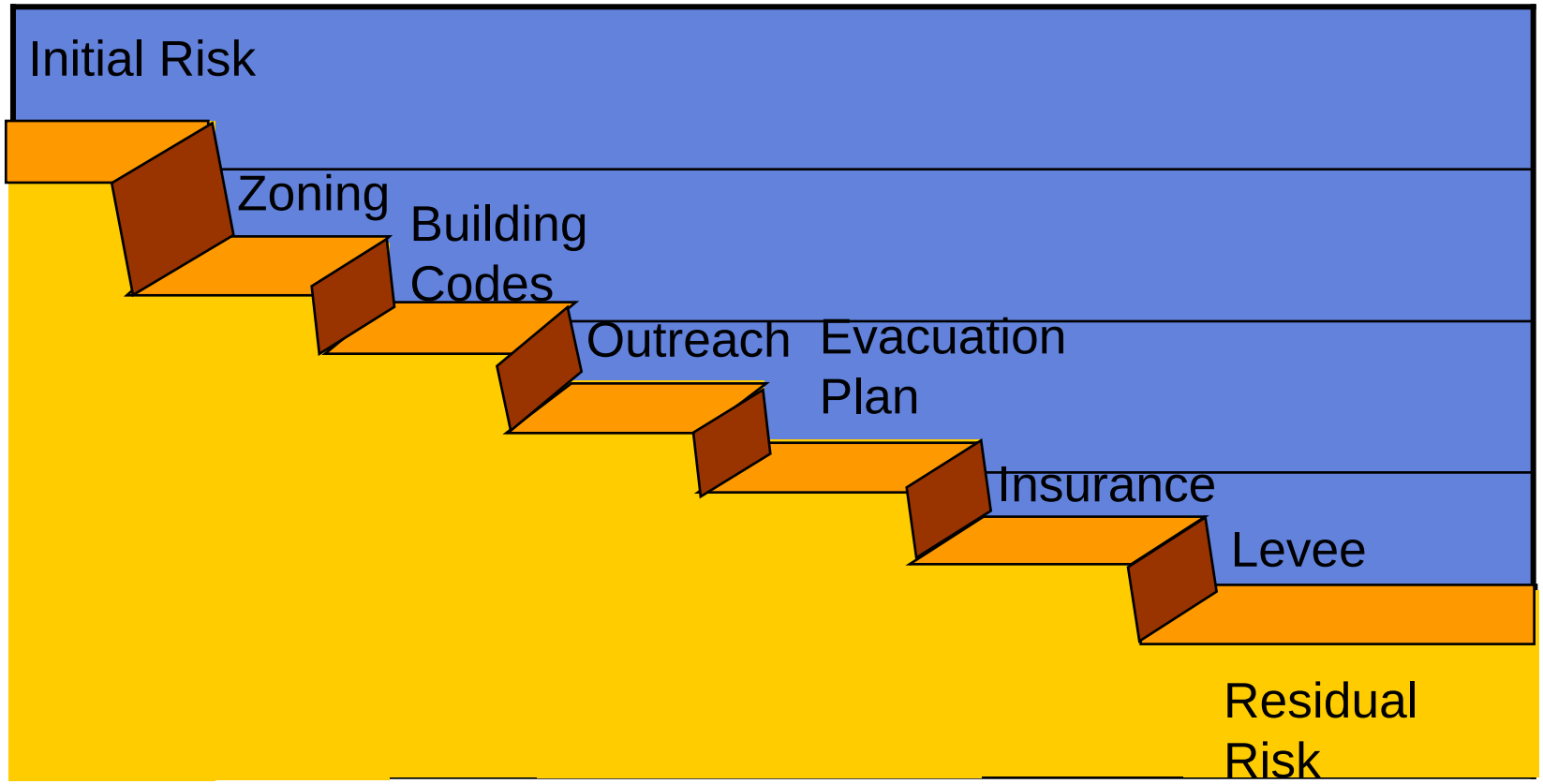
Proposed or recommended alignments

National Environmental Policy Act: NEPA

- Required of all major federal actions
- Analyze potential impacts to the human and natural environment and investigate reasonable alternatives
- Public Involvement is KEY! We want to hear from you!
- Goal: more informed decision making through public involvement
- Analysis documented in Individual Environmental Reports (IER)

Buying Down Risk

All stakeholders contribute to reducing risk!



Risk Reduction Tools (Cumulative)

