



Public Meeting Summary

Eastern Tie-In and Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Public Workshop Saturday, Sept. 19, 2009

Location	Belle Chasse High School 8346 Highway 23 Belle Chasse, LA 70037-2694
Time	Resource Room: 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Opening remarks: 9:00 a.m. Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Presentation: 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. 30-minute recurring break out sessions: 9:30 – 12:00 p.m.
Attendees	Approx 350
Format	Resource Room Presentations and discussion five rooms
Handouts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borrow handout Sept. 18, 2009 • 2009 Status map • Corps Approval Process • PPNFL Fact Sheet
Facilitator	PPNFL, Nancy Allen Swing Gate, Amanda Jones Roller Gate, Karen Collins Invisible Floodwall, Rachel Rodi Ramp, Mike Adams

Ken Holder: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you very much for coming today. I'm Ken Holder; I'm the Public Affairs Officer for the Corps of Engineers, the district here in New Orleans. I want to let you know that we have put together a program that I hope is educational for all and we hope that we'll get your participation back and be able to listen to everything that you have to say for us.

Before we get underway I know that we have Mr. David Dossen [Phonetic], Senator Vitter's State Director, with us, sir, if you could just stand and be recognized. In the back. Do we have any other elected officials that made it in that I've missed that would like to stand and be recognized? I see President Nungesser just coming in.

Great. Thank you very much. Well, thanks everyone, again, for coming out today.

We have quite a few people with us from the Corps and I'm going to run down who all is here today so we have a rough idea. Just an idea of how we're going to work everything today, they'll be five workshops, one of the workshops will be right in here and that will be the Plaquemines Parish Non-federal Levee. With that one, that will only be presented one time, it will be 90 minutes long, and it will be presented by Colonel Wehr from Vicksburg and his team. The other sessions, are about the various ways to close off Highway 23. They'll be the roller gate, the swing gate, the ramp, and the invisible floodwall. We're running those six times so that you have an opportunity to go to each one of the sessions and be able to see what the four options are. Just a quick introduction on who we have here and I'll bring up Colonel Lee in a minute. We also have with us Colonel Robert Sinkler, Commander of the Hurricane Protection Office, if you could just raise your hand and let us know you're here. Tom Holden, our Deputy; Tom Podany the Chief of Protection and Restoration Office; Julie Vignes, Julie's our Senior

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Project Manager. Julie LeBlanc is the Senior Project Manager for the Plaquemines Parish Non-Federal Levee Project, Thank you very much. Bill Maloz is not with us today.

When we get ready to breakout into breakout sessions I'm going to point to who the four folks are that are running the breakout sessions, and when I do those, when I breakout those four sessions, those will be who you follow to the rooms. Now, to get you to the breakout rooms you'll see signage and people with these badges on or red badges, they'll be right out here and they'll take you out. The four breakout rooms that are on the various options are down the hall and then down the hall to the right but you will have people out there to help you direct. There's also the Resource Room which is our overflow area and it's also, if you have any additional questions to where you'd like to get a little more information than we were able to present in any of these sessions, we have experts in there that will be able to answer those questions as well. So, ladies and gentlemen, I will announce those other four people who are going to do those sessions, the other five actually, that are going to do those sessions in just a second.

But, before we get underway, President Nungesser, would you like to kick us off, sir.

President Nungesser: Thank you. I want to thank everybody for coming out, and I want to thank you for your efforts up to this part, it's the reason we've gotten the attention to where we are today. There's been a lot of talk about why there's four options here today and none of them include 100-year protection for LaReussitte. This week we worked through some pretty intense meetings with the Corps. The Corps has given us, for the first time since we've been working on this, two options to add 100-year protection to the LaReussitte. It's going to take some work on our part, it's going to take cooperation on the Corps part but they're committed to help us do that. And, it's not just talk. As of yesterday, some of the landowners that we need to do the testing for the water base for 100-year have already been asked to give the right-of-way to their land so they can add that extra testing under the current testing they're doing for the Federal Levee, the water base to get to 100-year. They're also looking at several options that they will add the 100-year in some areas where it is environmentally better maybe to go with some other type of construction. They have agreed to do that. Mary Landrieu, Senator Landrieu, Senator Vitter, their staff was in the meetings with us, there was a letter passed out from Senator Landrieu, Senator Vitter today, I don't know if you got a copy of it. We will be flying to Washington Tuesday night to meet with the General and their staffs; I believe both Senators will be there as well, to discuss our two options. I'm going to ask Jason McCrossen [Phonetic] to come up in a minute and briefly tell you about those two options. Jason is retired from the Corps and works for a consultant firm and is a consultant for the Parish. His partners in the business is Colonel Starkel [Phonetic] and Colonel Bedey who had just retired from the Corps. They know the ins and outs of the Corps, they know how to get this done, and they have been working tirelessly on the plan. Now, with the cooperation and help of the local district, we believe it is more achievable than ever. And, I want to thank them for their help and their cooperation to help us move this forward.

It's not a done deal yet but it is doable. A couple things have to happen, we have to be able to fast-track the 25% design of that levee, then we need to go to the environmental and fast-track the environmental, then we move it from it from IER. The timeframe we're looking at, if those things happen in the time that Jason and the staff thinks it can, we can begin construction and meet the same deadline that the Corps is under by congress to complete the Western Tie-in. If that happens the floodwall will stop and it won't go in but, right now, until we get that work done they need to proceed. They have a floodwall designed. If you don't weigh-in on one of the options today, they're going to move forward the design of that floodwall. The new design, or one of the options they brought to the table, and they traveled up north to look at it and I believe approved it, is the invisible floodwall which is about 300 feet off the highway, it's a flat slab across the highway. That would be my preference to move forward. If it does get designed and the slab's put in, we move forward and get this done, floodwall never goes in. But, just saying no today does not help their mission to move forward. They will move forward and they've already got a

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floodwall design. So, they have gone out and looked at other options so we need to weigh-in on one of those options today. That does not mean it's going up. We're going to continue our work.

Two things I will ask the council, on Thursday when I come back from Washington at their meeting is to suspend the rules and fully support one of these two option. I will also go to the CPRA in Baton Rouge and ask for their full support. There will be a local match. CPRA should pick that up when it becomes 100-year protection, I'll have that discussion with the Governor's staff, and Garrett Graves as soon as I return from Washington. Whatever option can move quickest, one is to stay where it is and have the General approve that reach 100-year protection, the other one, move it in the West Bank and Vicinity in the 100-year. Whatever one can move quickest and is the least costly at the local level, local meaning Parish or state is the one we're going to do.

I ask you to be courteous today; they have a mission to do. I did enough yelling this past week for all of us. And, I apologize to the Corps for my actions but I'm as passionate as you are about this. We're going to keep fighting until 100-year protection is not only to LaReussitte, with our coastal plan, we will have 100-year protection for all of Plaquemines. Realistically, the levees can do it to LaReussitte; the Coastal Restoration Plan is going to have to do it for the south so we don't take out additional residents and businesses.

I'm here to tell you the truth. I'm not going to mislead you. I'm going to be here in the breakout session with Jason. I'll stay as long as you want to talk about it and go into the details. But, I'm going to give Jason a minute just to go over the two options and where we are. Thanks again for coming. Jason.

[Applause]

Jason McCrossen: All right. Thank you, President Nungesser. Again, I'm Jason McCrossen, and I work for a company called Valley Cooper International, they're contracted out with Plaquemines Parish to assist in levee management, levee consultant, and dealing with the Corps of Engineers. As he mentioned, we have several former Colonels in the Army who are very familiar with the Corps process so we help President Nungesser translate and figure out all of the Corps doings and the congressional ways that things have to get done. But, today, what I want to talk about is, add-on to what President Nungesser said and try to give you a little bit of details. I've got a lot to say but I'm going to say it really quick so that we can move on and get to the breakout sessions.

First off, I've been working with President Nungesser and his staff for about a year and a half trying to get this done and it hasn't been an easy road but we haven't stopped. And, finally this week, we had a meeting on Thursday morning, involved the Corps and the Parish and congressional representatives and Senator Landrieu, Senator Vitter, Congressman Cao's office. It got very heated and very passionate, at one point, you know, President Nungesser was fire engine red just bleeding from the eyes trying to get the Corps to understand how important this was. So, we adjourned again for a different meeting at 4:00 that afternoon and when we did it was night and day. The Corps had come up with a plan in writing for the first time, as President Nungesser said, and we appreciate that. We finally, now, have a path to move forward to, to get 100-year down in LaReussitte. It's not going to be easy, all right, by no means, and it's not a definite done deal but we now have a path, we have agreement from the Corps in writing, we have the support, we have letters from Senator Landrieu and Senator Vitter's office that come in yesterday in support of the Parish.

Now, let me give you the two alternatives of how we're going to go about getting this done. And, we have been proceeding with these, not just since Thursday when we had this meeting, but for the last year and a half. The first alternative is to get the sectional levee for most of LaReussitte put in 100-year

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protection, put in the West Bank and Vicinity Hurricane Risk Reduction System. That's a big old term, all that means is the 100-year protection that's been already approved by congress post-Katrina. That's going to take congressional reauthorization and congressional re-appropriations. We need funds to do it; the Corps needs funds to do it. It's not authorized by congress. Not any decision that the Corps ever made, it was congress that didn't authorize it. Senator Vitter's office is helping us with that right now and they have been helping us and they have draft language to put into a bill if we get a biller session. We may not get a bill. If there's no bill, we don't have a mechanism to get it authorized in the 100-year. It's as simple as that. So, concurrently, while we're proceeding that way, that is less than what the Corps and Parish can control. Okay? But, what we can control is the second alternative and we're moving forward, that one also, at the same time. And, that is keeping the levee in the New Orleans to Venice (NOV) hurricane protection project and use a betterment process, and I'm going to explain that, to get the 100-year elevation. This is what's going to happen. Right now the Corps, their designing, before Thursday, let me back up, before Thursday they were designing and doing the environmental work to cover the design grade to the authorized level way back when NOV was authorized, post-Camille and Betsy. All right? The standard project hurricane, they called it something different now, basically, it's not 100-year and it's not the new 100-year models that have come up since Katrina. That's what they were doing before Thursday. Now, the Corps is designing, using the same information they already have, no one has to start over again, they have extended the design out now to cover the 100-year elevation. That means you go up in elevation you have to go wide. So, soil borings will be taken in a wider path, the environmental work will be done in a wider path. We show the impacts. All of that is now currently being done to the 100-year level from Oakville all the way down LaReussitte. The Corps is going to do that and the Corps is going to pay 100% federal funds, all the Parish has to do is give up lands, 100% federal funds to that design grade. All right? That standard project hurricane what New Orleans to Venice authorizes, 100% federal. From that elevation up to the 100-year elevation will be born by the Parish.

We have specifically asked in a very heated manner, I must say, by President Nungesser, that we fast-track the design immediately, that work begins now. The Corps built 350 miles of levees in one year, they can build eight miles of levee or at least design it in a couple of months. All right? And, we will stay on them to get this done, without a doubt. All right? They fast-track the design, we go see the Center for Environmental Quality, Mr. Greczmiel just came down a couple of weeks ago and he looked me in the eye as we were flying over the levees and he said, "Son, if you can get the design speed up to where the environmental work is now the longest part of the schedule, I will sit down with the agencies and Plaquemines Parish," by agencies I mean the other environmental agencies who are in charge of overseeing the NEPA process, National Environmental Policy Act, he said, "Son, I will sit down with the agencies, I can't guarantee you anything because they all have to make their own decisions, but I will sit down and we will discuss moving this section of levee from Oakville to LaReussitte into a speed-up environmental process called the Individual Environmental Report." What does that do? Well, if you get design speed up, you get the environmental process speed up, you do a design build instead of the traditional design bid build where you have to do 100% of design, put it out for bid, then go to construction. We can do design, when we get to 25% design, it gets approved, the Corps lets a contract, and you immediately begin construction, and you construct as you're designing all the way down. What does that do? It saves us approximately a year, maybe longer, in the time it would take to go to construction.

Now, let's look at the big picture. Okay? The real big picture. We're here today to talk about a floodwall, why is this guy up there talking this levee down in the LaReussitte? What does it matter if we get this levee if they still got a floodwall? All right. If we get everything speed up, it's not an easy process, but you can believe President Nungesser and I and his staff are going to fight tooth and nail to make sure it gets done. When everything is speed up in the New Orleans to Venice Hurricane Project, this first eight miles of levee, while the Corps is constructing West Bank and Vicinity down to Oakville

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and getting ready to start putting in the floodwall, the Corps will also, because we had speed up measures, they will be constructing a levee to 100-year from Oakville to LaReussitte at the same time. So, the Corps gets down to Oakville and they say, Colonel Lee says, “Okay, President Nungesser, we’re ready to start putting in the wall.” And, we say, “Okay. Well, you’re also getting ready to make the turn at the LaReussitte siphon, on that levee, too. What sense does it do to put the floodwall in at Oakville when we’re getting ready to make the turn in the 100-year levee down in LaReussitte?” All right? Save your money. President Nungesser has an agreement from the Department of Transportation that the Department of Transportation is already ready to elevate the road at LaReussitte. So, we begin putting the closure in at LaReussitte and there never is a floodwall in Oakville. That’s the big picture. Okay?

Now, let me play devil’s advocate because there’s people out there that still don’t believe me. There’s a potential, and I agree, I will admit it and I’m sure President Nungesser will too, this is not an easy process but if it doesn’t happen, if the New Orleans to Venice Hurricane Project does not meet the same schedule as the West Bank and Vicinity and the Corps, mandated by congress, not Colonel Lee’s decision, mandated by congress, to put in the floodwall at Oakville. They have to put the floodwall in. Does that mean, well, we just, oh, well, forget about it, the wall’s in at Oakville, we don’t have to worry about building the levee to 100-year, now, we’re all going to flood in Jesuit Bend. No, you’re not. President Nungesser, and as long as I’m still around here, we’re not going to stop fighting. It doesn’t matter if the wall’s built. Okay? You will get 100-year down to LaReussitte if the Parish has to do it themselves. All right? It will happen. It will be certified. It will meet the Corps standard and it will be certified by the Corps. You will get your FIR’s for the FEMA 100-year, will all apply in Jesuit Bend. Just because you’re outside the floodwall, once 100-year levee is built, down to LaReussitte, it will be certified by the Corps because it’s going to be built to Corps criteria, yes, it will qualify under the FIR’s map.

All right. So, the worst case scenario, okay, the floodwall gets put in. All right? You’re still getting 100-year; we are going to try our hardest. Believe me, if you would have been there in the meeting this week with President Nungesser, he showed the most emotion I’ve ever seen him show, and I’ve been around him a lot in the last two years. You get 100- year down to LaReussitte, if the wall is put in at Oakville and the schedules don’t match up, then we’re going to take the turn from the Corps, the Parish will get 100-year down to LaReussitte, or we’ll break out backs trying. Believe us, okay. 100-year down to LaReussitte. And, like I said, I’ll play devil’s advocate, you may have to live behind the wall, as everyone likes to say, for a year, that’s a year too long, I agree but worst case scenario, that’s what would happen, and it may not even be a year.

All right. I’ll be around with President Nungesser in the breakout session if anyone has any questions. I’d like to get this thing moving along.

[Applause]

President Nungesser: Thank you. I saw some emotion coming out in that, too. What Jason didn’t mention, his parents live down by Jesuit Bend as well so he’s got some emotion in this, too. I want to, before I introduce Colonel Lee, I want to recognize Keith Henkley [Phonetic], Stuart Dewey [Phonetic], and Anthony Buras who calls me 20 times a day, is in my office before I get there in the morning to see where we are on this project. We wouldn’t be where we are today without the support of these three council members and I see them here today. Thank you for your support.

[Applause]

President Nungesser: And, I must recognize one of the hardest working Parish employees, I leave him there at night working on all the details, Blair Rittner, we couldn’t do it without you, thank you very much.

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[Applause]

President Nungesser: Colonel Lee, I'd like you to come up, and thank you, again, for working with us and having the passion to help us get this done. Thank you.

[Applause]

Colonel Lee: Good morning, everyone. Thank you for coming out today, and I take it seriously, and I know you do, that's why you're here and that's why we're here. So, I'm going to talk to you today about what we're going to do and try to frame it. I've got about 10 minutes of a prepared speech that I'm going to talk to you about. But, before I do that, I just want to talk with you a little bit about what you've heard.

Now, we've been working this issue for a long time. We've had 30 public meetings all over the Parish, in Orleans Parish, other places to ensure that we fully understood the concerns, the impacts, the issues that you're dealing with, with the projects that we're trying to build to reduce risk throughout the greater New Orleans area, and also throughout Plaquemines Parish. There are some limitations that we have to operate under and we've been trying to figure out how do we operate within the limitations we're given and the policies that we have to follow in order to maximize the risk reduction for all the residence in the greater New Orleans area including Plaquemines Parish, all the way down to NOV. We had a real intense meeting, as President Nungesser said earlier, and that meeting was effective though because what we did, I think sometimes when you have opposition or differences of opinion, sometimes there's a probability that you're going to talk past each other because one person's looking for a position, the other person's looking for a position, and sometimes you talk past each other and there's some common ground there. So, I think yesterday we found common ground, or Thursday. And, so what I'm going to do today is talk a little bit about the whole project as it pertains to West Bank and Vicinity and also for the project in the Non-federal levees, NOV, and then we're going to have a 90-minute breakout session here in this room. I encourage you to stay and listen to that full briefing because the other breakout rooms are going to be here as long as you're here. So, we're going to do as many rotations in those other breakout rooms, and there's five breakout rooms, I'll tell you what those are in a little bit, because we're here for you. We'll stay here as long as it takes to answer your questions, to get your feedback because it's important. When I came and talked to you in April and I talked to you in May I told you that NEPA is a public process and so I think what you will see today is, we have listened, we may not have incorporated every idea that you've had but we have listened. We've tried to take the impacts and fully understand those and ensure that we understand those impacts and that we're mitigating those impacts. And, there's a lot of other things that you brought to our attention. So, that's what we want to kind of show you in the breakout sessions. So, the breakout session focus here will be on the project, the Non-federal levees south of Oakville. So, that's what the focus of this 90-minute breakout session will be.