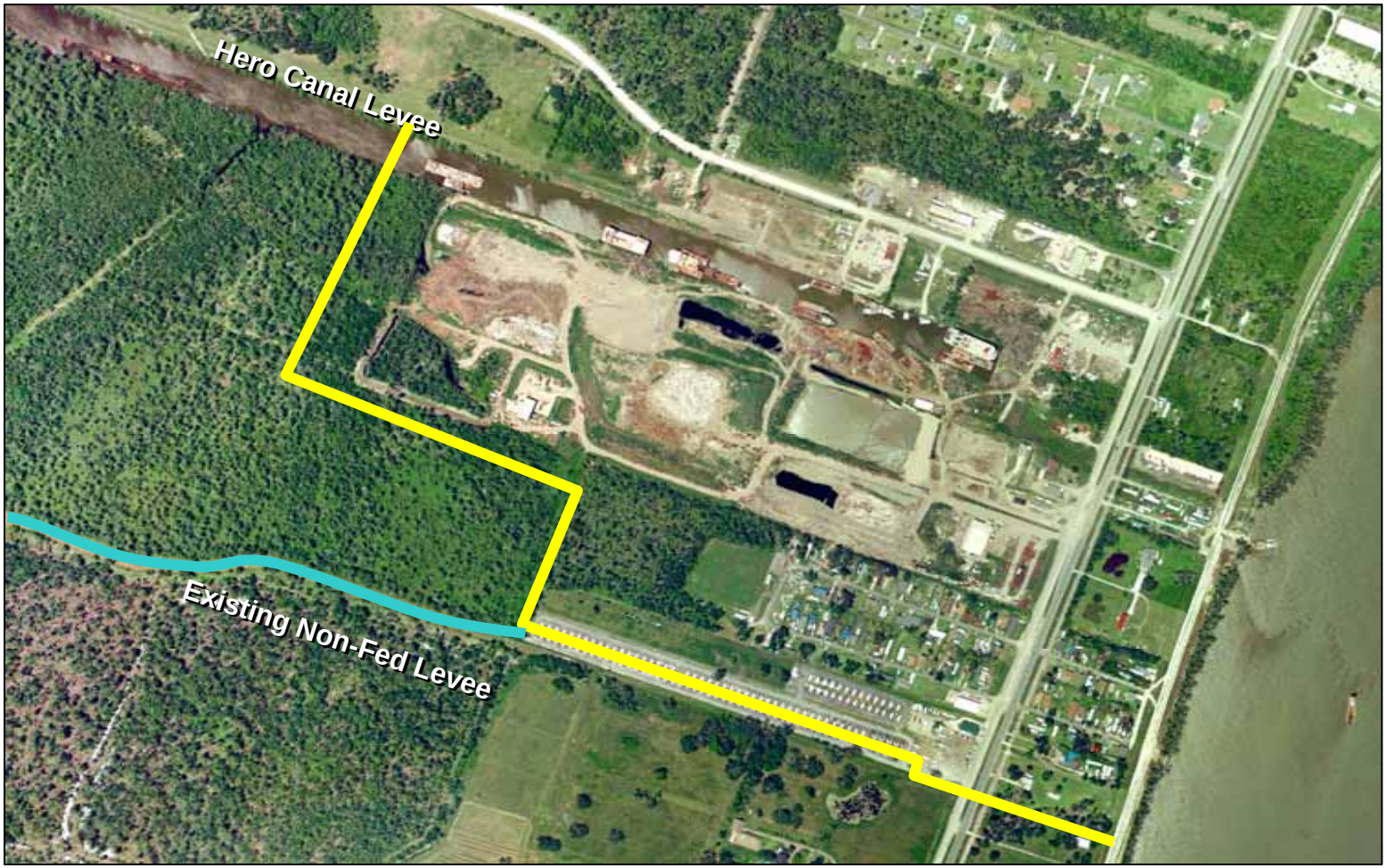
Hero Canal and Eastern Tie In (IER 13)

Proposed Action:

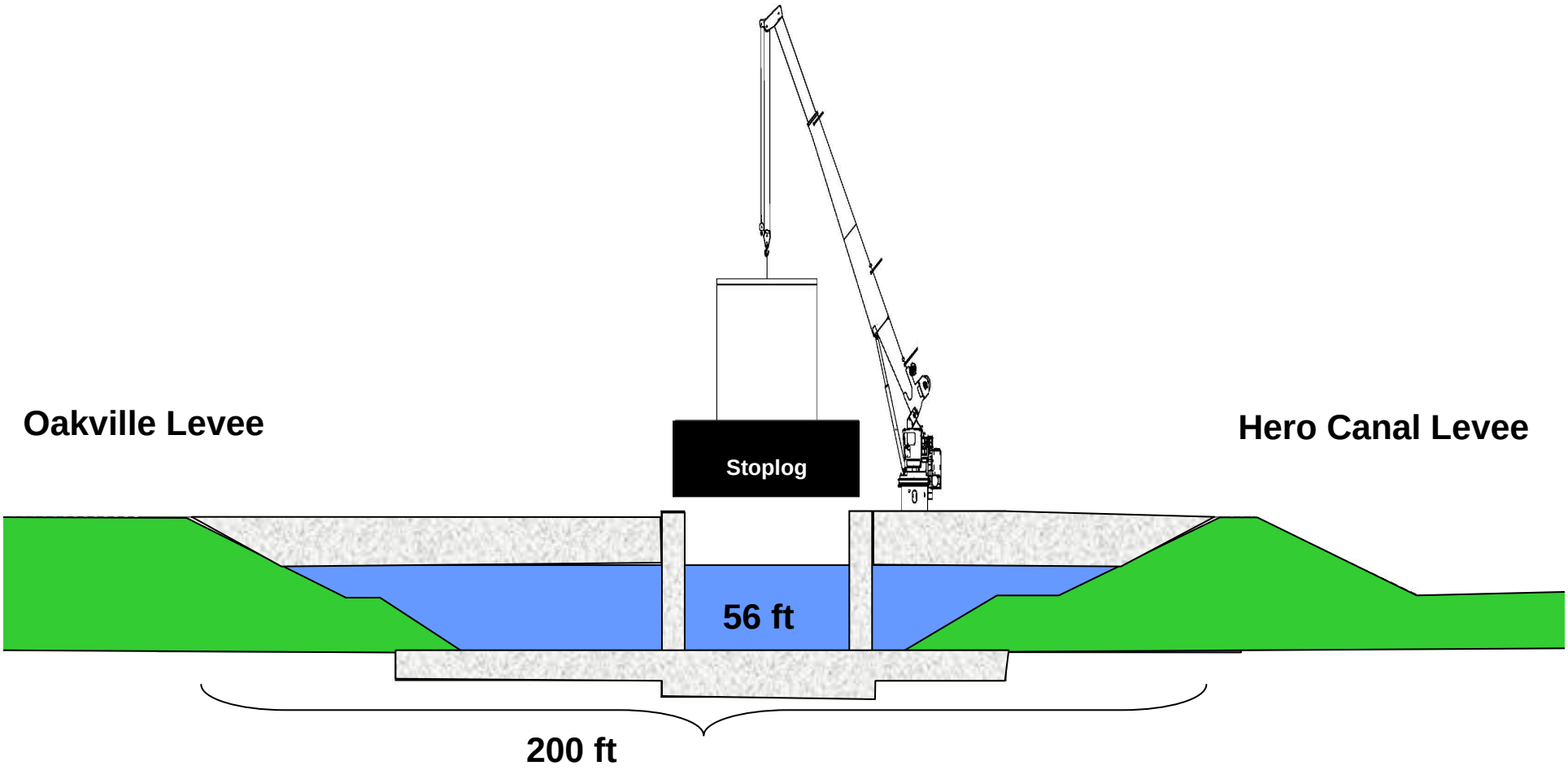
- Raise/expand existing Hero Canal Levee to design elevation 10.5 ft
- Construct the Eastern Tie In levee to design elevation 10.5 ft
- Connect the GIWW West Closure Complex to the Mississippi River levee