But, what I want to do now is start on my comments and get to them and then we're going to, of course, answer all your questions and concerns.

I'd like, once again, to thank President Nungesser and his entire team from Plaquemines Parish that have been working tirelessly on this. I have met either by telephone, in person; we meet with President Nungesser every month to kind of give him an update on the system, of the work that's ongoing throughout the Parish because, as you are aware, following hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike, Plaquemines Parish was severely impacted by those storms. So, you know, what we're focused on now is working together so we can design and construct a stronger, more reliable levee system than was in place prior to 2005, and we need your support, we need your ideas to help us do that.

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I really want to reiterate, once again, that I'd like to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to attend this workshop. We scheduled this meeting on a Saturday rather than a late night because we knew it was going to take more than three hours to talk through these issues. These are not simple issues. If they were simple issues we probably wouldn't even be here talking about them. These are complex, complicated issues that we are working with, that you're working with and trying to understand, and we recognize that. So, we have taken some feedback from the other 30 public meetings and we've tried to create some visuals to help you understand a little better what we're trying to accomplish throughout the system.

I've stated before, we already had 30 public meetings on the Eastern Tie-in project. We've listened to the people south of Oakville. We've listened to the people that live at Oakville. We've listened to the people that live north of Oakville. Those meetings are important because it gives us a sense of what you want, your priorities, and make sure that we can effectively communicate what we're trying to accomplish. We've also had a series of meetings with elected officials and we've had meetings with citizens groups, and I stand before this morning with a full commitment that I made back in May at one of the meetings based on your requests and comments and that was to extend the comment period on IER 13 and I did that. And, because we wanted to make sure that we fully understood what you were saying to us so we could go back and analyze and refine and ensure that we clearly communicated back to you what the impacts and issues are with the projects that we're proposing.

We also heard clearly that the community south of Oakville wants 100-year protection and that's a clear fact. I just want to make sure you understand that I know that and our team understands that. But, I also want to point out that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, our process, our design and construction projects are regulated by federal law and policy and we don't make those decisions. Our projects must be both authorized and subsequently funded by acts of congress then approved and signed into law by the President. And, you ask that the West Bank and Vicinity Project include your communities, the community south of the proposed action identified in IER 13 which is south of Oakville. And, the short answer is that we don't have authorization and funding from congress to do that and you heard from the speakers, President Nungesser, talk about, you know, there is a way to do this through two different alternatives, and there is. It is going to take additional work to get there but currently we do not have the authorization and funding from congress to do that. But, on the non-federal levees and what was referred to by Jason, he called it betterment, I think what I like to call it is a locally preferred plan, and that's kind of how we call it in the Corps of Engineers. That gives a local community or an indity or a company or whatever, if the Corps is doing a project and they want to make it higher, wider, better, then they can come forward with the amount of funding that is above what the federal government has authorized and funded the Corps to do, and that's what we're talking about, a locally preferred plan. So, we're going to work very closely with Plaquemines Parish and with the community and with you to ensure that we can move forward on this. We are going to provide additional information, one of the five breakout rooms that we have is called a resource room and we're going to have our subject matter experts in that resource room to answer specific detail questions. They're also going to be in this room. But, what we want to do is make sure that you have multiple venues to go to, to get your questions asked and answered.

The other part is we do have funding and authorization to implement the West Bank and Vicinity project for Belle Chasse to Oakville. And, we also have authorization and funding to proceed with the Non-federal levees for Jesuit Bend and the areas to the south and we're continuing to do so. You heard Jason talk about soil borings that are going on, those have been going on for weeks and months. We're doing surveying, soil borings, what we'll do now is expand those soil borings out beyond the current right-of-way we were looking at to a new 100-year level right-of-way so that we have all the engineering technical information that we need in order to design the levees.

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Now, let me turn to several of the major concerns that we heard from you, the members of the community who live south of the Eastern Tie-in Project. You asked if the West Bank and Vicinity Project would add to any flooding in the area south of it in the event of a storm surge from a hurricane. The most important thing to remember is no matter how much storm surge may or may not increase from the West Bank Project, we will raise the height of the non-federal levee to account for the change in that expected water level rise. And, so we had our Corps scientists go back and do additional modeling, they're continuing to do this as we do the designs for the non-federal levees and our Corps scientists have run models that simulate storm surge to identify any changes that might occur for the level of storm surge west of the West Bank Project once it is complete so we're talking south and west. And, the results show that the different storms, changes in water level can occur along the non-federal levees from Myrtle Grove to Oakville. And, we didn't answer that very well in the meeting in May and I'll be the first to admit that, we said it was negligible. Well, what does negligible mean? I mean, I had the same question. So, our engineers have some visuals today that they can show you points along the non-federal levees of what the water elevation changes will be because of the West Bank and Vicinity Project. The change and water level can vary from a low of minus a half a foot, and you say, "Well, how can it be less than?" Well, if you are aware, before hurricane Gustav, water was getting sucked out of the Barataria Basin before that hurricane came in, that's why. Now, after the hurricane passed through and the water came back, it's a range. But, there's also a high of about three-quarters of a foot which is less than 12 inches. Most of the changes that we seen below Oakville and the non-federal levees range between zero and six inches higher than would have currently been predicted if the West Bank and Vicinity Project wouldn't have been built.

But, again, what the most important thing I want you to remember is, no matter how much the storm surge may or may not increase, we will raise the height of the non-federal levees to account for the changes in expected water levels. And, what that means is that when we're designing a levee, and let's say the design elevation is eight feet, and we determine that the highest point in the area may be nine inches out of 12, so we take that nine inches and that gets calculated into how we do the whole calculation and then that would be added back in on top of the eight feet. So, you would have an additional elevation added to the levee for the non-federal levees to incorporate for any changes in surge that effect your areas and your communities.

Again, I know you're interested in probably more details than I've told you but I encourage you to talk to our Corps scientists. We have some of our hydraulic modelers that are here, they'll be located here and also in the resource room and they'll be happy to explain their findings. They should have a very clear visual that will show you that information.

The next major question from the members of the community was, will the area south of Oakville have increased risk of flooding from water that will be pumped over the levees during rain events to prevent flooding to the areas north of Oakville inside that levee system? And, that's the West Bank and Vicinity Levee System. These questions center specifically on the proposed 150 cubic feet per second pumping station that was originally planned to pump that outflow in to Ali Canal. The proposed drainage structure would provide the day-to-day drainage that is currently provided by an existing culvert. So, we basically will remove kind of a steel corrugated galvanized culvert and put a very similarly-sized box culvert in its place. But, during a tropical event, that drainage structure would have to be closed so that allows us to close that off and the pump station would be operated. So, in response to your comments in May, we have revised the design so that the 150 cubic feet per second discharge of the pump station is now diverted into the wetland area outside the non-federal levee so it will not be going into Ali Canal. And, the bottom line is when the pump station is operating, your risks are reduced. So, again, this is another thing that we've listened to your comments and we've tried to incorporate into minimizing risk for you and helping us to design a better project.



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Another major area of concern for the residents south of Oakville is how the Eastern Tie-in Project would affect property values and flood insurance prices and availability to those areas. Economists reviewed these issues and the evaluation was there was no credible evidence that the proposed actions would adversely impact property values. Having said that, once complete, the Plaquemines Parish non-federal levees will reduce your risk from hurricane storm surge. And, as for flood insurance, we have asked a member from FEMA to be here today and they'll be located in the resource room to address any issues or concerns you may have about flood insurance and our team is here to talk to you about this topic.

Now, for today's official announcement concerning the Eastern Tie-in Project. We will continue with the Eastern Tie-in Project as proposed at the proposed location that was outlined in the draft environmental report #13. The alignment is south of Oakville which is the proposed action. And, I do understand the concerns that the members of the community do not agree with that decision. But, it is my responsibility to move as swiftly as possible, the decision has been made to get the Eastern Tie-in Project built by the June 2011 deadline. This project is absolutely critical to the entire West Bank area and without it the area remains vulnerable to storm surge. Delaying this project any longer places hundreds of thousands of people at risk and that is something that I am not willing to do. However, areas south of Oakville will have improved risk reduction measures in place when that project is complete. As I've explained with the locally preferred plan, what Jason has told you, what President Nungesser has told you, we're going to be working closely with Plaquemines Parish to make that a reality. Because of your concerns and recommendations we have received at prior public meetings, we have designed four options for how Highway 32 Closure could be built. I want to make sure you understand that could be built. The decision has not been made on what that will be. We need your input today at the workshops before we make final decisions.

Because today will be very different from any session we've held, let me explain it. We're holding five sessions; one is a 90-minute session here in this room that will focus on the Plaquemines Parish non-federal levees that will be incorporated into the federal system. That breakout session will be held once. The other four sessions will cover possible designs for the Eastern Tie-in Project. The possible designs are as follows: a swing floodgate, and you've seen this, this is what was identified as the proposed alternative in IER 13 but there have been some modifications from it based on your feedback that you provided us; a roller gate, same thing, we received feedback during the comment period, we've incorporated that into this alternative; a earthen ramp with a floodgate, we received notification from the Coastal Protection Restoration Authority, this is an alternative they recommended so we looked at that alternative also, we have information on that. Now, that was not included in the original IER 13 but you'll be able to see that. And, then the last one is the invisible floodwall and you've heard that referred to and people say, "How can you have an invisible floodwall?" I think if you go to the breakout session and listen through it, it's a pretty short briefing that will kind of explain it, it will show what the visual impacts are, every day for about 99.9% of the time, and then when you have a hurricane event, they actually go in and built the floodwall out of materials. This happens all over the world. I went up to Grand Forks, North Dakota this summer and we saw one that, you heard about the floods up in North Dakota this year, that floodwall was put into place, took them about 24 hours to do it, and they were able to protect that community in Grand Forks, and it withstood the 100-year flood. So, that's the other alternative that you'll be able to look at.

So, each of these are a direct result of listening to you at the meetings in April and May about your concerns for public safety and impact on the communities. These sessions are 30 minutes each and they will repeat throughout the morning and into the afternoon so everyone has a chance to attend as many of these as you want. We also have a separate room set up, that I referred to already, as a resource room and that's to answer your individual questions. I will also take questions here but if you are more comfortable in a smaller setting, the resource room, you're welcome to go there and have one of our teammates

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answer your questions. I also know that some of you are interested in borrow, insurance rates, property values, hydraulic modeling that we did to look at the induced flooding, all of those things we'll be able to answer for you in the resource room. As I've said earlier, we do have a representative from FEMA who will be in the resource room to answer any of your questions about the flood insurance program. And, please feel free to ask about any of our other Corps projects that you'd like to.

We have a busy day ahead of us and I ask, again, for your help in making today's workshop meaningful. It is your comments and your engagement that will help us serve you better. I kind of want to recap real quickly what I think that I want you to take away from today's meeting. First of all, we heard your feedback and we've incorporated into what we're doing and how we're proceeding. Secondly, we operate within the authorities and policies set by congress and the President, that doesn't mean we can't do things, what it means is that there are limitations and we have to figure out ways to work within those limitations, work with our federal sponsor, with the public to ensure that you're fully informed on the direction we're going. We have responded to your comments as best we could and we've talked about the status of risk reduction to the individuals that live south of Oakville and for the folks that live within the West Bank and Vicinity Projects. So, now we're asking for your input and it is vitally important. We also want you to remain engaged throughout the process. This is just another step in the process and we just ask you to remain part of the process because it does help us deliver a better project to you.

Thank you for your time.

[Applause]

Ken Holder: Folks, we forgot to recognize just a couple of people, President Nungesser asked us to recognize Carol Ponds [Phonetic] and her achievement and his contribution to the team

[Applause]

Ken Holder: And, can we get Councilwoman at Large, Jackie Clarkson to come up and just make a quick comment.

[Applause]

Jackie Clarkson: Thank you. I'm Jackie Clarkson from Algiers and I think I know most of you. I'm not here as Orleans Parish government to butt-in Plaquemines Parish, that's the last thing any of us need. I am here, though, as a lifetime Algiers resident who is Vice President of my city council who has stayed on the Corps neck and has since Katrina. And, we've changed a few things and we've made them better. And, I'm here today to say, I offer you our regional support because on the West Bank it is united we stand or divided we flood, I love that bumper sticker.

[Applause]

Jackie Clarkson: And, I'm not here to divide Plaquemines to save Algiers, I'm here to help President Nungesser and I appreciate his welcoming me and Mike Bush's inviting me and the business and political leadership of Plaquemines. We've all reached out to each other and worked as a region because we've done things like save and expand military, which is our number one economic development, we have saved more flooding and we will prevent more flooding in the future, we have crime coalitions. We're working as a region which is critically important to the West Bank more than any part of this metropolitan, and I know that because of a lifetime history on the West Bank. So, I'm here to pledge the support of Algiers and Orleans Parish to make all of Belle Chasse, all of Orleans, all of



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Plaquemines, all of Orleans Parish and all of Jefferson Parish, West Bank, as safe as we can make it together, and I will help you as much as I can.

Thank you.

[Applause]

Ken Holder: Thank you, ma'am. And, now we'll break-up. For those of you who are staying here, Colonel Mike Wehr and Paul Eagles will be leading that session. Sir, if you could stand up, just kind of let everybody know who you are.

[Fain background speaker 48:11 – 48:13]

Ken Holder: Roger that. Okay. So, for the rest of us, if could get our groups, just follow it out as we go. Gary Brouse will be up first.

Gary Brouse: I'm speaking for the swing gate option.

Ken Holder: Swing gate. So, you'll follow Gary if you want to see the swing gate option.
Ted Carr is the Invisible Floodwall

Ted Carr: Invisible floodwall.

Ken Holder: Invisible floodwall, if you want to see that option.

Tim Connell has the roller gate and, Chris Dunn the ramp. So, if you just follow these folks. My folks will show you where to go for the individual rooms. The Resource Room is at the end and to the left.

Thank you very much.

Nancy Allen: My name is Nancy Allen, I'm a Public Affairs Officer with the Corps of Engineers. I'm going to be facilitating today's meeting. In this room we are going to be talking about the non-federal levees. Let me clarify and explain. This is the non-federal levee, the levee that is currently non-federal, between south of Oakville to St. Jude. It will be incorporated into the federal New Orleans to Venice Project. So, although we refer to it as the non-federal levee, it will be a federal levee. So, we just want to clarify that. We really need your input and help as we continue to develop this project and so that's what we're going to have a chance to talk about today. We're going to provide a brief update on the status of this levee system and then we'll open it up for your questions and comments.

Again, if you're interested in the crossings, the Highway 23 crossings, there are four sessions that are running through those options currently. I will tell you when you need to leave this room in order to see all four sessions. So, you can stay here for about an hour and then you can go join the sessions and learn about the roller gate and the swing gate, the invisible floodwall, and the ramp option.

I'm going to ask you to please silence your cell phones, your blackberry's, whatever you have. We are videotaping this session, this will be used to make an official transcript so we are going to ask that you hold your questions and comments until the end and that when we open it up for questions and comments, you use the microphones that we will be setting up. This is really important for us.

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This is our agenda for today. Our presentation is only going to take about 20 minutes to half an hour and then we're going to open it up for input.

Again, we are talking about the currently authorized plan for the levees from Oakville to St. Jude. We're going to provide a brief description, show you what ongoing work is happening right now, update you on the schedule, and then we are going to show you the preliminary alignment for these levees, and then we'll open it up for your questions and comments.

When you came in there was speaker cards on the front table. We will be calling people off of speaker cards first and a lot of them may have chosen to go to another session but we'll give everybody an opportunity. And, if you want speaker cards there's some now available in the lobby, they'll be bringing those in to us.

We now have a regional team that is focused on this project so I'm going to introduce our folks here at the table. Paul Eagles who is the Senior Project Manager; Julie LeBlanc who is the Senior Project Manager for Plaquemines; Julie Vignes who is the Senior Project Manager for the West Bank and Vicinity Project; Ben Caldwell the Technical Manager; Larry Marcy and Gib Owen are Environmental; and John Bivona is Engineering. Vicksburg District is assisting us with the execution of this project. We do have Colonel Mike Wehr who is the Commander of the Vicksburg District here to kick-off our presentation so I'm going to turn it over to him now.

Col. Mike Wehr: Thanks, Nancy. Good Morning, my name's Colonel Mike Wehr. I'm literally the neighbor up the river from Colonel Al Lee. It's a real honor to be down here to assist and to get after the work that needs to be done. My focus on the first few slides is what is currently authorized but I can't escape the fact, as Jason really eloquently put it, there's a lot of passion on getting after the rest of the protection that is wanted and needed for Plaquemines. And, what I would ask before we even go there, I had the chance to meet a couple of veterans earlier, but I just ask if there are veterans in the house to raise your hand that have served our nation. We've got a few of you.

[Applause]

Col. Mike Wehr: I bring that up because, again, we're amongst some of the greatest generations that are serving and it's an honor to serve with the sons and daughters of America as we speak. But, today is where I'm at and, in fact, that catch is no less in terms of what we're trying to get after in terms of flood risk reduction, to reduce the risk of flooding in this area.

So, I've got a few slides and I really enjoy the way Jason described the locally preferred plan. In fact, I grabbed a slide, go ahead and click to the next one that describes what he is looking at. It's that red portion; this is the locally preferred plan that goes above and beyond what is currently authorized. What's currently authorized is in green. What's in red is the locally preferred. These are interrelated. I'm going to focus here, for our little breakout session, but it's not in ignorance of what is desired and what is preferred. And, in fact, a couple of the slides that will follow here, you'll see some of the work that is being done on the soil drilling and those are the things that are being looked at now in a little bit different light based on this week's discussions. Do we prepare the ? potentially for this locally prepared plan to come through? It's going to be tough, just as Jason and President Nungesser described, it is not going to be easy.

The last slide I've got is a handoff to the real subject matter experts, we'll get to the schedule and how tight this will be to try to parallel the efforts. But, they really are two parallel plans. So, I would just ask you, as we focus on the locally preferred through these first few slides and that input that we're going to get, trust me, we're going to stop standing up here talking to you and put microphones in these runways

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here and get some feedback and dialog going. So, I'll go quickly through what I've got, but that's dialog's important. If you said it before, it is not endlessly wasted on people that aren't hearing it is shaking things as we speak. Those four alternatives came out of a very passionate meeting that I had a chance to attend back in May, I think, in Oakville. It was a very small, tight room, I saw some familiar faces that are there, and very heated passionate discussion, Jesuit Bend specifically for example, it was a real eye opening for me as well.

So, what I want to do is go to our next slide, and again, we're going to focus on the non-federal portion, Oakville, St. Jude. And, the next slide describes this in writing; this is what it's described as in terms of the current authorization by congress. Again, it came through in the supplemental, in the 4th and 6th, and again, it's funded so we're moving out already and I'll show some of the slides that get to the work that's underway to include design. And, of course, it will incorporate into the existing New Orleans to Venice Project. And, again, what it looks like is about two to eight feet. Now, that means a lot of different things to different people in different locations so we're going to go section by section. In fact, the next slide shows a map. Mr. Paul Eagles will walk us through those after I show you a couple other pictures here. But, we're going to look at individually in a much broader scale, each of those sections.

So, again, as I mentioned, we're focusing on what's authorized, what's showing up on this slide. I point this out because we recognize what's existing now with hesco baskets, barriers out there, I don't think we have visual example here today, but we know that is a temporary measure, and we can save a lot of lives at the last minute but we don't want to rely on that continuously. So, this gets after that more improved protection. .

Again, looks at a floodwall option, and again, this is based on a lot of different decisions with the terrain, existing ground, environmental impacts, the availability of real estate in all different ways.

These three slides that show what's underway. These are pictures that are taken, I think this one is actually near Myrtle Grove but the fact is we're getting after the work. The soil drilling rig that's taking samples, these are taken all the way back to labs to research the pure strengths of soils, figure out what that levees made of at the moment.

On the next slide you'll see what we've brought out and that's a mobile lab, and this is more current technology but it augments that drilling rig and it gets after the real detail of where we're out. And, that's important survey analysis that helps the design that's being looked.

And, the next slide, I'll just point out that this is an interagency effort. The Wetlands is an example of working very closely with the state and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as well. So, this is moving forward. Your input is vital, and the feedback we get today will continue to shape this.

The next slide shows our schedule. Again, it's been ongoing, for too long for some, and certainly I can appreciate that but we've got work that's taking place now. This is where we're at in terms of the September date. We are working on a draft EIS, this is critical that your input starts to shape that. There is a formal public comment period that takes place; it will include a public meeting in January where we will meet again to discuss where we're at on this current authorized project.

Again, there's a lot of other discussion going around in the breakout rooms and in the preferred plan that needs to happen and it is, in fact, related to the work that we're getting done on this. So, that is supporting that effort, it is not diametrically opposed, in fact, they are parallel tracks. I think Jason put the passion on it very well, I can appreciate that, he may be a little bit younger than me but I can still feel that passion to get things done and to make it work when you put two things that work together.



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So, I will let sit down and let Paul Eagles go through the sections. Again, it will go fairly quick, maybe five minutes. Then, literally, every slide we had up here we'll bring up as questions are asked. So, I appreciate your patience as we go through these next few slides and get into more dialog. Thanks, Paul.

Paul Eagles: Okay. Colonel Wehr showed you this a while ago and this is just an overview of the entire levee reach from Oakville to St. Jude. And, we're going to go through this one section at a time. These are our planning reaches that were used in looking at the different areas and we tried, based on some of your input, to use existing lines as much as possible in the levee, in the planning. The yellow here shows the preliminary alignment we have. You can see there's some blue sections, that's existing levee where it differs from the alignment. And, then most of this in yellow, you don't see blue because it is the exiting alignment, now at the lower end there's a couple miles of levees where there aren't levees now, those are the new levees. And, so from that point I'm going to go and talk about each reach but I do want you to know that we tried to listen and accommodate your input. [Inaudible] we don't have the alignment the way you like it and there were some reasons for that but we want to hear your input today because this is not final. We want to hear what you have to say and I know there are some areas where you would like to see a change made and if that's the case, we need to hear your input today so we can reevaluate that and make sure. Okay?

Here's Oakville to LaReussitte. We believe the levees will be raised about two feet, up to two feet here, probably more because we're going out and getting new surveys. In the next few weeks they'll start those surveys and I believe that there are some areas where we'll see increases of way more than two feet but that's what we have today. We see a T-wall here, when we were doing the preliminary planning for this area some of the things we were looking at was reducing the impacts to wetlands and so forth, and looking at costs and so forth, we looked at different alignments, a T-wall here was part of the preliminary assessment of what we could do. It's not final; we are going to reassess that decision as we get better detail on the design breaks of the levees. Okay? And, then down here, we're looking at a flood-size skip in the levees to protect the residents in that area. Next slide.

LaReussitte to Myrtle Grove, we did try to follow existing alignment as much as possible and I know we did look at some options here in Myrtle Grove and some folks here are going to talk about that today. There are some other options to look at down there and we want to hear your comments on that. So, if we need to reevaluate that, we want to hear what you say about that today so we can incorporate your comments and try to understand. Okay? We are trying to incorporate agricultural lands here in this reach. Next slide.

This would be Myrtle Grove and we're looking at possibly a levee increased height of about seven and a half feet here. And, again, we're looking at those new surveys to verify those numbers and make sure we know exactly how high they're going to be, how much higher they're going to be. As you see, since a hurricane surge is higher for the south, then the levees get higher as you go further south, it goes from like about nine feet, in that range, at Oakville down to about 12 at St. Jude. Next slide.

Here we are at Citrus Lands to Pointe Celeste, and in this reach we're looking at about an increase height of about almost eight feet and we've tried to avoid some environmental tracks in this reach an so forth and keep as much of the agriculture properties incorporate into the levees. Next slide.

And, points of Point Celeste to St. Jude, here we're looking at new levees along the lower end. This will be up to about 11 feet high and we're also incorporating the Parishes maintenance building in the levee system, and then they'll tie-in to the federal levees down here at that point, the NOV project below St. Jude.



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Now, we don't have all the answers, I know, but we want to hear your comments. I am going to turn it over to Nancy to start that process.

Nancy Allen: Okay. Again, we just want to stress this is a preliminary plan, this is a preliminary alignment, these are tentative elevations. As you saw on the schedule, we will have SEIS coming out this fall and then what will follow will be an additional public comment period. So, right now we're still in the planning and design stage.

But, that being said, we want to hear your input today, we want to get your questions and comments. When you came in there were speaker request cards, I have a stack of them in front of me and I'll start calling people from here. If you did not fill one of these out you can still fill one out in the lobby and they will bring them to me, or when we run out of cards and if we still have time, we'll still be here to answer your questions and we'll just let people come up to the mic. There are also postage-paid forms out there if you simply want to provide a written comment.

I do ask that you limit your comments and questions to three minutes. We're going to put some lights up here to help everybody stay on track. When it starts blinking you'll have a minute left, when it buzzes and you get a red light that means three minutes is up and we'll just ask you to wrap-up.

If you want to submit additional comments there's a point of contact here, Gib Owen, and also an email address that you can use as well. Again, we want your feedback.

There are two resources, you may already know about them. We urge you to keep checking here; nolaenvironmental.gov is where all of our environmental documentation is posted. When a SEIS for this project is released, it will be there. We also have the website mvn.usace.army.mil.

Okay. We're getting mic stands right now. Again, if you're asking about a specific reach we can go back and find those slides if you're curious about alignment, we have a number of other backup graphics so we'll do our best to answer your question. I have a panel here and once you've made your question or comment I will direct it to the right person on the panel.

The first two cards I have are Geneva Grille and Robin Zuvich, if you're here you can come to either of these isle ways while we're getting set-up. Do we have Janiva or Robin?

Please do give us your name for the transcript, and again, we are using microphones, we are making a transcript so please just speak one at a time.

Geneva Grille: I'll just ask you the questions, after looking at this presentation right now. My name's Geneva Grille and I am a registered professional civil engineer, worked on levees over 40 years. In some of the lessons learned post-Katrina and as far as extending this non-federal levee system, are you going to compartmentalize some of these reach 1, 2, 3, and 4 in case you have any type of failure somewhere around LA 23? Just like on the East Bank of the river when the floodwalls failed in Orleans Parish around the 17th Street Canal, we never expected Jefferson Parish to flood over there but the water went around because of the breach. Levee systems are what they are and no one can guarantee you're not going to have a failure or a breach, and I think one of the lessons learned from the Dutch is, it is important to compartmentalize and segregate systems so if one system floods another doesn't. Is there any consideration for that in the design?

Paul Eagles: Ben Caldwell can help with design questions. We have not, at this point, considered compartmentalization in this area. However, I guess, that's something we need to think about and, obviously, consider.

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Ben Caldwell: We can definitely consider but, as Paul just stated, currently we're not considering compartmentalizing non-federal reaches, and I'm assuming that's what your question was addressing is that reach. There is, where the federal levees tie-in, as you know, there is compartmentalizes, there's a levee that goes from St. Jude back to the Mississippi River levee so that is still in place, we're not going to be moving that. So, if that answers your question.

Nancy Allen: Okay. Robin Zuvich or Dave Smith, I have cards for both of you. Can I just get you to come over to this mic for me? Sorry.

Dave Smith: My name's Dave Smith, I live in the Belle Chasse area. I want to ride on what Miss Geneva just was saying, compartmentalization is important and it should be more seriously looked at. I wasn't satisfied with that answer. And, regarding that, some of the same lessons we're learning today from the Highway 23 Closure, you're going to run into that with the same compartmentalization so you should take some of those lessons learned and add them into this project now, plan it at the beginning not at the end. That's all I have. Thank you.

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir. Donald Landry and Theresa Wade.

Donald Landry: Good morning. My name is Donald Landry. I want to thank you all for coming out and taking our input. We have seen that it does impact your design studies. One point clarification, this just keeps being called non-federal levee like it's not your responsibility but it is a new federalized levee. The Corps of Engineers does have responsibility for responsibility for this levee. My first question, actually, it's going to degress a little bit, my comment on the breakout sessions, I think it would have been a value to have everyone stay in here to see this presentation because a lot of people that left are also involved in this presentation. So, that's just a comment.

To digress a little bit, Colonel Lee stated earlier that they have done an economic study that the IER 13 will not negatively impact our property value. And, so I would like someone of authority to please sign a document stating that and distribute it. That needs to be public information.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Gib, please speak for that.

Gib Owen: Okay. We do have a person, Kevin Lovetro, in the resource area.

Donald Landry: Okay.

Gib Owen: And, you can talk to him, he's the one, and his people are the ones that made the announcement on that.

Donald Landry: It's one of the primary concerns that almost all us citizens have here, and it's been stated but never signed off. I mean, but words will be words until they're written down and then committed to.

Gib Owen: Right.

Donald Landry: So, we need that in writing.

Gib Owen: And, it is, we are addressing that in the addendum as one of the substantial comments.

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Donald Landry: Because, every meeting I've been to you all have said, no, it's not going to negatively impact but when it does happen, if it does happen, I want someone's signature saying it shouldn't have happened so we can research why it happened.

Also, it was a little confusing when Colonel Lee was giving his presentation, I think I understood it but I just want to clarify it. It was confusing when he was saying about IER 13's negative impact on the new federalized levee, how the surge would increase that new federalized levee to a certain extent, they're doing those calculations and he said that differential would be raised. Is that within this project or would that be in if we get approval for the 100-year protection?

Nancy Allen: Paul, can you just clarify that we're talking about the elevations for the new federalized levee?

Paul Eagles: To answer your question, sir, the current hydraulic analysis for the elevation does, in fact, involve the affects of the impacts for the West Bank and Vicinity. You start with surge, and the modeling will, in fact, involve that, along with other components sought as wave run-up, a wave period, and levee slope.

Donald Landry: Right. So, those are negative impacts with this new federalized levee...

Male engineer: We're going to incorporate them into the design of the non-federal levees or the federal levees, whatever you want to call them.

Donald Landry: New federal levees, let's just call them new federal levees.

Male engineer: New federal levees. We're going to incorporate those into the design of the new federal levees.

Donald Landry: Under this project?

Male engineer: Yes.

Donald Landry: Okay.

Male engineer: Yes.

Donald Landry: That's not considered in the 100-year if we get that 100-year...

Male engineer: Right.

Donald Landry: ... protection. Okay.

Male engineer: Right.

Donald Landry: Thank you. I just wanted to clarify. That's all I have for now. Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir. I have a card from Theresa Wade, Gary Farwell, Mary Rivero, are any of those folks with us today? Okay, great. Still with us, I should say.



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Gary Farwell: Good morning. My name's Gary Farwell. First of all, I'd like to thank Colonel Lee and all the other Military members for your service, I appreciate it and I'm sure everybody here does.

[Applause]

Gary Farwell: As I understand it from previous meetings, the environmental study for IER 13 was based on a late, mid to late '80s environmental study. Is that correct?

Male engineer: The IER 13 did not revisit the economics that everybody's talking about down in the Jesuit Bend area.

Gary Farwell: Okay.

Male engineer: That was not part of that process. We did not re-look at the alignment and that's why we're talking about the non-federal levee project.

Gary Farwell: All right. The proposed Hero Canal levee and floodgate that was based off a study made in the mid to late '80s. Is that correct?

Male engineer: It's based off of the authority that we got in '96 to build that alignment.

Gary Farwell: All right. Colonel Lee, I understand from one of our previous meetings, you served your tour in Iraq, if you were in Afghanistan today and going to take your troops to battle, would you base it on 20 year old intelligence data?

[Applause]

Colonel Lee: I guess I don't understand the basis of the question. I understood what you said but I just want to make sure I understand it. We're not doing anything based off that; the designs for the hurricane system in New Orleans are based on 2009 current practice, the best in the profession. We use academia, we use the Corps of Engineers engineers, we use private sector engineers, we use our research lab that's located in Vicksburg, Mississippi to do the modeling, we also use the Dutch engineers to augment some of our modeling efforts that actually work in our offices in the district. So, you're talking about an authorization, that's all that is, and that is 1996.

Gary Farwell: Okay.

Colonel Lee: But, what we're doing to build this project has nothing to do with what was in 1996. Congress directed us to provide 100-year levels of protection for the West Bank and Vicinity project and we're using the latest scientific information we have, engineer information to build that system. The same thing is occurring south in the Plaquemines, the new federal levees that will be built in Plaquemines that are currently non-federal, we're doing the same analysis, the same soil borings that we're out there on the ground right now doing, the same design criteria, the factors of safety, pre-Katrina, post-Katrina, different; the cost, different. The borrow material doesn't have organics in it, doesn't have roots in it, doesn't have debris in it, we have a very much higher standard for clay that we use in the levees now since Katrina. So, I think we've tried to incorporate the latest technology, the latest materials, the latest scientific approach in building the system. So, I just want to make sure you understand that part.

Gary Farwell: There are some input from the previous meetings that accelerated the non-federal levee construction. Is that correct?

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Colonel Lee: What we're doing right now, and I think they probably either have talked about it or are getting ready to talk about it, they're already out there doing the borings as soon as those get completed and we get a report then we'll be able to start the design and continue designing, and that's what we're going to do. We're going to design the levees as rapidly as possible, and that's what Jason was talking about earlier, and if something happens in the environmental process that makes us change those we'll have to go back and make some adjustments to the designs but we're not going to wait until we have perfect information at the end to go design them, we're going to go ahead and start design them in concert with the environmental work that we're doing.

Gary Farwell: I have over 26 years Military service, and in that time I was faced with several problems, many problems where you had to make a decision, you'd either follow the rules, regulation procedures that were, you know, in effect and come up with a bad decision, or you could use some common sense and logic and probably come up with a better decision. And, many cases I did that, and I found it was easier to ask forgiveness than permission. I know you're going to spend a lot of money on this floodgate if you install it, that money could be better spent on the non-federal, federal levees. Use some common sense.

[Applause]

Colonel Lee: I understand what you're saying. And, you know, I think one of the things I told you earlier is that we have authorization appropriation so we do have certain limits that we have...

Gary Farwell: I understand your limitations.