Eastern Tie In

Proposed Action: Alternative 1



Hero Canal Stoplog Gate
(cross section)



Hero Canal Stoplog Gate

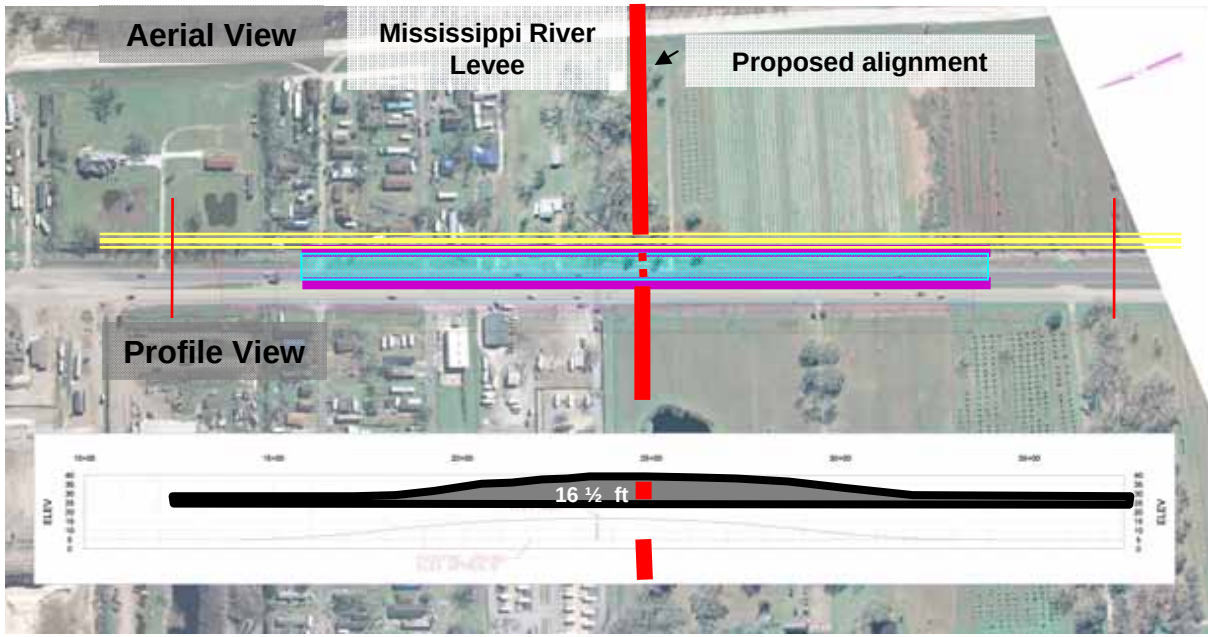
- Proposed action includes construction of a stoplog gate across Hero Canal
- Two to three metal stoplogs would be used to close the Hero Canal
- Stoplogs would be placed 72-hours before a tropical event

The stoplog concept proposed at the Hero Canal is similar to the gate used to de-water the Industrial Canal Lock in New Orleans