Colonel Lee: ... and they're not procedures and policy, they're actually public law. So, you know, I'm in a position where I can't violate public law.

Gary Farwell: I understand...

Colonel Lee: It's a procedure that I can skirt the edge or work around to make sure we can get what we need to do and work that hard, and I will work as hard as I can to make that accomplishment. So, what we've done with Plaquemines Parish is, I think we found a lot of common ground, you know. They're willing to step-up for to do the locally preferred option for the new federal levees in Plaquemines, that first section of eight miles to LaReussitte and that's what they're committing to, and we're committed to working with them to make that a reality.

Gary Farwell: When will that first eight miles realistically be completed? Wild guess?

Nancy Allen: Paul, or somebody, can you speak to how that would impact the schedule?

Paul Eagles: We have a schedule for the existing schedule based on the authorized grade. We have not worked up a new schedule for the change with putting in the locally preferred plan; however, it would be put in as expeditiously as possible, like Jason was talking about this morning. We've got to sit down with the Parish and the state and find out the steps that have got to take place to get...

Gary Farwell: Okay. I understand all that. Wild guess, when do you think that first section will be completed?

Paul Eagles: I can't make a guess without knowing what the steps to get that done are. I'm sorry.



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Gary Farwell: All right. In business you hear the term, it's very popular now, think outside the box. I'm glad to see the Corps is finally thinking outside the floodgate so please help us here.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir. Okay. I have cards, we now have two microphones, I have Mary Rivero, Sylvia McNabb, Matt Zuvich [Phonetic], Tim Schotch [Phonetic]

Matt Zuvich: My name is Matt Zuvich and I live in Jesuit Bend. And, I'm glad to see all you guys are here and you all plan work pretty well because you all split us all up. I mean, I think that was one of you all's tactics. We should've had everybody that was in the room here this morning here for this session because what they're going to see was Oakville's comments not Jesuit Bend's comments. We have never heard from you guys on our substantial comments. Colonel Lee, you said you all said something about them but we have never seen the documentation. I do want to ask one question because after the May 4th meeting I was coming home in my subdivision, Jesuit Bend, and I saw an entourage of about eight vehicles. Well, I recognized a bunch of you people right up in the front here, were in the vehicle, you all drove through our neighborhood, I got in my truck and I followed you all. You all went down to LaReussitte, everybody did, got out the trucks and looked to see what made sense, to remove the floodwall and bring it down 100-year protection all the way to LaReussitte. From what I was told, there was an option that was put out there to move the 100-year protection down to LaReussitte has been disbanded. How come that has happened? Colonel Lee, can you answer the question, was there a proposal to remove the floodgate and bring 100-year protection all the way to LaReussitte with a rise in the road without a floodgate?

Nancy Allen: Colonel Lee has stepped out, he is rotating, let me answer first that, the rotating session will go all day. They had opportunities to stay here and then go there and give their comments. We have folks in the resource room to answer questions and we can take written comments on any or all subject matter today. So, there's plenty of ways to get your voice heard.

Julie Vignes: Okay. Just to acknowledge, yes we've done some field visits with some of the elected officials, state, and Parish government, as we...

Matt Zuvich: Shouldn't you all have done that 20 years or 10 years ago, or three years ago when this first came out?

Julie Vignes: Well, those are just continued throughout the whole process and still continue today. And, what we went back and did is we looked at options, specifically options of how to cross at the proposed locations and we re-looked at, we re-asked the question, do we have the authority, the existing authority under the West Bank project to extend the 100-year to LaReussitte? And, we came back with the answer, we do not currently have the authority. So, it was a consideration, and the answer is we don't have the current authority. But, there is a process that we're working with the state and the Parish government to do it as a locally preferred plan or a change in the existing authorization from Congress.

Matt Zuvich: One comment, too, on the gentleman that was just up talking. He wasn't asking about how you're going to build this floodwall, he's talking about the line in the sand, where you all going to put it. If they would've done a recent study and looked at what we have below, south of Oakville, that line should have been moved to LaReussitte to begin with. His intent to Colonel Lee wasn't about the structures you all want to build and how sounds it's going to be based on all your knowledge, it's why didn't they move the line in the sand to where it should have been?

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Julie Vignes:: It goes back to the congressional authority. It's true that the way this West Bank study was dated in 1996, and the authority that we got in 2006 to bring it to 100-year protection did not extend our authority beyond what was the existing documents. So, we're building it to a higher level of protection, we're using current day design standards but it gave us more authority to the existing project.

Matt Zuvich: And, one other thing, you all came up with a lot of recognition this morning but I didn't hear anybody recognize Pete and his wife Jamie, if it weren't for them we wouldn't be in this meeting today and you all would have you all's floodwall with no opposition.

[Applause]

Matt Zuvich: Up until April none of us knew about this.

[Applause]

Matt Zuvich: You all talk about talking about this a year and a half ago, President Nungesser said it, and you guys said it with the Corps, about a year and a half ago you all been discussing this but we found out about it in April. And, the only way we did find out is because Pete came around door to door asking us about it. So, I mean, you all didn't think that. And, before your comment we heard you, well hear this, no floodwall at Oakville, go down to LaReussitte and get 100-year protection for all of us.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir. Mary Rivero, Sylvia McNabb, Tim Schotch. Okay. If they come back in, they'll certainly have another change. Wendy Keating, Bobbie Stockwell, I have cards with your names on them.

Wendy Keating: Good morning. My name's Wendy Keating. Colonel Lee made the comment in introduction that the flood insurance rates would not increase, however, once the floodgate is in place, how will you address the homeowner insurance affordability? This floodgate will clearly divide our Parish north and south. It is very probably that the south end of the floodgate will be reclassified as Coastal Plaquemines Parish. We will be reclassified at Coastal Plaquemines if we are not included in 100-year flood protection, not 50-year as proposed. Our homeowners insurance carriers can decide to drop our wind and hail coverage and/or non-renew our homeowner policies altogether. We will then be forced to obtain insurance through Louisiana Citizens and our premiums will increase. For example, my premium will go from \$4,000.00 a year to \$11,000.00 a year for less coverage. This isn't a scare tactic, this is a fact. Therefore, it is imperative that the community south of this floodgate be include in 100-year flood protection and I pray that you, Colonel Lee and the Army Corps of Engineers, will do all that you can do to include us in 100-year flood protection, anything less is unacceptable. Without it, many of us will no longer be able to afford to live in this wonderful Parish. Please don't forget about us. Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: We do have a representative of FEMA in the resource room to talk about the flood insurance program.

Bobbie Stockwell: My name is Bobbie Stockwell, and I'm just curious. I'd like you to show a map of the Oakville area again, please. Now, I'm wondering, if you could use the light, where does the federal levee end at Oakville? I live about a mile south of Oakville, and I was just curious as to why the levee is south of Oakville. Does it go right across or is it a few miles north, a few miles south? Because, I'm just wondering about that.

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Julie Vignes: The project, the West Bank and Vicinity project, the Eastern Tie-in portion of that, the location we're proposing across Highway 23, enclose that system, is essentially just south of Captain Larry's. Does that describe to you well enough where it is?

Bobbi Stockwell: Right. I was just wondering because some of us may just be a mile or two south.

Julie Vignes: Right. The area south of that will be protected by the non-federal levees that are being incorporated into the federal New Orleans to Venice project.

Bobbie Stockwell: And, I wanted to say something about the insurance problem. I mean, that's a huge problem for us. The flood insurance is not that big of an issue it's our wind and hail insurance and it's not going to do anything but go up. And, as far as the floodgate idea, even if it's an invisible floodgate, it's still going to be a problem for us as far as even if we want to sell our property. So, the financial issue is a big issue for us and that hasn't really been solved, you know, with what you've told us. That's just a comment that I wanted to make. Thank you.

[Applause]

Julie Vignes: Thank you, ma'am.

Nancy Allen: Zeke Austin, Stanley Gaudet [Phonetic], Jamie Stavros, if any of you want to come to the mic, please. Zeek or Stanley or Jamie.

Stanley Gaudet: Good morning. My name is Stanley Gaudet. A couple comments. One of the things I've heard today, when we get 100-year into LaReussitte the floodgate won't matter. It will always matter to us, we don't want the floodgate in our area.

[Applause]

Stanley Gaudet: And, I know you all listen and sometimes I think we're talking to the wrong people because I don't know even if you're listening you're hearing what we're saying. Give us the 100-year protection to LaReussitte and do not build the floodgate.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir.

Zeke Austin: My name is Zeke Austin, I live in Jesuit Bend. I guess the big issue I have in this meeting today and I think it's the same issue that everybody has here, since all this discussion started in April and May, there's been all the backdoor sessions, Billy's been in meetings with Colonel Lee, Billy's been in meetings with the lobbyists, Billy's been here, Colonel Lee's been there. Pete's been involved in some, Pete's probably not been involved in the ones that he needed to be in. The issue I got is the trust issue. What we were told yesterday, right, the eve of this meeting, that, trust us, we hope we can fix this thing, work with us, you know, and we'll get there. What I've seen today is a schedule that's authorized to get the West Bank and Vicinity complete for 2011, and I think that will happen, Colonel Lee made that perfectly clear. That will happen in 2011. What I also saw for the non-federal levees was another schedule, not near as solid, with a 2013 schedule, and I have concerns that, that 2013 schedule is going to become 2017 or even beyond. So, this message that Billy and McCrossen guy said to us this morning, trust us, we're going to work with the Corps between now and 2011 and get this thing done. I don't believe that for one minute.

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[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Jamie Stavros.

Jamie Stavros: Thanks for allowing me to be heard. I think my issue goes along with Zeke's, it's trust. Basically, the story you told to congress, you were suppose to tell them that we were there but you told them we were cows, a cow pasture and orange groves. That's how you described us, and you're not saying that. Part of that is that you were supposed to tell them what was there and you didn't. I have a big trust problem with that. That was your job to say we were there and you ignored that, now you want me to trust you. Do you think it's fair that I trust you now? I'm an American, today I wanted to be heard and I wanted to learn from other people's things that they had to say but you broke us up, split us in different rooms. You have reputation that, basically, it's not a good one, you had to hire press to kind of smooth that out. Should I trust you? Why didn't you tell congress we were there?

Multiple speakers in audience: Answer. Answer.

Nancy Allen: Are you, I'm sorry, I'm going to try to clarify...

Jamie Stavros: I'm asking a question.

Nancy Allen: Are you asking about environmental documentation, are you asking about the original WBV authorization...?

Jamie Stavros: The documentation that said that we were orange groves and cow pastures so that you could pass this study and put up a new levee, a new floodgate, not add dirt on an old one on a crossover and breakaway somewhere, but a new one, and that study basically says that my family can live without stress of worrying about what my house is worth, having my neighbors not having nervous breakdowns. That study was suppose to help me, help these people that are trying to talk to you, not this kangaroo court that's going on in here. I understand and I respect the uniform, I really do, but I really wish it wasn't involved because I'm having a hard time.

Nancy Allen: Julie?

JulieVignes: Right. I think the reference that the speaker is talking about is in our original IER 13 document. We described the area south of Oakville, we acknowledge that there was agricultural land and citrus groves, and you know, when we put out our environmental document addendum we intend to clear that issue up. It was intended to describe...

[Inaudible 01:36:53 – 01:36:55 Multiple speakers]

Jamie Stavros: I went to Washington D.C. based on your study and they're like, cow groves, cow pastures, orange groves. So, you know, you needed to clear it before you started running at us and stressing us out like this. And, you know it's the right thing, you know it's the right thing to do. You should have told them that we were there and today you didn't even address us as a stakeholder but yet we'll be suffering. We weren't addressed as a stakeholder and that was sneaky, and I don't appreciate that very much at all, and you know it, you know, every one of you, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, Colonel Lee, eight, you know you should've told them we were there.

Colonel Lee: I want to answer, I understand your concern about it. I think when Gib tried to talk earlier, I had to step out for a minute, but the basis of economic justification has nothing to do with what's in the Individual Environmental Report, and that's what Gib tried to explain.

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Jamie Stavros: You gave a description.

Colonel Lee: Of course, but it has absolutely nothing to do with the economic justification of whether 100-year level of protection is required or not required.

Jamie Stavros: No, no, is the study supposed to protect me economically, though? Is that study done so that you don't hurt me?

Colonel Lee: This study is an environmental...

Jamie Stavros: It's done so that you don't hurt me?

Colonel Lee: ... Individual Environmental Report and it is done to disclose the impacts...

Jamie Stavros: Impacts.

Colonel Lee: ... of the proposed action.

Jamie Stavros: Impacts of my area.

Colonel Lee: That's right.

Jamie Stavros: Economically, environmentally.

Colonel Lee: That's right, anything, air...

Jamie Stavros: You didn't tell them I was there.

Colonel Lee: ... human impacts, environmental impacts, noise, air, induced flooding.

Jamie Stavros: And, you didn't tell them I was there, they were counting on your description.

Colonel Lee: Well, that's part of the NEPA process and that's why we extended the public comment period, we allowed, we're having this...

Jamie Stavros: You've still got to tell them, you extended time for yourself to go tell them and you didn't do it.

Colonel Lee: And, that's what the addendum is for, the official document will incorporate the comments that you provided and the community provided in the Individual Environmental Report to address the concerns that you're stating here about the population centers in Jesuit Bend and the other parts of southern Plaquemines Parish that were, from your perspective or our perspective...

Jamie Stavros: Why don't you announce us as a stake holder then?

Colonel Lee: Announce...?

Jamie Stavros: Why didn't you say that we were stakeholders, acknowledge us so that you can say that you're impacting us.

Colonel Lee: Well, I think that you are a stakeholder.



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Jamie Stavros: No, you didn't today when you described everybody, you pretty much said this is all done for everybody up north and we understand your concerns down there. But, we need to be known as a stakeholder.

Colonel Lee: Of course, you're a stakeholder.

Jamie Stavros: And, do you have that documentation...?

Colonel Lee: I agree you're a stakeholder. Anybody that has a stake in a project, and that would mean people that live inside and outside of a project, is a stakeholder.

Jamie Stavros: Well, let me just tell you what happened with my homeowners insurance. I couldn't figure out why, I even asked a neighbor, why they thought my insurance, I couldn't figure it out, went from \$1200.00 a year pre-Katrina, post-Katrina \$4500.00, and \$9700.00, I rounded it to \$10,000.00 a year. They knew you were coming, I just didn't, and I wish that you had gone to congress and told them what you were going to do because if you had told them that we were there I don't think I'd be stressed out for the past two seasons waiting for answers on why I'm in this situation.

Colonel Lee: We don't control insurance rates. I live on the north shore...

Jamie Stavros: But, you have it throughout your documentation, insurance references all throughout your documentation.

Colonel Lee: ... I live on the north shore and the insurance rate that went up again last year and I'm not even, I'm at a plus 18 feet base flood elevation is where my foundation is, and that insurance has went up about three times what it was pre-Katrina, and that's 70 miles north of where you live.

Jamie Stavros: Well, why do you refer to insurance all throughout your documents and the Army Corps of Engineer documents, why do you refer to insurance?

Colonel Lee: I'll let, does somebody have an answer for that?

Jamie Stavros: Because it's going to affect us.

Colonel Lee: I think the only thing that's been referred to is flood insurance.

Jamie Stavros: But, that's because what you're doing is going to create the people in the new fortification, the people that somebody put so eloquently, the haves and the have nots. We're going to be on the outside and you can chose, you chose to buy a house that's in with no issues or out with issues, and there is our trouble right there, that people are going to chose to be in with no issues.

Colonel Lee: I understand your perspective and I don't live there so I can't completely understand it but I try to understand it. What you have now with the protection in place is precarious at best, and I think that you saw the effects of Katrina, Rita, Gustav, and Ike...

Jamie Stavros: I didn't have a claim.

Colonel Lee: ... on that levee system that is there right now. What the Corps of Engineers, the Plaquemines Parish, and your input is trying to build with the new federal system will greatly reduce your risk because your risks are significant right now.

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Jamie Stavros: Well, I know, let's talk about those risks because when you put up that world's largest pumping station that I know it's probably a seat and you all should probably be very proud of it and I'm sure it's great work, but when you put up one of the world's largest floodgates back there behind us and then all the water that use to go where it did and it's not, then you turn on that pumping station and it pumps out, tell me about the funneling affect that's going to happen towards Oakville and Jesuit Bend levees.

Colonel Lee: Well, that's the modeling that I talked about earlier. There's a range and the range is minus 0.6 which is about a half a foot and minus to about three quarters of a foot plus. That's what our modeling shows.

Jamie Stavros: Now, initially you had said two to three inches, and so what I'm guessing and I really would like to come in and get more educated about it, but is it your little machine there that you put things in and the different variables. How do I know you're putting in the variables that, like, wind, important things like wind, how do I know what your variables are?

Colonel Lee: We have Deputy Chief of Engineering here and also my hydraulic subject matter experts...

Jamie Stavros: We've been trying to get in to see.

Colonel Lee: ... is in the resource room and she'll be glad to show you the map, show you points along the levee reaches where the water surface elevations, how they're affected by, not just the pump stations, actually the pump station in that project decreases the amount of water that gets put in below that so it's really the levees and the structure because...

Jamie Stavros: So, you won't be pumping any water that the city has collected out into my backyard, into the basin?

Colonel Lee: Let me explain. Before that gets built, right now there's eight pump stations that pump into Harvey and Algiers Canal, that water flows right where its flowing right now. And, so when we put that surge barrier, the floodgates and that pump station, we will actually be withholding water behind that barrier to a higher elevation...