Changes to Previously Described Alternative

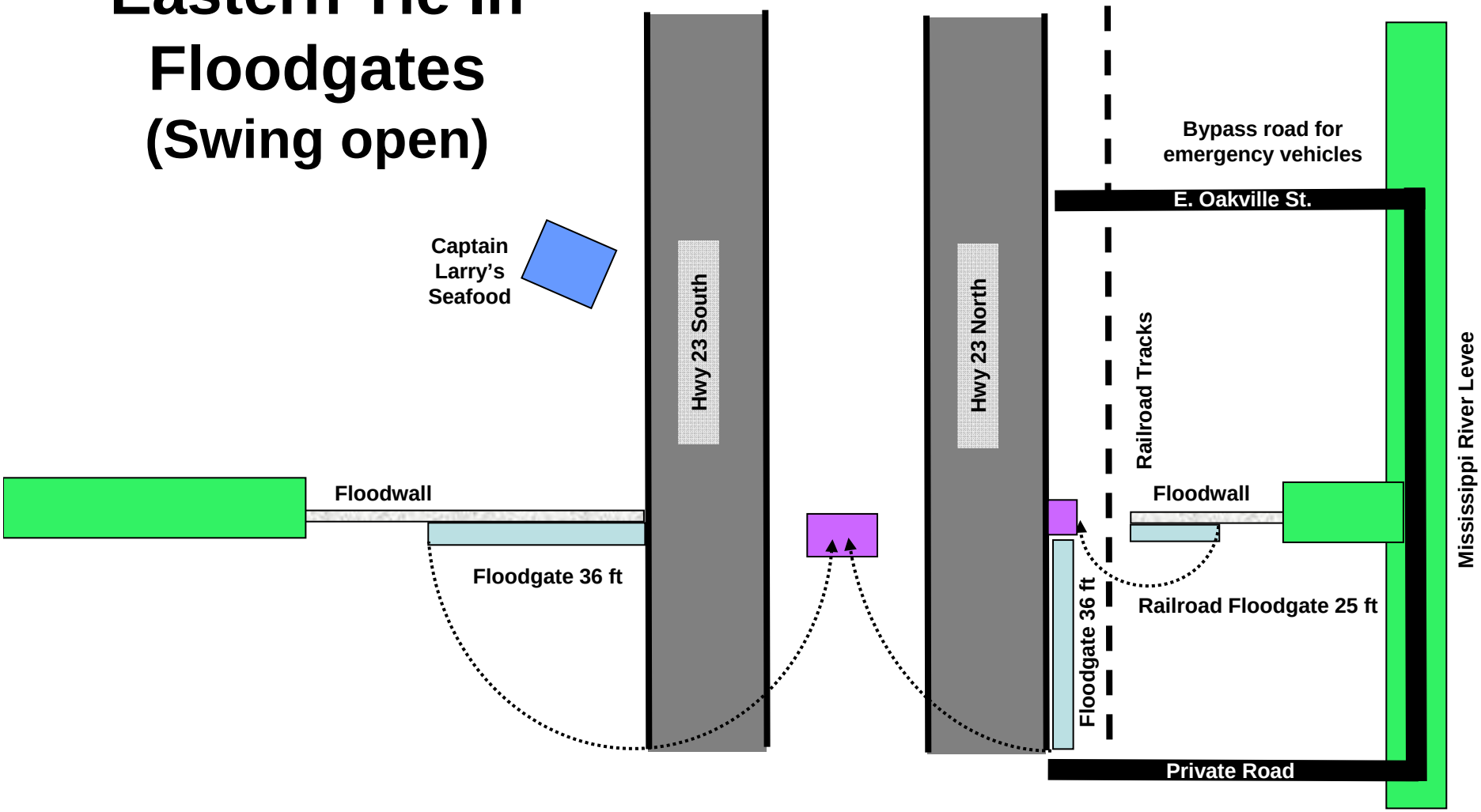
Proposed Action: Alternative 1

- Feedback offered at a Jan. 8, 2009 public meeting opposed construction of a bridge over the Hwy 23 floodwall
- Project team consulted with Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and Plaquemines Parish to develop the proposed action of floodgates



The project team originally recommended an elevated bridge over the floodwall

Eastern Tie In Floodgates (Swing open)



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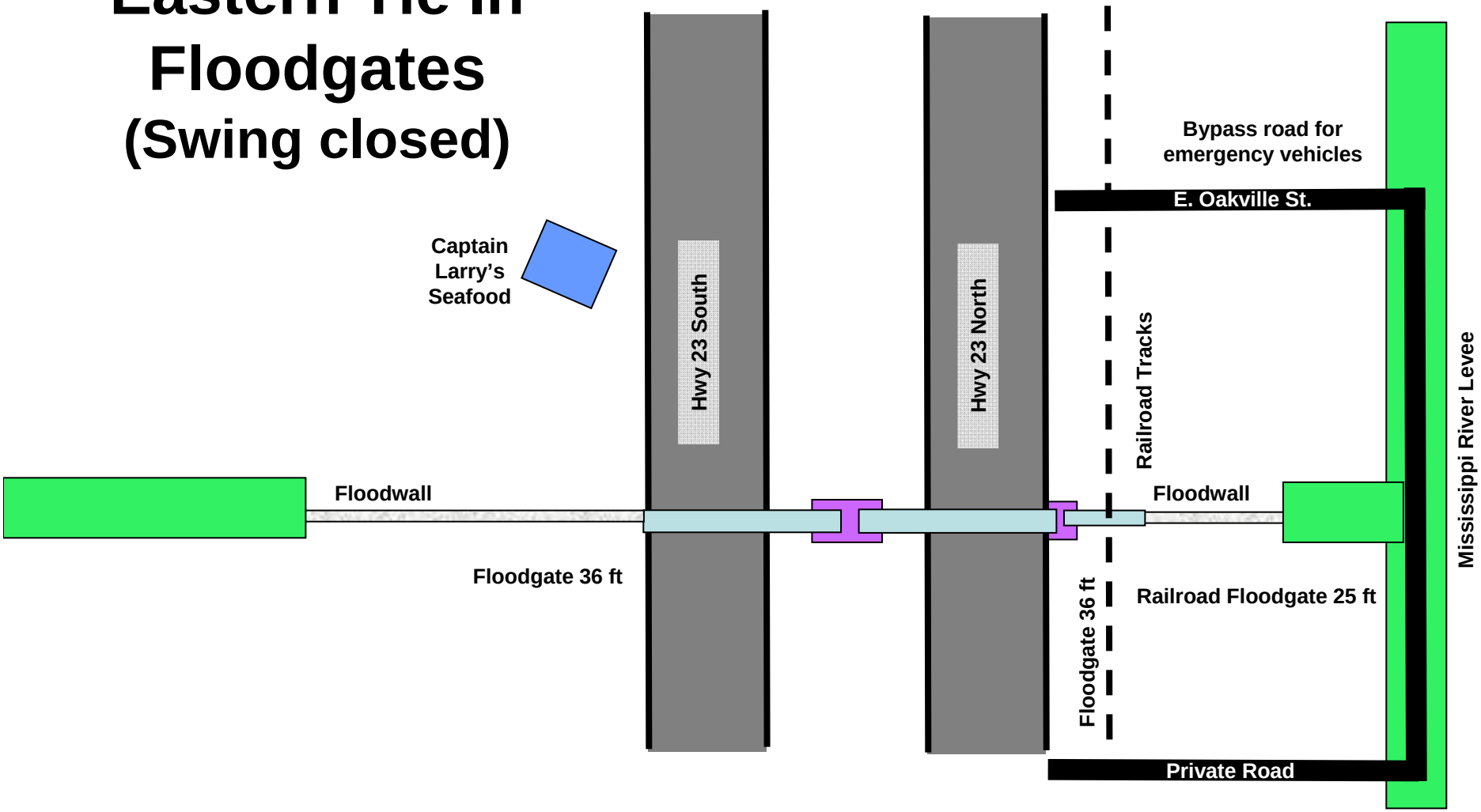
Eastern Tie In Floodgates (Swing closed)



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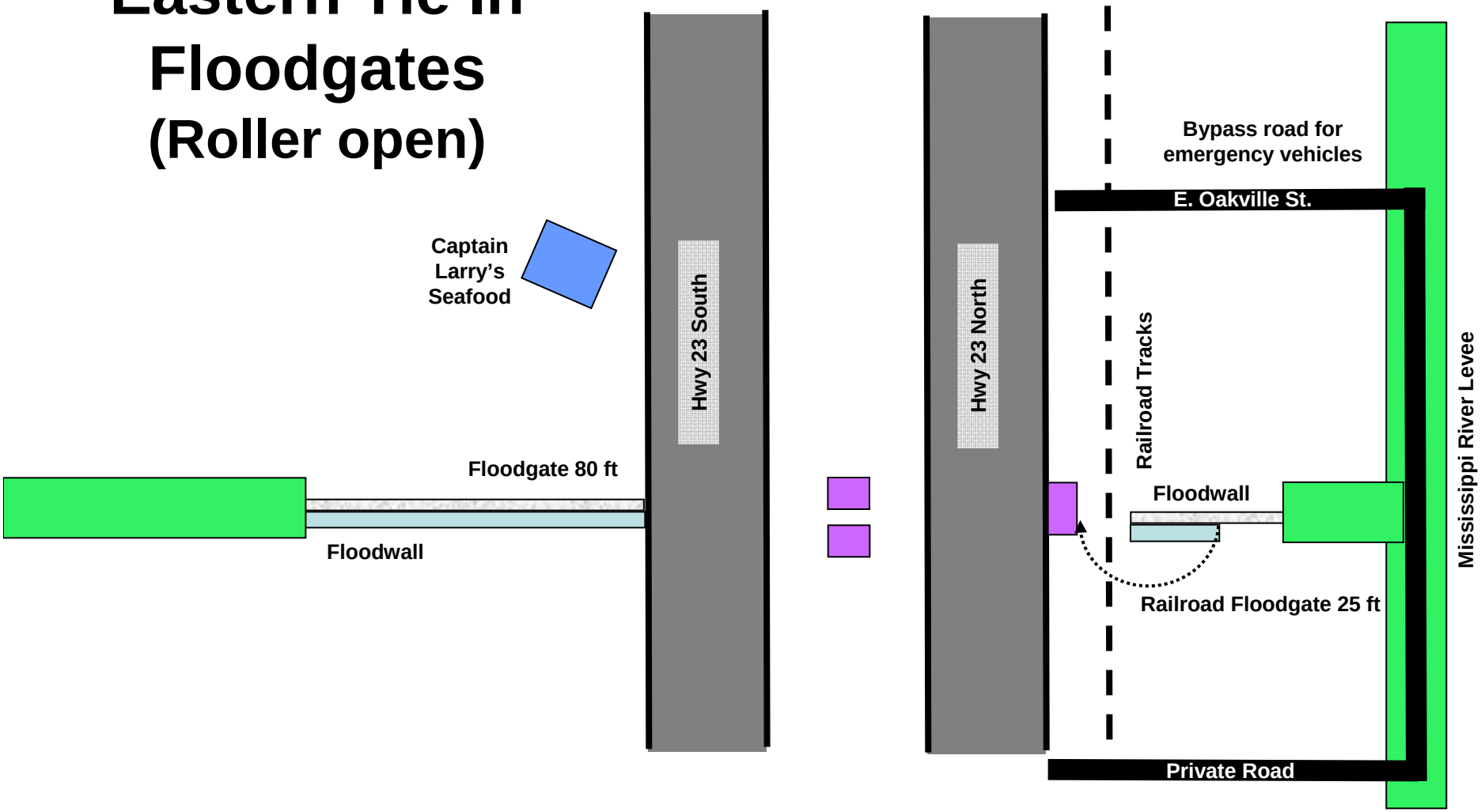
Eastern Tie In Floodgates (Roller open)