Jamie Stavros: And, when that gets full?

Colonel Lee: Yeah, we pump, but...

Jamie Stavros: Pump.

Colonel Lee: ... but that's less than what's flowing through there right now during a hurricane event. I mean, the city will pump eight pump stations, it will flow in the Barataria Basin, when we build that surge barrier the water surface elevation behind the barrier, north of it, will actually go up and hold back water from going into the Batataria Basin.

Jamie Stavros: Well, I have to say I'm not that educated on what you're saying.

Colonel Lee: But, we'll be glad to show you.

Jamie Stavros: And, I would love to bring a hydrologist in because we've been trying to do that, to bring one in...

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Nancy Allen: We have been trying to schedule that.

Jamie Stavros: ... so we can share information and make sure that we get taken care of.

Nancy Allen: We have hydrologists, we have one of each of these folks in a room with a map. I'm going to have to move on to other folks but you're welcome, once we've gone through all the cards, to ask any other questions as well.

Jamie Stavros: Thank you for your time.

Nancy Allen: Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Marggie Lachaise, Rose Jackson, also, Anita Cognevich [Phonetic]. , Ralph Herman, Jr., Pete Stavros [Phonetic].

Male speaker: I don't know if I can follow that very well. First of all, I appreciate you listening to some of our comments. When we arrived here today I was a little upset because we had been trying to get the direct answers, the actually substantive comments that we made in April and May and then the direct answers. I know that Colonel Lee addressed some of those in his opening remarks but what we've got is an opinion that is being used to make a record decision here in about a month. We respectfully ask for the data behind that recommendation so that we can get a second opinion on the economic impact of those that will be south of that area. We talked about NEPA and the alternative arrangements that were authorized by congress to allow a fast-track of this project. In March of '07, it specified in about a seven-page document what you could and couldn't do legally to get around during the full EIS, we all agreed that we need protection, we need it fast, it was appropriated under emergency authorization to get it done. The problem is that when we go fast we have the potential to make an error and part of the alternative arrangements are to look, particular on paragraph 4 that says, a geographic area large enough needs to be evaluated for both direct and indirect effects, and we are being affected economically and at flood risk. Initially it's negligible, now its nine inches, what is enough to say, we are affected?

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Gib, when you start can you clarify the schedule for the addendum to IER 13 that will answer the comments?

Gib Owen: Right. Our intent is to, after this meeting, is to finalize a proposed action with Colonel Lee and have the addendum out by the end of this month, by the 30th of September. That would leave the entire month of October as your 30-day comment period for anybody as a stakeholder to weigh-in on it, and then after that we would prepare a document and give Colonel Lee the opportunity to review it, he's involved all along but he would do a final review and then he would make a decision as he so chooses. Now, you brought up substantive comments, and we've heard that, the process that you're describing, alternative arrangements, was specifically set-up to allow if we determined there were substantive comments, and as Colonel Lee makes that determination to write an addendum, and that's the exact process we're following here. So, the answers to those substantive comments, the three that Colonel Lee laid out today, are in that addendum that should be coming out by the end of this month. That's the process in place that follows exactly the alternative arrangements.

Male speaker: Well, what we did get and I understand that the date is the 30th of September for the publication of the IER addendum, that's 11 days from now, I would hazard to guess that that's already

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gone through the coordination and staff summary sheets or whatever it goes through, and that we have a copy of that somewhere electronically that we could see that prior to this meeting because we're going to have to come back again and look at another meeting sometime in October when we could've done this now.

Gib Owen: Right. And, that document has not been completed, we don't know what the proposed action is going to be. We can't release it until it goes through the process, when it comes out on the 2nd or 3rd, that's the 30-day public comment period.

Male speaker: I understand. We verbally have said that there is no economic impact and I will say that whatever economist is doing the evaluation on property values based on the new floodgate or any structure going on in Oakville needs to be second guessed and another opinion needs to be looked at.

Gib Owen: As I said earlier, Keven Lovetro is the gentleman that's the sector chief on this section. He is in the resource room and you can discuss that with him. The processes he followed, as Colonel Lee said, there are very formal processes that we go through. These impacts, give you his justification and backup, explain, his experience and how he came to these decisions.

Male speaker: I understand that each of these separate projects and congressional authorization, my concern is the promise of 100-year protection afterwards even if we go through the design process, to start it with the promises that way that may or may not have been that flooding. If we're not included in this particular, I fear that we're going to have that piece put up in place to answer **[Inaudible 01:50:23 Speaking too low]**, we're going to be exposed for a period of time.

Male engineer: We understand that, I mean, that was actually the very conversation on Thursday. That's why we're trying to move all this in as parallel track to get everybody up to the **[Inaudible 01:50:42 – 01:50:44 Speaking too low]** that we're allowed to.

Male speaker: I think what we've done is passively acknowledged that we have the plain sense of trying to push this forward because we understand the concerns. My question is, why we can't get it put in **[Inaudible 01:50:54 – 01:50:58 Speaking too low]**. And, if it's a congressional act that's required then let's build **[Inaudible 01:51:00 Speaking too low]** side-by-side and go back and ask the questions and get it changed.

[Applause]

Male engineer: The Corps cannot lobby Congress but you can.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you.

Colonel Lee: Just real quick, I want to make sure I reiterate this. We've had multiple meetings with local elected officials, state of Louisiana, and the congressional delegation about this project so we have given them, what we believe is, the information that those officials need to make decisions, and I think the track we're working with Plaquemines Parish on the locally preferred plan is the best way to

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accomplish what you want to accomplish. There are no guarantees but I think you heard what President Nungesser said and what Jason McCrossen said this morning of their path forward, and we're going to work with them to move that forward in everything that we can do to do that. I'm going up to Congress this week and I'll be talking to the two senators and the Congressman, actually Congressmen, that represent Orleans and Plaquemines Parish and we'll have discussion on this project, I am sure.

Nancy Allen: We need to move on to some of the other folks that we have waiting. We'll let you come back up when we're done. Ralph Herman, Anita Cognevich, Rose Jackson, Marggie LaClaire, I have cards with all of your names on them. Mike Muff [**Phonetic**] from Myrtle Grove, Emily Campbell from ConocoPhillips, if either of you would come to the mic.

Mike Muff: I'm Mike Muff from Myrtle Grove. However, if there are other neighbors from Jesuit Bend that would still like to speak on their issues, I would be glad to sit down and let them get through because they seem to have a momentum going and we have the same concerns for them that we have within our neighborhoods. So, does anyone else...?

Nancy Allen: I don't know who's from where, I just have a stack of cards. Some of you have written your neighborhoods and most of you have not. So, I would like to just proceed with everybody that I've given a chance to speak to, please.

Mike Muff: All right. Thank you. On section 3, that's the Myrtle Grove area, since we've been here we've heard that this is just tentative alignments and you don't have all of the answers. The people in Myrtle Grove, however, feel that we do have all of the answers, we're just asking for you all to listen like the people in Jesuit Bend. This alignment, the way it's proposed right now, puts an additional seven foot of water in every home in Myrtle Grove. These homes at Myrtle Grove traditionally don't flood, if they do get water it's very, very minimal. This recommendation, if it's passed, will put seven foot of water in every home. So, I don't understand how this could possibly be called flood protection. I'm just having a hard time dealing with that. There are several issues. This documentation off of the Corps web, I have it here, I have this entire presentation copied so I can pass it on to Colonel Lee or whoever needs to have it. There's a statement in this documentation where you explain the various sections and it says the alignment intentionally places the Myrtle Grove Marina on the outside of the system allowing for marina expansion, that is so simple to resolve, it's not funny. If you'll just take that original alignment that follows that canal and instead of going up to Highway 23 on this side and then running down parallel to Highway 23, if you just bring that levee just like this, swing it right here and put a floodgate, you have taken all of that levee away from Highway 23. That's the levee and that's the place on Highway 23 that floods every time there's a hurricane. That's the section of Highway 23 that completely severs the northern end of the Parish from the southern end of the Parish. That is the most troublesome area that we have in this Parish. Another thing it does, if you would just look at for a minute, by building your levees up following the existing alignment, swing in the canal right in alignment with our pump with a floodgate, this creates a safe harbor for all of our marine fisheries. The last several hurricanes our marine and fisheries people were almost inundated, I mean, devastated because they had no place to park their boats. This offers them, along with people from Lafitte and Empire, for Empire, Myrtle Grove's 45 minutes, it gives these people a place to bring their boats and it offers them a safe haven. It just makes good sense.

The only other concern that we would have as far as the constituents at Myrtle Grove is you have approximately 300 home sites, there's about 70 homes that have already been built, you've got another possible expansion, if you swing the canal, the existing levee, if you swing it down with a floodgate, then you can also develop all this into marina because you still have water access and it will not only be marina but it will be marina protected by a floodgate. It just makes good sense. So, having said that, I don't know if anyone else has anything else that they've like to add to this...

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Male engineer: I have a question, what was the basis of the increased flood height you're talking about, the seven feet that you mentioned?

Mike Muff: Wait, I beg your pardon?

Male engineer: What was the basis for the seven feet additional water you're talking about, or?

Mike Muff: Our existing little levee around the marina right now is at, I believe, a plus 4, that's the existing little potato ridge levee, runs right here and it's the little blue right on this side, that's at a plus 4. The majority of us at the marina realize that, that was the containment levee and we all realized that if we built our homes above that levee the water would have to flow over the levee before it got into our houses. In most cases, and in the past, if we did raise the levee, it may have been 12 inches, 18 inches, never to the magnitude of seven foot, that's our biggest concern. Our houses were built at an elevation, at the time, was conducive to the existing levee protection. This, and it says potential to increase seven and a half foot that just inundates every home at the Myrtle Grove Marina.

Now, I understand that the man under the gun here is Colonel Lee so if he doesn't mind, I have this completely documented and I would like to give it to Colonel Lee at this time that way, he says he's going to Washington, we have complete documentation. One other point, before I give it to him, early on in this progress, on May the 14th, the council, the Plaquemines Parish government unanimously passed a resolution urging the Corps of Engineers to consider this alternate proposal along with the floodgate. Well, as your soil borings have gone on in the Myrtle Grove area we have seen no activity on the back canal, nothing to even indicate that our scenario was even being looking into. That's caused a lot of concern for us. It was brought back to the Parish, our concerns, and then the Parish actually adopted a second resolution where they absolutely object to this alignment. The first resolution they use a little bit of diplomacy and asked the Corps of Engineers to look into an alternative, apparently nothing was done. The second resolution, diplomacy went out the window, they flat object to it. So, here we're sitting here with two pieces of legislation from our government unanimously adopted to absolutely look at our proposal and we would just hope that it didn't take two resolutions to get us to do it, and like I said, all we can do is hope that you all will take this under consideration and realize that your present intention line will intentionally flood every home at Myrtle Grove. And, with that I'd like to pass this to whoever I have to.

Nancy Allen: We'll take that, sir.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Can I ask the panel, does somebody have that resolution? Does somebody with the Corps of Engineers have copies of that resolution? Blair, can you see if that resolution can be resent to our teammates in New Orleans and Vicksburg? We're not sure who has a copy of that. Okay.

Paul Eagles: We did look at the alignments that were proposed and when Colonel McCormick made his recommendation in...

Speaker in audience: Speak up, we can't hear you.

Nancy Allen: Hold on.

Paul Eagles: Can you hear me now? Okay. We did look at the tentative alignments that were mentioned and that was evaluated before Colonel McCormick's final alignment decision end of May,

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however, we were sure to go back and look at those to make sure we didn't miss anything and would like to those, your counsel...

Nancy Allen: The resolution.

Paul Eagles: Resolutions, yes.

Nancy Allen: Yes. We will get copies of those. Thanks, Paul. Emily Campbell, ConocoPhillips.

Emily Campbell: Hi, I'm Emily Campbell, an engineer for ConocoPhillips. I just wanted to continue to reiterate our interest in keeping the alignment protecting as much land as possible. ConocoPhillips is one of the largest refineries in the United States, and if you remember after Katrina gas prices were adversely affected across the nation due to flooding at the refinery as well as, I'm sure, other economic things. But, I just, you know, we consider the land that we own as essential to protecting the assets that we have and that protects a lot of things with the economy and jobs in this area, and we would just ask that you all protect as much land as possible. We know levees tend to overtop and the land serves as a buffer, the properties and developments that are within that land and those polders, the larger they are the more they can absorb that and have a change to transport the water and pump it out.

And, on a personal note, I'm an engineer but prior to my engineering degree I got a degree in government and I remember in class my teachers talking about the constitutional right of life, liberty, and the pursuit happiness, and as a 20-year-old it didn't mean much to me what the pursuit of happiness was when my teach told me that it was the ownership of land, by enlarge, when this country was founded the pursuit of happiness was defined as land ownership. And, so I just ask you to consider land and still I hear this talk about land being agricultural but I would ask you to consider the land as being one of the fundamental rights of this country not so much by what it's used for...

[Applause]

Emily Campbell: ... not so much for what it used for but by the fact that people do own it and I think everybody cherishes the right. And, I know we get carried away drawing lines on big maps zoomed out but zoomed in those are individual lots and people live in those places and I thank you for all of your work, and I just ask you to remember to continue to be compassionate when you're applying the rules that you're required to live under.

Nancy Allen: Thank you.

Male engineer: Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: One announcement, we still have the rotating session going, you have a chance to see all four half hour sessions, if you are to depart now. I think the next session will start in about 10 minutes. Is that right, Ken? Again, also we have the displays in the resource room so if you just want to look at them and talk to folks you can do that in the resource room but we're going to continue in here while I still have cards in front of me. Bert Sandlin, and Pat McCabe. And, we really want to thank you all for any input that you have on these alignments that we're showing you this morning, that's very helpful for our team. That's what we need to hear more of. So, Bert Eiermann or Pat McCabe, can make your way to the mic. We'll give people just a minute. Again, we'll take written comments on anything

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and we have everybody in the resource room available to continue discussions so you're welcome to stay here as well.

Bert Eiermann: Hello, my name is Bert Eiermann, I've got my degree in civil structural engineering from Mississippi State about 30 years ago. I live on the canal, I've done a bunch of the permitting process, been through all that kind of stuff. I was here during Katrina, saw all the stuff. I helped repair the Belle Chasse ferry landings, went down to Empire, did three dives on the Empire floodgates. So, I've been around a little bit around this area. A couple questions I have. First is, how much of this property of non-federal levees is privately owned right-of-way and how much of it is government owned property?

Nancy Allen: Somebody speak to that question.

Male engineer: I think it's mostly private land, all private land.

Bert Eiermann: Okay. Have we taken any effort to try to bring the landowners into building anything on these things, encourage the landowners to do things that help what we're doing? I mean, a lot of landowners would be happy to build up levees and maintain levees. I'm looking at it saying, getting the landowners to take ownership of the property, to become stewards of the levee system, to watch over it.

Male engineer: Since it's not in the Corps system now we wouldn't be doing anything like that, I don't believe. So, no.

Bert Eiermann: You know, if we turn around and we're looking at people building piers, turn around and make them build piers, if they get a permit to build a pier, ask them to build a pier so that at least the pilings come up higher than the top of the levee so that if the water does come then debris or boats or something have something still left to tie to. Just certain things you can ask them to do, where they can plant trees, create drawings and saying what they can do and what we would prefer them to do, what we would like to see the landowners actually do. Make them part of this.

Male engineer: We did mention in some scoping meetings last weekend down in the lower part of the Parish that as they are doing new construction that they try not to get too close to the levee. That was one reason we brought up.

Male engineer: There's a slide up here if we can pull it back up on buying down the risk. You're highlighting exactly what is one of key messages here, it is a partnership with the citizens, with the federal government, with the state, the Parish, everybody. Everybody has a different authority and a different roll, like, floodplain management is at the local level. But, as you see here, its starts with non-structural, that's the local homeowner, does he build his home high enough to be above the base flood, you'll see that it goes all the way down to the federal government or the state or whoever is going to handle the levees. It's exactly what you're saying, there is a partnership and everybody plays a role in that to buy down that risk to the greatest extent practical.

Male speaker: Okay. One of the things I'm looking at, too, is if we're digging borrow pits in order to build levees, okay, we dig these borrow pits and by digging borrow pits we can create catch basins so if we overtop levees the water has someplace to go rather than flooding somebody's house. If we take those things into consideration, where we put, I'll give you an idea, just like this WCC project we've got going on with the floodgates, we're looking at putting the Highway 23, Peter's Road extension tie-in, okay, you're building a road. We have a big triangle that we have created in between that area

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that's pretty much, there's not a whole lot of people living in that area so we've actually created a catch basin in between there that's about 700 acres.

Male engineer: That's correct.

Male speaker: Okay. Now, that property is hardwood, wetlands, its three foot below sea level, okay, and rather than when we shut the floodgates and we start pumping at 28,000 cubic feet per second with the nine flood pumps that feed in to the Algiers Canal and the Harvey Canal, rather than pumping it over the wall, put it in catch basin that way we're not flooding our neighbors downstream.

Male engineer: And, as Colonel Lee explained, that's exactly what we're doing. Right now the capacity in that area is 29,000 CFS, we're going to move, the pump station being built will only move 20,000, we are going to use the area behind it, the Algiers Canal, the area you're talking about, and the Harvey Canal as a retention basin.