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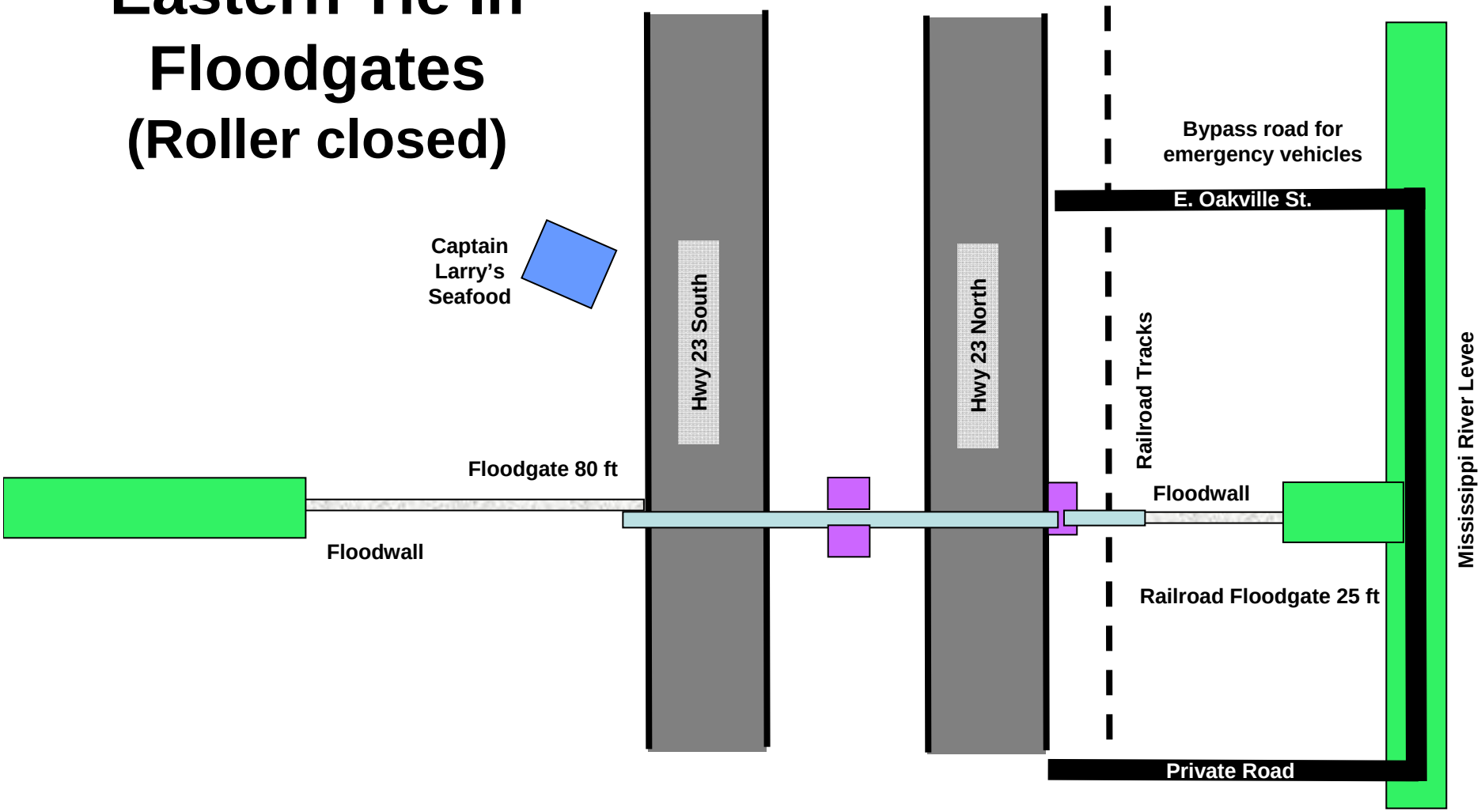
Eastern Tie In Floodgates (Roller closed)



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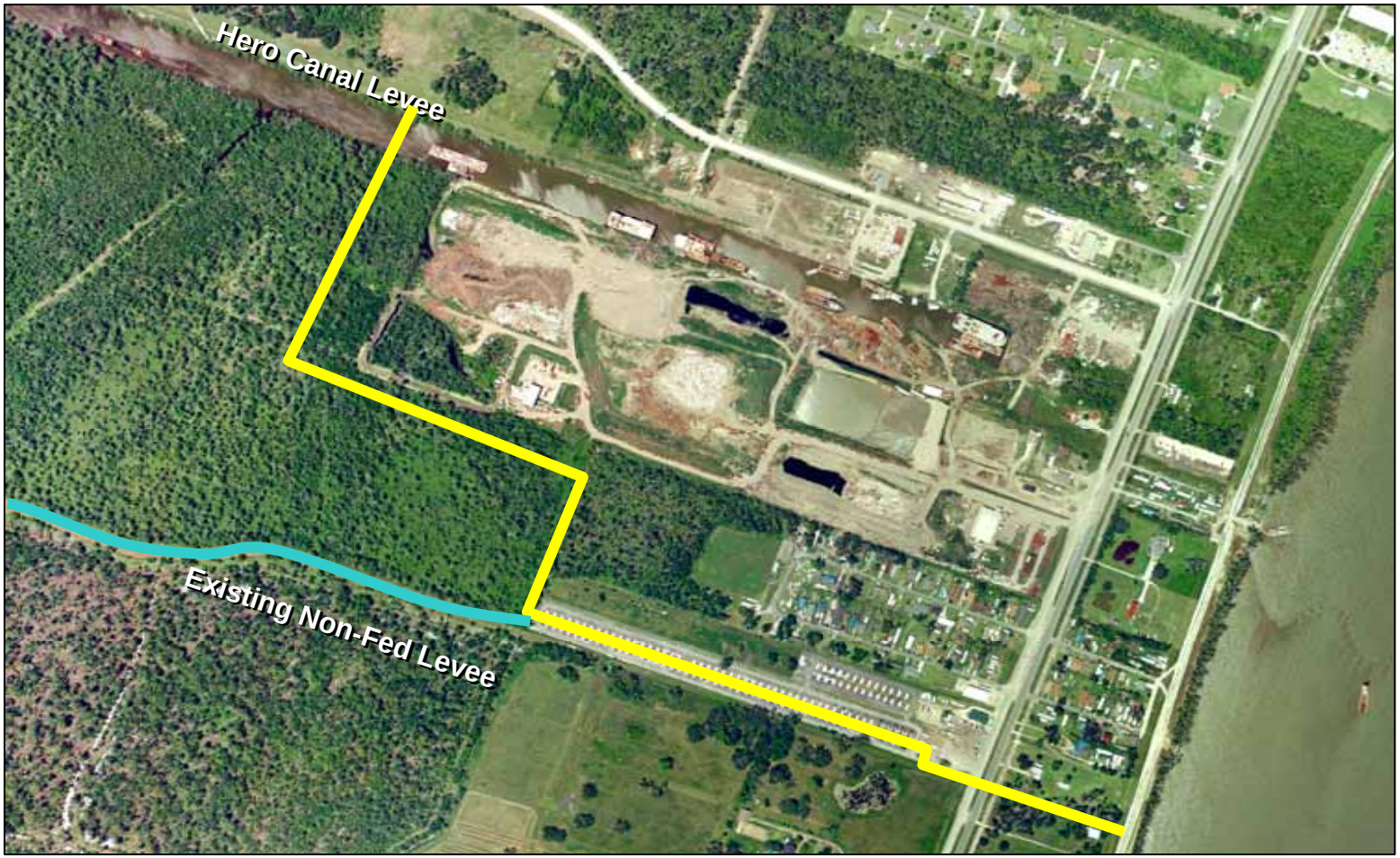
Connection to Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Project



Status of Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Project

Multiple alignments under investigation using criteria, including:

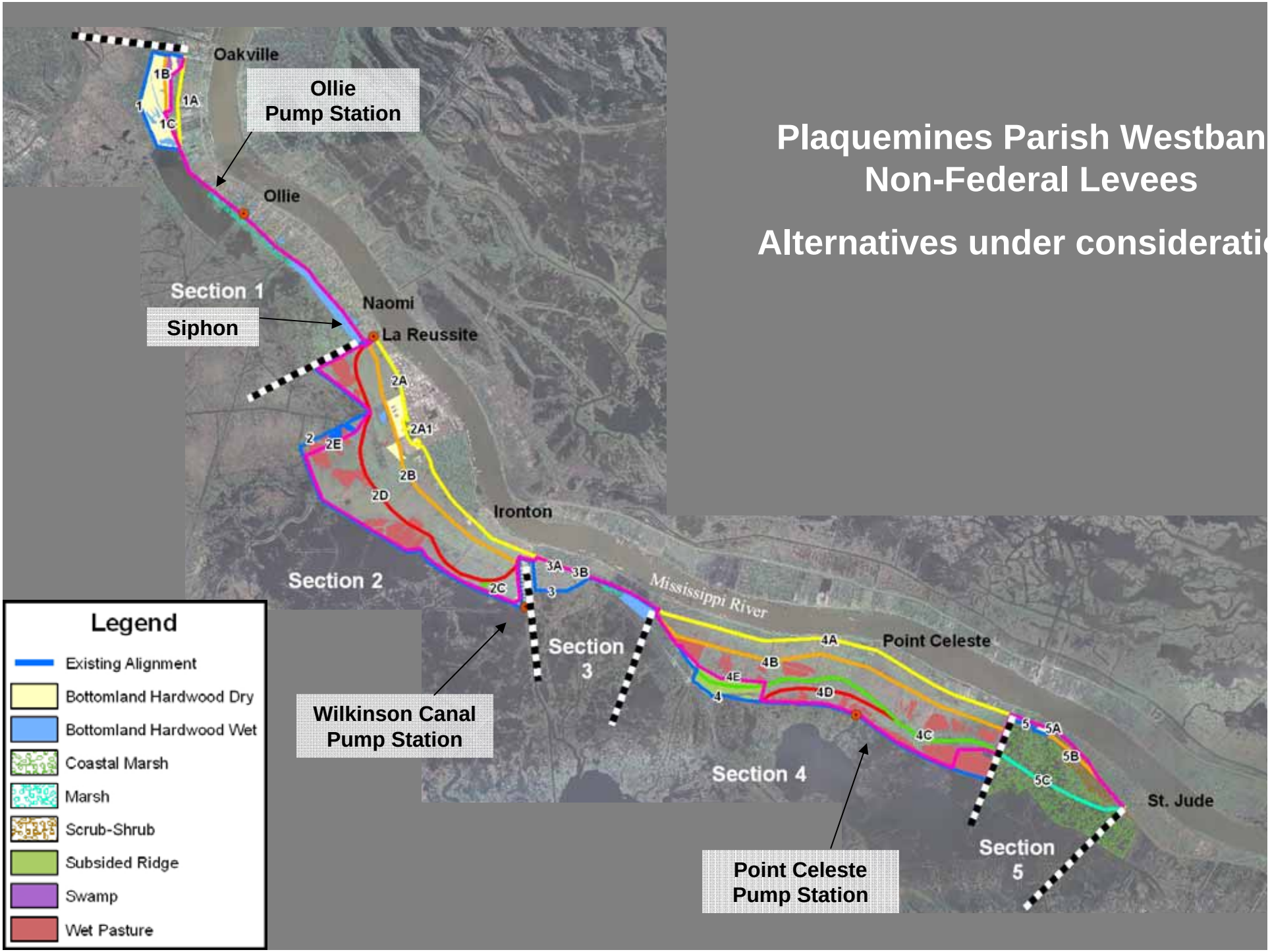
- Risk reduction for people and infrastructure
- Public feedback
- Protection of Highway 23
- Cost considerations
- Avoidance of wetlands
- Avoidance of cultural resources

Authorization limits the potential alternatives

- **"**Repair or modification**"** of existing alignment

Plaquemines Parish Westban
Non-Federal Levees

Alternatives under consideratio



Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Project Path Ahead

- **Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement in progress**
- **Record of Decision (ROD)**
- **Project Partnering Agreement**
- **Acquisition of Right of Way**
- **Construction Begins**
- **Construction Complete in 2013**

Hydrologic Impacts to lower Plaquemines Parish

- **Eastern Tie In floodgates reduce storm surge and associated wave risk to Belle Chasse area**

- **West Bank and Vicinity project, including the Eastern Tie In floodgate, would not create additional flood risk to lower Plaquemines Parish when the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levees are completed**

Upcoming Public Meetings

- **May 4, 2009**
  - Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee project and Eastern Tie In at Belle Chasse Auditorium
- **May 11, 2009**
  - St. Bernard risk reduction at St. Bernard Parish Council Chambers
- **May 13, 2009**
  - Bonnet Carre Spillway Masterplan Update at La Maison Magnolia
- **May 17, 2009**
  - Bonnet Carre Spillway Masterplan Update at Bonnet Carre Spillway Pavilion
- **May 19, 2009**
  - St. Tammany Parish at Slidell Auditorium

IERs Currently Available for Public Review

- **IER 13 –** Hero Canal Levee and Eastern Terminus
  - **Released for public review and comment: Apr. 3, 2009**
  - **Comment period extended to: May 4, 2009**
- **IER 10 – Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity, Chalmette Loop Levee**
  - **Released for public review and comment: Apr. 13, 2009**
  - **Comment period extended to: May 12, 2009**
- **IER 6 – Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity, New Orleans Citrus Lakefront Levee**
  - **Released for Public Review and Comment: Apr. 24, 2009**
  - **Public Comment Period closes: May 23, 2009**

Note - copies available at www.nolaenvironmental.gov or by request

Opportunities for Public Input

- Regular public meetings throughout New Orleans metro area
- Comments may be submitted at: www.nolaenvironmental.gov

Questions and comments regarding Greater New Orleans Storm Damage Risk Reduction System projects should be addressed to:

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