Male speaker: No, I'm not talking about using the Algiers Canal and the Harvey Canal as catch basin. I don't want to be sitting there watching and seeing a hurricane and somebody's pumping, you know, eight feet about sea level in the canal and have a wall of water waiting to come rushing down on houses. I'm saying if we're going to keep the level in the canals the same, the Algiers Canal, the Harvey Canal stays the same, the last place I want to put it is above my head, I would rather have it in a hole down below. If I'm going to pump it someplace, I create a catch basin by the land that we dig out to build the 16-foot high levee walls, to build the Highway 23 bridge, I mean, the St. Peter's Road addition, we've created a catch basin in there we can utilize that. And, it's still good usable property, you don't flood it unless you have to flood it, you still have, you know, people can still use it for the shooting range, they can still use it for everything else. And, it may never flood in my lifetime, we may never use it in my lifetime but it's available.

Male engineer: Right. We have not explored taking anybody's private land to do that but we do encourage and we work with our partners on it, the state or the local governments, on the borrow pits to potentially use those as retention. Some of those, actually, when their borrow pits actually stay in the private ownership, it depends on how we acquire them or acquire the use of them. But, on the ones, I know there's two in Orleans Parish right now that the Parish is looking very seriously as using them as retention basins, doing exactly what you're saying, pulling them down just before a storm and using them to retain water, to hold it long enough for the storm to pass and then pump it out.

Male speaker: I'm trying to get all the different projects to work together.

Male engineer: I know that but you're also talking about impacting private lands and we have to be very careful [Inaudible]...

Male speaker: Yes. You know, the other thing is, there's natural barriers that we have. Now, I'm looking at it and we've got a project that's \$16.8 billion that affects 286,000 people, that's the numbers I read in the thing, that's \$58,000.00 per person, that's a lot of money. But, then it affects a lot more than just the people, you know, we have the ConocoPhillips refinery, we have the oil and gas quarter, this is a support that supports the oil and gas industry that supplies natural gas up north, this is part of national security, this is something that people have to have, and they have to have the people here to take care of it. But, you know, we look at it and there's a dollar value to everything we do and I'm looking at it and saying, okay, we have \$16.8 billion, \$58,000.00 per person, and I realize that because of the natural barriers certain people are disenfranchised. Now, rather than a physical solution to some of this stuff maybe we start looking at an economic solution, an economic solution may make better sense. Let's say, for temporary insurance support for the people that are disenfranchised for a year or two

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because they don't have protection. Maybe, people that we don't include because it's just too costly, you know, it just costs too much to try to include certain people within the thing because of where the natural barriers are and you basically say, okay, you give them a permanent flood insurance assistance, and basically, wipe out their flood insurance and then give them a relocation assistance if they do flood. Something along that line. Money right up front. It could save billions of dollars. So, I'm looking at saying, you know, what are the benefits in a cost per benefit per person to do certain areas and then look at it from an economic solution as well as a physical solution and I'm just trying to bring a little more things into light as far as this goes. And, these things are stuff that we still haven't made decisions on, we still can make decisions on coming up. One of the things I'm looking at, the permitting process that we have, I mean, it's pretty honourous, any of the landowners that live along and want to permit property, you know, and do anything as far as building bulk heads, piers, anything like that, you've got to go through about 10 different government agencies to get something to happen. And, it's, you know, if we decide what things we like to see the landowners do and try to encourage those landowners to do those things and speed that process up, the things like, I'd like to see, you know, and it's something that, I don't own any land at the Gulf but I'd like to see somebody encourage right at where the waves break to turn around and say, "Okay. We'd like to build-up some sort of bulk head along there, some sort of barrier island, whatever." Encourage the sportsmen to go in and put in camps, bring dirt, sink barges, artificial reefs in 30 feet of water, not artificial reefs in 300 feet of water, I'm looking at artificial reefs in 30 feet of water where the waves are going to break up against them, where the fish are going to have a habitat, where the barnacles are going to grow and the algae is going to be on it, you know, where you can put lights on the thing and fishermen can drive up and hook up their boat right to a piece of steel or something. I'm looking at trying to bring things in like that, that are going to help retain the marsh. I mean, you turn around and you say, "Okay. I hurt the marsh there." And, we go all the environmental stuff but then all the marsh behind is being held in by people building up things along that line.

Male engineer: Right. We are pursuing and many of you have been to the meetings and heard the multiple lines of defense and that line of defense starts at the Barrier Islands and we have certain authorities that we're working on to do projects there. We have the Louisiana Coastal Act that we have 10 projects ongoing right now under study, Congress authorized them for study with the potential to spend \$2 billion. As soon as those studies are done, they're scheduled to be done in December 2010. So, our part of it we're moving forward with. You're asking for things that are much more on a local basis. You need to really pursue the local Parish or the state to go after.

Male speaker: Well...

Nancy Allen: I think this is great discussion but I've got a few more cards and I'd like to kind of bring it back to the information that we're here to discuss today. But, you're welcome to talk with any of us afterwards.

Male speaker: I'm looking at things like that with the landowners, it costs the community nothing, zero. And, it makes the landowners better stewards and protect the rest of the community. That's the kind of things I'd like to see get pulled into this.

Male engineer: Right. And, that goes back to what I was saying, this is a partnership with all of us and we greatly encourage that within the authorities given to each agency or the people.

Male speaker: Okay. Thank you.

Nancy Allen: Thank you. Okay. I have four people left. Chester Wallace, Pat McCabe, Spencer Keating, and Doug LeBlanc [Phonetic], if any of you are here. And, when we finish with these folks we'll open up the comments and questions from everybody else.

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Doug LeBlanc: My name is Doug LeBlanc, I live in Jesuit Bend. I'm listening to all these comments and everything, and with all due respect to this panel here, probably you all wasn't even around when all this started in 1984, you know, when we was supposed to start it. You inherited a very nightmarish situation, I feel like, you know, it's hard to deal with. Considering that, you know, and our Parish President and the councilmen and everybody are not here anymore, I feel like the Parish sold us out. Billy Nungesser was telling us that he was against this floodwall plan since I started coming to the meetings with the first meeting that was in Jesuit Bend. At that meeting he said, "Well, it's a done deal." But, you know, after that he started saying, "Well, I'm going to be against it, see what I can do." Okay. Well, this morning, in the paper when I read is when I found out that all this happened. Okay. Billy Nungesser is backing you all and he's ready to go tell the council to back the plan and everything, and Anthony Beurison, he's not here either, he's our councilperson, but, you know, like I say, I feel like we've been sold out. My question about all this is, and I don't know about the hydraulics, you know, I'm not an engineer, I've been around the swamps a long time though, I'm 67 years old, I'm retired. What you're getting ready to do is make Jesuit Bend a rice field, basically. Would you like six inches of water in your home? Only six inches? Six inches of water that means you've got to start tearing out all the sheetrock and everything. My daughter lives around the corner from me in Jesuit Bend, unfortunately, her house is lower than mine and she had approximately six to eight inches in her house, and they had to tear sheetrock up four foot. That's no fun. I don't feel like you all are a bunch of evil people up here trying to push something down our throats and everything because you have to follow the rules of congress and everything. But, sometimes when we ask questions you all look at us, like, "Hey, I don't know," you know, "What can I do?" We don't get the answers that we need, you know. Nobody says just how much the governments going to back us on the insurance, you know, this federally funded flood insurance plan right now. If the floodwall's put up and all of the sudden I've got to pay double the flood insurance, well, you know, I feel that the government should be paying that extra money that I have to pay because they put me in that situation, you know. They're doing things now because of Katrina, and God forbid we ever have another that does that to our city and what happened, you know, in the Ninth Ward and everything. But, if it does happen and we've been cutoff from it, something should be done to, you know, I feel like my property value won't be there, I feel like my insurance rates have already doubled, you know, and the flood insurance I want to know, you know, if the governments going to back that at all, you know. I'm not entirely sure about all your plans. Just like I said with the hydraulics, that gentleman was saying before, a simpler plan would be down in Myrtle Grove to extend that levee right over to that pumping station. Sometimes the common sense makes a lot more sense than engineering sense, you know. My son's an engineer. Sometimes he can't see the forest through the trees, you know, somebody looking on the outside does. It took an act of congress in 1996 to get it changed so Oakville would be contained within the wall, why can't an act of congress be made now for us?

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: It absolutely can, sir. And, you need to work with your Parish and your elected officials to pass that message on. I urge you.

Doug LeBlanc: I don't understand. Why are we split up like this? Was this planned?

Nancy Allen: We wanted to give...

Doug LeBlanc: I mean, why couldn't we have on meeting in here where everybody's that's involved or concerned about what's going on could be in the same place? Look at us.

[Applause]



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Nancy Allen: We certainly understand your concern. We gave you all every opportunity to choose what you wanted to hear about today, where you wanted to give your input. That information is also available in the resource room so you did not have to leave. But, if we had sat here and sat through this and then sat through four sessions on the four options for crossings, wouldn't you agree we wouldn't have had a chance to get your input on this project or their input, anybody else's input on the Highway 23 crossing. So, result, this is the best way to accomplish everybody's wants and needs for today and for us to be able to listen to as many of you as possible.

Doug LeBlanc: Well, have you all started on the wall, I mean, have you started on the levee, the back levee yet?

Male engineer: No, sir.

Doug LeBlanc: You said that, I think I wrote down here...

Male engineer: Right now...

Doug LeBlanc: ... 2011 the contract's going to be let on that. Is that correct?

Male engineer: You're talking about the non-federal levee?

Doug LeBlanc: The back levee behind Jesuit Bend, the extension that's going all the way down to St. Jude.

Nancy Allen: The non-federal levee.

Male engineer: That's the current...

Doug LeBlanc: Has it been started yet?

Male engineer: That's the current schedule, we're going through the environmental process...

Doug LeBlanc: I can't hear you, I'm hard of hearing. Just speak up a little bit.

Male engineer: We are currently going through the environmental process. Once that is done and approved then they would do the real estate acquisition and then the contracts would be let to construct. The current schedule shows that occurring in 2011, March 2011.

Doug LeBlanc: When are they coming up?

Male engineer: Inaudible

Doug LeBlanc: That's what I have, 1911.

Doug LeBlanc: I mean, 2011.

Nancy Allen: The contract will be...

Doug LeBlanc: The contract's going to be let?

Nancy Allen: 2011, sir.

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Doug LeBlanc: God forbid.

Male engineer: But, would like to...

Doug LeBlanc: Thank you.

Male engineer: ... I would like to reemphasize something you brought up.

[Applause]

Male engineer: The non-federal levee program is going to reduce the risk of Jesuit Bend and everybody else. Right now, as Colonel Lee stated, it's a very precarious, HESCO baskets, the type of levee that's there, that levee, when it's constructed, will be higher and much, much more robust and resilient. So, it's not going to turn Jesuit Bend into rice fields, its going to increase the level of protection that's there today.

Doug LeBlanc: Yeah, well, I can understand what you're saying, you know. And, I'm looking at that levee back there and they got the hesco bags on top of it and everything, and I appreciate that, you know, I mean, that's something that really made a difference, you know. And, I feel like that somebody, you know, why aren't they starting sooner on this? You have to go off all these steps and everything before you can do something, you know?

Male engineer: Correct. There is a very specific process and we're streamlining, we're trying...

Doug LeBlanc: You all trying to, I mean, you're all trying to push it through as much as possible, I feel like, you know, as quickly as possible. But, you know, quite frankly, I'm scared, you know. If one comes through, like I said before, God forbid, I don't ever want to see another one around here in my lifetime, and even after my lifetime I don't want to see it. By then I hope that we are protected, all of New Orleans, and you know, probably none of you all are from New Orleans area, if you are from New Orleans area, you know, you don't appreciate what we have here. They think we're just a hole in the, you know, something that's going to sink into the sea anyhow and we're going to lose it so why worry about it. That's not the case. You're going to lose, you know, the heritage, the history, everything in New Orleans that vital to us and everything will be lost, and we can't afford to have this happen. And, this stuff just, you know, why wasn't the levee started in 1984, you know, when congress first, you know, gave the contracts out, why wasn't it started then? You all had the money and authorization to do it then, didn't you?

Nancy Allen: No, sir. No. This levee was not authorized to be brought into the federal system until after Hurricane Katrina.

Doug LeBlanc: I understand that but I'm talking about is, if the money was there back in 1984 why wasn't it started back then, and even not including us, I can understand that, you know?

Male engineer: Right. It was not justified...

Doug LeBlanc: If you all started the levee when you had the authorization and the money, you know. Not our levee, I'm not talking about the back levee, I'm talking about what you're building now...

Nancy Allen: Julie?

Doug LeBlanc: ... why wasn't it built sooner?

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Julie Vignes: Right. So, there was an authorization in '86, an additional authorization in '96 but at that time the project wasn't fully funded, we were getting incremental funding on a yearly basis.

Doug LeBlanc: Yeah, well, did you start with the funding you had?

Julie Vignes: But, now it is fully funded at this point.

Doug LeBlanc: Was it started on with the money you had?

Julie Vignes: There were portions of the West Bank project that was started in the timeline of the original authorization, yes.

Doug LeBlanc: Well, I think that, you know, it's a done deal, we're going to have problems, like I say, I'm going to be living in a rice field. Thank you.

Nancy Allen: Sir, go ahead.

Chester Wallace: My name is Chester Wallace, I live at Ali, and I've been here all morning listening to you all basically say the cow jumped over the moon. And, you know, I'll be quick and I'll be short about it. When I was a young man I bought an Edsel and I'll I can say right now about listening to all this is, I've already bought an Edsel so don't b.s. me. Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir. I still have cards from Pat McCabe and Spencer Keating. I will also opening up the microphones if you will line up behind them we will continue to take your comments and questions. Oh, Rose Jackson, I'm sorry, I should have run through these people that I have. If you turned in a speaker card and either you weren't here when I called your name or we didn't somehow get it, I'm very sorry, please come to the mic. I just ask, again, that we try to keep our comments three to five minutes so we can be here. Go ahead, ma'am.

Rose Jackson: Hi, my name is Rose Jackson. I just came from one of your sessions where they were showing the option for the floodwall. And, one of them that I went to was about the ramp, the second one was about the invisible floodgate. Now, number one, that raising of that ramp in Oakville, which I expressed my feelings about months ago, since last year, that, that was a bad idea. We have three historical churches in that community. The people from the east side of Oakville attend these churches. We have elderly aged people, where they want to raise that ramp, there's an 82-year-old woman's house sit there. Right next, in the back of her, is an 85-year-old man who built a \$400,000.00 home. And, that ramp is going to [Inaudible] those old people. Whoever designed this particular project were not thinking, it came from the highway department, which we were told back there in the session. Number one, the Louisiana Highway Department doesn't take care of their highways now. We have water that drains off that highway that drains into the main drainage ditches that goes beyond the back of my house, my property. We had rain five days last week. I watched my babies play in sewage water because the water drained from the front, the sewage lines overflowed, the sewage comes up through the manhole, these kids out there on the side of the street in my community playing in this unhealthy, defective water with human waste in it. If the highway department can't fix their existing problems now, that one they need to take it and shove it in the back of the closet like they do all the other stuff. That's a no-no. That community is over 200 years old and I'm not going to set aside and see it be divided. That's an all black, Afro-American historical community, and when you're talking about dividing a community like that, that's sounds like a big old racial issue to me. Now, the invisible gate, excellent idea. Whoever came up

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with that, with that option, the best one that they ever came out with. That's a good go ahead but forget the ramp.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, ma'am. Yes, sir.

Donald Landry: Just to make a point. My name is Donald Landry. Just to make a point, again, that gracious lady is addressing these issues and the only people left here is Corps. We apologize that you all happen to catch the brunt of where our local and congressional delegates, any congressional delegates still here? No. Any Parish representatives still here?

Nancy Allen: Blair's here.

Donald Landry: No.

Nancy Allen: All of this will go into the public record, the transcript for all of these will be available.

Donald Landry: Right. And, they're very busy and I'm sure they'll extensively look at it all. I have two issues. One issue is, if we are going to pursue 100-year protection for the Oakville to LaReussitte reach, as that project moves, my first question is, is that going to take place, my understanding, my interpretation of the presentation was, it's going to start on the north end, add Oakville, and construction of that levee would head south?

Nancy Allen: Are you talking about the locally preferred plan, sir?

Donald Landry: The new federal levee.

Nancy Allen: Okay. So, section 1, Paul.

Donald Landry: Section 1.

Paul Eagles: Probably so.

Donald Landry: Okay.

Paul Eagles: That's what we would envision, I think.

Donald Landry: Okay. Then I would make a proposal that you run some hydraulic models as to the impact of the water as that levee construction heads further south and then turns towards the southeast because our true risk in this entire area is the Barataria Basin, and it is a southern exposed levee that has the greatest potential for topping. So, as we run a levee south and then southeast those risks to Oakville to LaReussitte start dropping. So, at different stages, my proposal would be to run models at different stages of that construction where at which point is the floodgate or that floodwall truly not needed? I know it needs to be closed and tied-in to another fed levee but there is a point at which if we do a slight ramp, not a total ramp I agree with the lady that just spoke, this huge ramp is a terrible idea, I hadn't been able to make these sessions so I don't know what an invisible gate is because I think is a more important issue is to directly address ongoing issues here but, maybe an invisible gate, I can't comment on that. You see what I'm saying? As you run that levee south and then southeast the risk goes down.

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Paul Eagles: As far as the construction effort, the more we can try to do concurrently, we would like to do that, we'd have to see if that works, you know.

Donald Landry: Okay.

Paul Eagles: As far as the flooding below there, I ... Can you answer that question?

Male engineer: I think, let's make a clarification when we talk about hydraulic modeling and surge.

Donald Landry: Okay.

Male engineer: Surge does not equate to top of levee.

Donald Landry: Right.

Male engineer: So, I think that's been maybe misunderstood. With the West Bank Vicinity project in place, the hydraulic modeling will take that condition in the computer program which is similar to the computer program that we're doing with the 1% storm, will take the impacts on that, be at three, six, nine inches at various stages.

Donald Landry: Right.

Male engineer: Then we'll add that to the model but that doesn't just add on to surge, that's just maybe two components.

Donald Landry: Right.

Male engineer: To that, to get top of levee, of course, you...

Donald Landry: Direction and track of storm, wind, distance.

Male engineer: ... wind, height, wave, and it's also the geometry, the slope.

Donald Landry: Exactly.

Male engineer: Our levees are trapezoidal.

Donald Landry: Right.

Male engineer: You flatten that slop; that helps out a lot.

Donald Landry: Right.

Male engineer: That comes in further refinement so when we say surge or three inches, that's not top of levee and that's why we need the hydraulic model to give us that output and then the design takes off from that.

Donald Landry: Right.

Male engineer: But, yes, the answer is, all that is taken into account. As a matter of fact, I was told by the Chief Hydraulic Engineer who's in the resource office that the current software used right now

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is the most conservative prior to what was used previously. So, that will give us, you know, a better feel for uncertainty.

Donald Landry: Right, right. But, as you run an eastern flank down, in other words, you run easterly flank that levee, and if you have Barataria Basin pushing north, the further you go south with that east flank, you see what I'm saying.

Male engineer: Yeah. And, of course, that will be addressed in our hydraulic output.

Donald Landry: Right. Since this is a fast-tracked project and its time critical as to how far and completed this project gets and the floodgate decisions to actually build it. That's why I'm asking.

Male engineer: Another point, I think the system has to be closed to the MRL to give you complete protection in there, I believe.

Donald Landry: For the current authorization, 2011. Right?

Male engineer: Right, right. I mean if you don't close it then water can backup, you know.

Donald Landry: Sure. My other point was to the Parish officials but I guess they're not here. Maybe he can bring this back to President Nungesser. You know, I've been living in Jesuit, I grew up in Belle Chasse, I grew up in a house right behind the school here, I lived all my life in Belle Chasse area, moved to Jesuit Bend for a larger lot, I have a one acre lot, never considered myself out of the Belle Chasse community. But, I did recognize after I was living in Jesuit Bend for just a few years that we live in no man's land. We have councilmen in Belle Chasse area who need projects done and pass legislation, we have the lower end where it's off of Venice, their councilmen, they do trading, that's politics, if you vote for my project, I'll vote for yours. We live in no man's land. We have one councilman and he can't get either end to get our projects approved. They've been fighting 25 years to get sewage facilities and we still don't have sewage, I determined we will never get sewage because of the politics. So, my concern is, although, good intents and I appreciate your good intent to get us what's right. I believe that. I believe sincerely that's in you all's hearts, you all going to do what's right. But, when politics enter in, it concerns me that if it takes Parish additional funding, we may never get that extra protection. Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you. I know that we've talked a lot about the invisible floodwall today. I'm going to ask Julie Vignes to just briefly describe what this is. I think it's probably the option that people are least familiar with and I know we've heard a lot about it. Julie, can you speak to this, please.

Julie Vignes: Okay. I would like to say, yes, we're still considering four options for the Highway 23 crossing and, you know, we have display boards in the resource room and folks will stay behind as long as we have to to walk you through those boards if you're not able to meet the session. We're also going to put on the nolaenvironmental.gov website the presentation. And, the visual is pretty good, we've got some 3D renderings and we even have some animation of how the invisible wall is erected and put up to provide the protection. But, just real briefly, I mean, it's referred to as an invisible wall because it doesn't exist, you know, it's not in place until the time it's needed to be there to block the storm surge. What is constructed is, actually if you go back just one slide real quickly, that wall that will be constructed is supported by a deep foundation to give it its strength so you have to drive piles where it will exist and those piles will be covered with a plate, you know, the highway won't be impacted by that.

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Then, when it's needed, it gets erected, and what's first put in place are columns. You can kind of see, there's a column there and then there's a diagonal pile that will support that column. So, when there's a storm threatening, Parish officials will make a determination as to when it has to be put up and they will have to erect these columns, and then the logs, the industrial aluminum logs that actually build the wall have to be dropped in place. We've looked at this alternative to address the visual and the aesthetic and some safety impacts that we heard from previous meetings. Folks that want to drive through Highway 23 and feel like they were going through a closed system, that they didn't have gates, you know, right up at the edge of the roadway. So, this extends the line back, from day-to-day traffic when it's not erected, 350 feet, its wide open. And, it's only erected when it needs to be for a storm surge.

Nancy Allen: Thanks, Julie. And, again, you can feel free to ask questions in the resource room. Go ahead, sir.

John Golden: I've got a quick question. My name's John Golden, and I hear from Mr. Nungesser that, you know, we could build this levee down to LaReussitte for the same price of taking out the floodwall and I know there's some debate whether or not that's possible. But, if you could do that with no additional cost to the government, it seems like a great idea but then I hear from the Corps that we can't do that because the law says we can't do that and there's congressional authority but I never heard defined exactly what that congressional authority is. What exactly, I mean, I know its not so specific that it says you've got to stop at Captain Larry's or you wouldn't have gone down and looked at the LaReussitte area so there's got to be some kind of congressional wording that's limiting you all and I haven't heard what that actually is.

Male engineer: Yeah, it has to do with two factors, one is engineering and the other one's cost. And, it is not cost neutral from our perspective. I've heard, you know, what the Parish has said and I understand that's their opinion but we believe it's not cost neutral. It will take additional funding, we had this discussion with President Nungesser and so it's not the best engineering solution to close the West Bank and Vicinity project and it's not the most cost effective. So, therefore, you have to look, is there another way to build the 100-year levee and that is through the non-federal authorization. So, there is authorization to build it to 100-year and that's the locally preferred plan. And, the Parish has said they want to move forward with the locally preferred plan, it will require additional funding to pay the increment, the level above what we're going to build to the 100-year level so whatever that difference is in width and height, that's what the Parish will pay a percentage of to build that.

John Golden: So, IER 13 doesn't specifically say you have to stop at Oakville, there's no congressional...

Male engineer: No, the authorization says to include Oakville. We don't have the authorization for funding to include section 1 of the non-federal levees in the West Bank and Vicinity project under current authorization or appropriations.

John Golden: But, technically you could go to the border of Oakville and Jesuit Bend, technically.

Male engineer: Yeah, right there. Yep.

John Golden: Okay.

Male engineer: So, if we had additional authorization and additional funding it would be included in West Bank and Vicinity but it is already included in non-federal levees and all you have to do



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is have the locally preferred plan, the Parish says we'll pay the additional funding to take to 100-years and we can build it under that authorization. That's the quickest way to build it.

John Golden: But, the wording is Oakville, the town of Oakville.

Male engineer: To include Oakville, that's in the '96 authorization that was amended from the original '86 authorization.

Nancy Allen: Thank you.

Female speaker: Excuse me, Colonel Lee, the same way that you went to go get Oakville, could you not come and get us the same way?

Colonel Lee: It wasn't the Corps that went and got Oakville, it was really Oakville that went in an engaged Congress and from what I understood, listening to a public meeting either in April or May, they said they went and engaged Congress to get Oakville included in the West Bank and Vicinity. So, that's my understanding of how Oakville was included. So, the answer to your question is, can you be added to the West Bank and Vicinity project, I think you can. It's a longer process, Congress has to provide additional authorization to specifically include LaReussitte in to the West Bank and Vicinity project and provide additional appropriations. But, under what we talked about this morning, under the locally preferred plan, if the Parish and the state are willing to pay the additional funding, we already have the authorization to do that under the non-federal levees or the new federal levees that will be built south of Oakville.

Female speaker: Because, I did see a document that Senator Vitter shared with us and said that if we didn't have the floodgate that I would be a wash.

Colonel Lee: It would be a...?

Female speaker: It would be, we wouldn't have the additional costs if we didn't have the floodgate.

Colonel Lee: If we didn't have the floodgate.

Nancy Allen: That would be, I think she's referring to the thing called cost neutral.

Colonel Lee: Oh, you're talking about the neutral cost?

Female speaker: Right, the neutral cost.

Colonel Lee: Yeah, we don't believe its neutral cost.

Female speaker: But, the document I saw was from you all.

Colonel Lee: Not that says neutral cost. I mean, I briefed Senator Vitter myself personally.

Female speaker: Because, you all added the floodgate but without the floodgate then it would bring it back to neutral.

Colonel Lee: It still wouldn't be neutral cost, no. It's not neutral.

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[Faint background speaker 38:14 – 38:16]

Colonel Lee: Well, again, we operate within the limits of Congress of what we can and cannot, I know I'm not addressing what your question is but, I mean, we can only do what we can do. We're trying to work with the Plaquemines Parish to build 100-year level for that section 1 of the new federal levees and that's what we're focused on trying to work with Parish to move forward. So, I mean, I think that's what everybody wants is 100-year level of risk reduction so that's what we're trying to move forward on.

Female speaker: So, when you give us the 100-year protection, because I know you can do it, I believe in you, I know you can, when you do that will you have to take NFL levees, will you have to flatten them and start fresh or will you build up?

Colonel Lee: If you look at the black hatch marks with the brown, with the little hesco basket on top of it, because of Ollie Canal and the geotechnical concerns of building a big levee like the one on the right, the new levee, we can't build it right on top of the existing levee, we actually have to offset it about 45 to 60 feet. So, for the 100-year level, the potential locally preferred plan, we would offset it 60 feet from the centerline of the existing levee to the west. And, you can see how much bigger that levee's going to be, the new levee. The green is what we're authorized and funded to do right now, the red and the green would be the new locally preferred plan.

Female speaker: I'm a woman and all this north, south stuff is kind of crazy for me. Would that be forward?

Colonel Lee: That would be toward the west, if you were looking toward the hescos from where you live, it would go that way, flood side, not protected side, away from Ollie Canal.

Female speaker: Okay. And, the last thing I have to ask is that because it's taken so long to digest this information for you all, I'm asking that, I think it's kind of unreasonable to come here, digest, and give you an answer today. Can you give us some time as a town, as a community to discuss, get together and discuss what you have brought to us today? Because, I think it's kind of crazy to sit, Miss Rose had some comments I'd like to digest and everybody has, you know, I'm going to come here and I thought I wanted the ramp but Miss Rose said it affected her community. So, if I had to pick, I really want no floodwall but I'd like to digest here and you're telling me I need to talk about this today but yet it's been since April that I've talk to you and we've not heard sensitive comments.

Colonel Lee: Right. I mean, that's why we came back today to do this workshop to give you that information, at the end of the month we'll issue the addendum, they'll be another 30-day public comment period and a public meeting...

Female speaker: So, we're not having to pick one of these four options...?

Colonel Lee: No. Until I put the addendum out on the street, this is saying, this is the proposed alternative based on the additional information you provided us, and then in November I would go forward to approve a recommendation or I would approve an alternative. So, I won't make that decision until the 1st of November.

Female speaker: You can do it. LaReussitte. 100-year protection.



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Nancy Allen: This graphic shows, under the currently authorized plan, this shows the existing levee and then you see the earthen levee, you see the levee with the hesco baskets and then that would be the new higher levee. Yes, sir?

Male speaker: I've got some questions. The WCC project is a \$16.8 billion project.

Nancy Allen: No, sir.

Male speaker: It's not?

Nancy Allen: \$16.8 billion?

Male speaker: Right.

Nancy Allen: No. Not the West Closure Complex.

Male speaker: What is...?

Nancy Allen: The entire hurricane and storm damage risk reduction system...

Male speaker: Is 16.8.

Nancy Allen: ... is 14.8.

Male speaker: Okay.

Nancy Allen: For the entire system.

Male speaker: So, billion, okay. What does that workout to be, \$45,000.00 per person that it covers? Somewhere in that neighborhood maybe?

Nancy Allen: I don't know what the population is.

Male speaker: The question I've got is, you know, we're doing this little addition to include Oakville and I'm looking at it and saying, well, how many dollars per person is this covering? And, I'm wondering, you know, we have certain natural barriers that occur and as you go down it's going to cost more money per person to cover these people, and I'm wondering whether or not we've looked at economic solutions in a way of, one, maybe temporary insurance coverage for some of these people that are going to be disenfranchised for the first couple of years; or maybe permanent, you know, insurance, you know, aid of some sort.

Nancy Allen: I mean, we understand the comment, sir, and we'll record that but that's not something that's in the purview of the Corps of Engineers.

Male speaker: Do we know how many dollars per person are we paying for this to include Oakville?

Nancy Allen: Are you talking about the locally preferred plan to give...

Male speaker: Yeah.

Nancy Allen: ... 100-year protection...?

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Male speaker: To the Oakville residents, how much more does that cost?

Nancy Allen: Oakville is included.

Male speaker: Right.

Nancy Allen: Oakville is already, you're talking about past Oakville?

Male speaker: Well, no, once we, before, I believe, November, Oakville wasn't included; after November something...

Nancy Allen: No.

Male speaker: ... when was Oakville included?

Nancy Allen: Oakville was always included, '96 was when...

Male speaker: '96.

Nancy Allen: ... Oakville was included in the West Bank and Vicinity project.

Male speaker: Okay. I'm just, as we're going down it and we're looking at how many dollars per person I think, you know, that's one of the issues you've got to look at is how much it's costing to provide coverage for people and maybe its cheaper to go ahead and do some sort of assistance, you know, for permanent insurance assistance and permanent relocation assistance and put the money in some sort of trust fund and look at the projects and say, okay, how many million are we spending, how many billion are we spending for this. And, an economic solution may be a better solution for certain areas. We can't put everybody in the same box is what I'm looking at. There's going to be some areas are too expensive per person to do something with. That's all I'm looking at saying, hey, let's look at an economic solution because some people it may not be cost effective and then if you do disenfranchise them you need to sort of compensate them, make them equal play with the rest of the people.

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir. Yes, sir?

Mike Marion: Good afternoon. My name's Mike Marion, I'm a resident of Belle Chasse. I've listened to a lot of people here, my neighbors and people from my community. And, I, first of all, it sounds like everything you do is generally, the goal is to help us and I do appreciate that. I urge you to listen to what you've heard here because what you're hearing from a lot of people, especially from the Jesuit Bend community, is that they're worried about their property values and when you reduce or hinder their property values you're taking their freedom. And, that's a very important thing to understand. People work all their lives to develop what they have and what they have is tied around their property. It's very important that you understand that.

The other thing I'd just like to mention, we've got this project, you've got the project that you're doing with the huge flood control structure over on the Algiers Canal and the Harvey Canal, there are some coastal restoration things that another gentleman mentioned. It's important that we understand these together, they are not separate projects though they are funded separately they work together, and it's important that we bring all that in.

My last comment is going to be the coastal restoration because no matter how high we build floodwalls, no matter how many pumping stations we build, no matter what we do, coastal restoration is absolutely

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essential, none of this matters if the coastal restoration isn't there. We have got to look at that. I ask the Corps to take that seriously. As far as the congressional authorization, please consider yourselves and advocate for the people of Plaquemines Parish and the people of the United States, not just a doer...

[Applause]

Mike Marion: ... not just a doer for congress. We need to be able to rely on you to tell congress, because let me tell you, the congress people, they're not engineers, I don't want to demean them, they're not engineers, they don't know and only a few of them represent us. We need you guys to look because you know the area, I'm sure you guys are working in good faith, you know our area, you know what we need. Right now we're taking sediment out of the river that could rebuild our wetlands and sending out off the continental shelf and making a pile because, supposedly, that's the most economic solution. It's not. That's ridiculous. We need to put that into the wetlands behind these levees that you're going to build, rebuild our wetlands and increase our actual flood protection. What we're doing now is ridiculous and I, as a citizen, expect you guys to be our voice to congress, say, "Hey, this is nuts." We've been doing it for too long. Because, the reason we're even talking about this today is because we built this federal levee back in the 1920's, you guys took control of it and that was great and you've kept us from getting floods from the river and that's great, but the problem is we never really considered the other impact of that. The land is sinking, it's not that we chose to live someplace, we chose to live on a Bayou, that Bayou might have been a drainage ditch a few years ago. The land is sinking. We have got to consider all these projects and the context of all of these projects together and I really do expect you guys, all of you, I expect you to be our voice to congress because we don't have much. Okay? Thank you very much.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, sir. It seems we have a gentlemen here and then a gentlemen here.

Charles Povich: My name's Charles Povich [Phonetic] and I've been a lifelong resident of Plaquemines Parish. Unfortunately, I own land, on your map is Naomi, which is about a mile or so above the LaReussitte site. So, naturally I'm rooting that perhaps it could be moved at least down to there, and I would be protected from a floodwall going across Highway 23. I think, you know, we talk about Naomi is right there which is about a mile up above, I think that what we're talking about here, too, is that you all are more than aware and I'm aware that the two most powerful hurricanes that have hit the United States have hit Plaquemines Parish first. Camille and Katrina essentially wiped out the lower end of Plaquemines Parish and yet when we hear the news reports we hear New Orleans and we hear Biloxi and all this other kind of stuff and, therefore, nobody knows anything about Plaquemines Parish, you know. We have this thing here so we're invisible in the eyes of the country and yet we've been here since the United States bought it from France for a few million dollars that long ago. It is a very rich in historical heritage Parish. You have the Mississippi River that flows through it, you have the oil and natural resources that are gathered from it, you have the seafood that's gathered from it, and yes, we have excellent oranges that we grow here. This was all stuff that was passed down to us, you know. I wonder if there's any other evacuation route that is going to be essentially blocked off by a floodwall and you're going to trap people inside of it, essentially, more than 75% of people could be trapped inside of a floodwall. We're talking about logistics. I've been in some of that logistic things where they're talking about voluntary evacuations, mandatory evacuations, etc., etc., and still you have people that will stay behind. I stayed behind last year. Okay? And, you know, unfortunately, I have animals, I live on one side and the animals on the other side of the proposed flood wall in Oakville. So, my idea of being able to get to my animals, there it goes right out the window right there. That goes right out the window. I can tell you for a fact that it will require the earliest...

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Julie Vignes: Sir, let me just point out, I didn't mean to interrupt you, but I just wanted to point out that all the options that we're looking at for crossing Highway 23, they all include an emergency bypass that someone would have access around the gate or invisible wall when it was constructed.

Charles Povich: Well, that's good news. I just hope that in hind site, I think that a lot of the people in this Parish feel as though we're being written off again. Nobody knows about us, nobody knows that we got wiped out and yet we still come back to rebuild, we still own this property. My mother and my father's been down here all this time. My mother owns property in Florida, it's sitting there, it's essentially a large estate, she can't sell it because she can't get insurance to cover it anymore. You see? That's potentially what could happen to the properties that we have invested not just a few thousand dollars. I own about seven and a half acres in Naomi. Okay? It costs me in excess of a half a million dollars just to purchase the property. Okay? The insurance, I know the insurance for you all, everybody in this area is going up. We might not even get it anymore, therefore, you won't be able to build because you won't be able to get a mortgage, etc., etc. It goes down the line, you know. So, I think that when we're talking about the LaReussitte site which is a better site because if you drive down there, yes, there are orange groves and there are multi-hundred thousand dollar estates and subdivisions and people that live on both sides of the river, you know.

In closing, I just want to say, and I know that you all's job is to rebuild that back levee, if you'd look back there and I know you all have looked back there, there's a beautiful cypress swamp back there, there's a beautiful cypress swamp that has been built by that freshwater diversion. That freshwater will feed everything and it will make it alive. That probably won't be there after the new levee's put up and all that kind of stuff. The levee's going to be in that swamp. It is, that's where it's going to be at, you know. I'm just saying, I've been back there and I've taken my kids back there to look at the swamp and to take pictures and to look at the alligators and to look at the turtles and the wildlife and things like that. But, that's just part of our cultural heritage, it's a very rich Parish. Please don't write us off like the rest of the country does. Okay? They just forget about us, they say, "Oh, it wiped out New Orleans." Well, it really wiped out Plaquemines first. Thank you all for your time.

Nancy Allen: Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Oh, Julie, do you want to show where the emergency bypass is, we don't have that slide but there is an emergency bypass. Yeah. So, even after the floodgate would be closed there would be a way to make emergency bypass of this. Go ahead, sir.

Ronnie St. Pe': All right. Thanks for this opportunity. My name's Ronnie St. Pe', I live in Jesuit Bend, I was born and raised in Plaquemines Parish. I think the real reason we're here today to talk about this floodwall is because the federal government sold us out on coastal restoration, totally. My brother is the director for the Barataria Terrebonne National Estuary program, Carey St. Pe', and he has also lived in the Parish all of his life, now he's in Raceland. But, anyway, he doesn't want to retire right now and he's up for retirement because he don't want to go through all the hard worked he's been through and see somebody else walk in and finally to find federal government to give them the money to subsidize all the levees and the coastal restoration. So, he's really at it hard at trying to do the pumping of the sand to build immediate land but federal government is selling him out, not him, all of us. But, I just wanted to add that, that's really not what I was here for but the gentleman before me brought it up and I just wanted to reiterate.

Everybody in this room which is not many left but myself included, my main concern is property value. I'm furious at this wall going up. I'm furious to hear that we're on a timeframe for such an important

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decision. I just can't understand why we can't take a few steps back, everybody take a breath, let's do the right thing. You all talked about building the floodwall if the levees are there we won't need the floodwall. Well, what's the damn hurry? Everybody in here's got property value, you know, we live in the Parish, the Parish, the kids, the schools, the seafood industry, the citrus. What's the rush? I don't understand the rush. Could somebody explain the rush to me?

Nancy Allen: Could someone speak to the timeline of completing this IER 13? Okay.

Colonel Lee: The Corps of Engineers made a commitment following hurricane Katrina to complete 100-year level of protection for the greater New Orleans area by 1 June 2011. And, so you ask a very good question, you know, why can't we wait until we build the rest of it and then we won't have to build a floodgate. But, you know, my decision making is that we have 245,000, approximately 245,000 people that live on the West Bank and they are either directly or indirectly affected by what happens with the West Bank and Vicinity project. And, right now, there are three gaping holes in the West Bank and Vicinity project, one of them is the Eastern Tie-in which includes the proposed action at Oakville, the Hero Canal levee, the Western Closure Complex, and then all the way on the west side and you talked about, Davis Pond, one gentlemen talked about Davis Pond and the cypress swamp but those three areas are very critical for the West Bank, 245,000 residents live there. And, that's our focus is to get that system completed as rapidly as we can to meet the commitment that we made to the President of the United States, to congress, and to the people of the nation.

Ronnie St. Peigh: Thank you. I'd also like to add that, well, I had written a speech but, about the housing market in Jesuit Bend area. The way I did it, I mean, I built a house in Belle Chasse, sold it for low profit, was able to build a nicer house in Jesuit Bend area because more land, cheaper land, I couldn't afford Belle Chasse area so I moved down to Jesuit Bend. I've built a house for me and my family and my two boys because I wanted them to grow in an area away from city, you know, kind of countrified. I can go in my backyard, go hunting, go fishing. So, now here comes the, I finally get my feet on the floor good, and then here comes a damn floodgate across Highway 23. It's shoved down your throat. I don't like it. Now I've got to start all over if this floodgate comes across, my property value and everybody else's in here done went in the gutter. And, I'm not ready to start my life over again at 45-years-old with nothing in my pocket from the investment that I made years ago because of some stupid floodgate. No wall, no way.

[Applause]

Robin Zuvich: Hello. Thanks for coming. My name's Robin Zurich. And, Colonel Lee, I would like to address this to you. You had made the comment when we're talking about property value that there was no credible evidence from congress that our property value will go down, I'm assuming that's what you meant.

Colonel Lee: **[Inaudible 01:00:35 – 01:00:43 Speaking too low, too far from the mic]**

Robin Zuvich: Because, I wrote down, no credible evidence from Congress. It wasn't? Okay.

Colonel Lee: **[Inaudible 01:00:48 – 01:00:51 Speaking too low, too far from the mic]**

Robin Zuvich: Your economist.

Colonel Lee: **[Inaudible 01:00:52 – 01:00:54 Speaking too low, too far from the mic]**

Robin Zuvich: Okay. Yeah, I know.

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Colonel Lee: [Inaudible 01:00:55 – 01:00:58 Speaking too low, too far from the mic]

Robin Zuvich: Well, what does that mean?

Colonel Lee: [Inaudible 01:01:00 – 01:01:04 too far from mic] We have economic professionals on our staff that do economic evaluations for all projects built in the state of Louisiana on the coastal area, our area of responsibility from Pearl River out to Texas. And, they've been doing, I mean, the lead economist is in the resource room and he probably can answer this better than I can but I'll give you what I know. Is that, you know, they use the best professional judgment along with the information that we get from the real estate records, from sales, just like a realtor would or an appraiser. I mean, these people have, I mean, we even have appraisers in our...

Robin Zuvich: Right.

Colonel Lee: ... organization. So, they're pretty competent in understanding what property values are, the trends, what the impacts could be, and so they went out after that question was brought up to validate it so we could put it in the addendum for IER 13 so we could address that substantive comment that we agree is important for you that live in that area in Plaquemines Parish.

Robin Zuvich: Right. So, they came up with, there's no credible evidence that there's going to be a drop.

Colonel Lee: That's correct.

Robin Zuvich: Do you believe that, Colonel Lee?

Colonel Lee: Oh, I do, and this is why I believe it, first of all, if you go back to the picture of the levee of what we've got right now. I think sometimes this gets lost. We're currently looking at, I heard a gentleman get up and talk about a potato ridge, and if you look at the existing levee that's in place right now, I mean, that is right behind the neighborhoods there in Jesuit Bend.

Robin Zuvich: That's right in my front door. If you look out from my house I can see that.

Colonel Lee: So, that is not to the current standards, it doesn't meet the new borrow requirements for the organics, its weaker soils, it's not very high. So, when we build the new levee, can you go to the new levee cross section, that shows the cross section? . So, you can see in the brown and black cross hatches with the hesco basket on it, that's what's existing now. The new levee is going to be the green levee and if the locally preferred plan occurs it will be the green plus the red levee.

Robin Zuvich: Right.

Colonel Lee: So, that will be significant increase in protection and risk reduction for your community, where you live.

Robin Zuvich: Right. That's locally preferred but that's not 100-year.

Colonel Lee: Yes, it is.

Robin Zuvich: If, that's the if though ?. See, we're so concerned about that potential.

Colonel Lee: Oh, I understand. I mean, what we've done is tried to work with the Parish...



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Robin Zuvich: I know.

Colonel Lee: ... to provide, can we get there.

Robin Zuvich: Right.

Colonel Lee: And, I think we have provided that part. What I'll be doing is following up with President Nungesser, sending him a letter based off our meeting from Thursday, saying, "We understand you want to proceed with the locally preferred plan. These are the steps that you have to go through." Because, it has to go to our headquarters for final approval.

Robin Zuvich: You see, that's, I believe in you, Colonel Lee.

Colonel Lee: But...

Robin Zuvich: I want to tell you this. I believe in you, it's not you, but I know the position you're in. Can you answer this? Just hypothetical, now you've got to think outside the box. So, if you were in charge, in total charge, you didn't have to go through Congress, as the good man you are, what slide would I see for LaReussitte, for Jesuit Bend, for my home? What slide would you present to me?

Colonel Lee: Well, I think what we, can you go back to the conceptual? I mean, what we have tried to do all along, and I know, I tried to explain it earlier this morning but I probably didn't explain it very well, you know. I think we have two, I won't necessarily say they're conflicting positions, but two different positions for the West Bank and the non-federal levees and that's how they're viewed anyway...

Robin Zuvich: Right.

Colonel Lee: ... from authorizations and appropriations.

Robin Zuvich: Right.

Colonel Lee: And, so you ask the question, I mean, it would be the locally preferred plan and that's what we're trying to get. That's why we've been working with the Parish to try to get to that answer.

Robin Zuvich: Right

Colonel Lee: And, there's a certain amount that we have control over...

Robin Zuvich: I know.

Colonel Lee: ... and there's a certain...

Robin Zuvich: And, that's the problem that I'm having with.

Colonel Lee: And, there's a certain amount that the local Parish and the state has control over. And, so what we'll be doing from, you know, this day forward is [inaudible] that in writing, sending it to the Parish and the state saying, "We understand that you want to proceed with the locally preferred plan. These are the steps to accomplish that, and these are the actions that need to occur." And, so we're, I mean, I'm confident the Parish wants to do that, too, and we're going to continue working with them to accomplish that.

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- Robin Zuvich: Well, you're going to Congress, you said, next week?
- Colonel Lee: I am.
- Robin Zuvich: And, I know President Nungesser said he's also going.
- Colonel Lee: He's going up Tuesday or Wednesday.
- Robin Zuvich: So, you all going together?
- Colonel Lee: Actually, I am going to be in D.C. all week.
- Robin Zuvich: So, are you all going to meet with Congressmen Melancon, Vitter?
- Colonel Lee: We'll meet with Congressmen Melancon, Senator Vitter, Senator Landrieu...
- Robin Zuvich: One meeting?
- Colonel Lee: ... Congressmen Cao. Typically, they're individual meetings is typically how we do our business.
- Robin Zuvich: So, Colonel Lee, when you go in that meeting can you tell me how you will represent me?
- Colonel Lee: Well, we always go in and any interest of a project that represents a congressional member, we give them an update on that project and kind of where a status of where we are with the project, and that's what we go in and tell them where we are, any issues we're having with a particular project whether its funding, authorization, whatever it is and, you know, we communicate that to the members.
- Robin Zuvich: And, will you fight for us if they say, "No, I don't think we'd better do that."?
- Colonel Lee: Well, we always go in and if there's a locally preferred plan, just like Plaquemines Parishes has done, we will show them the same document that we gave Plaquemines Parish to say, "This is feasible as long as there's funding to accomplish that."
- Robin Zuvich: So, the funding, the other funding must come from our government. Correct?
- Colonel Lee: From either the local government, the state, or Congress. I mean, Congress could...
- Robin Zuvich: They could still funnel a little money to us?
- Colonel Lee: They could appropriate additional funding.
- Robin Zuvich: They can.
- Colonel Lee: That's the hardest part, though.
- Robin Zuvich: Without a Congress, without an act of Congress?
- Colonel Lee: No. With an act of Congress.

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Robin Zuvich: Well, we know we're not going that way. So, let me ask you this. How much more is needed by our Parish to get this done to LaReussitte?

Colonel Lee: Well, that's the thing that we're working through right now. You heard, I think Paul, talk about the geotechnical analysis we're doing. We don't know exactly what the design is so until you get more refinement on exactly how tall, how wide, we can't say specifically on a number right now.

Robin Zuvich: So, what time frame are you giving me for that?

Colonel Lee: Paul, do you have any on numbers, refinement?

Paul Eagles: **[Inaudible 01:08:30 – 01:08:33 Speaking too low, too far from mic]**

Colonel Lee: Okay.

Robin Zuvich: You would guess in the next few months, meaning, two, three, four?

Paul Eagles: **[Inaudible 01:08:36 – 01:08:40 Speaking too low, too far from mic]**

Robin Zuvich: By the end of the calendar year. Okay.

Colonel Lee: By the end of the calendar year.

Robin Zuvich: So, you're looking at three and a half months. By the end of the year you'll know a figure?

Paul Eagles: That would be my guess.

Robin Zuvich: A guess. So, who do we push for to know the figure? Who do we go to? As a citizen who do I go to say, "Okay, we want to know so that we can make sure we have this funding to do this?" What is the process? Can someone help me here?

Paul Eagles: We can keep your Parish government informed about that and whoever, and let you know what the cost is. We'll be working with them specifically about this. Right.

Robin Zuvich: Because, it seems like we can never get answers, you know.

Paul Eagles: I understand.

Robin Zuvich: I know it's a long process but I'm going to tell all of you here, we're not giving up, and we're not taking less than 100-year protection.

[Applause]

Robin Zuvich: You know, whatever it takes, the good citizens, the tax paying citizens, the hard working citizens will get 100-year protection.

Paul Eagles: I think about Plaquemines Parish every day of my life. Okay? I do.

Robin Zuvich: And, I hope that every one of you think about, when you go to sleep at night, if you're doing the right thing.



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Paul Eagles: I don't go to sleep at night, sometimes, thinking about Plaquemines Parish.

Robin Zuvich: I don't go to sleep at night, either, lately, and it's not funny, and I'm not laughing at all.

Paul Eagles: I understand.

Robin Zuvich: This is my home, it's always been my home, my husband and I have worked very hard for what we have, and the value of it will go down the drain if that wall goes up and you know that, and you can't even look me in the eye right now, sir.

Paul Eagles: I will.

Robin Zuvich: So, I'm telling all of you, all of you professional men who have educations, who know the right thing to do, think of your morals, think of your ethics. We're not here for long on this earth, sir. All of you, we're not here very long. Don't think the good Lord's not watching everything we do. So, Colonel Lee, I want you to see, I thank you, the last two meetings, the end of April, the beginning of May, I did send you a letter, I don't know if you received it but from the bottom of my heart, you're a good man, and I know that, and I know you have to go through a lot when you're working with the government. So, please, I want you to know my prayers are with you daily, and I want you to continue to fight for us. Thank you.

[Applause]

Nancy Allen: Thank you, ma'am.

Rose Jackson: My name is Rose Jackson. I'm the Vice President of the Oakville Community Action Group, a state registered non-profit organization. I want to say to this to some of my residential Plaquemines Parish, in another year and a half from now I'm 70-years-old so I've been here a long time in this Parish. In all the years that I've been here where you built your home and a lot of the rest of you built your home, I use to work there as a young girl in the fields. I've never in my life known of that area to flood other than when Katrina put a 22-foot tidal wave over the Mississippi River levee. I've never known of that area to flood at all. It was always considered as a higher part. I've never known of that area, the areas from the Phillips Conoco up the Perez's to flood at all. I've worked for every, the Becknell's, the Renanze's, you name it, I worked for them. I've never known, and when it was flooding other parts of Plaquemines have water we were out working in the fields. I've never known that area to flood other than Katrina and God did that, sent that 25-foot tidal wave and if you think it didn't Oakville, go when you pass back going southward, stop in Oakville, look at the side of that hall, we have buoys that still sitting there that came out of the Gulf of Mexico. But, it didn't just affect some of us, it affected all of us. Now, what we need to do, all of us need to join together because we don't just need protection around our homes, think about the people in southern Plaquemines. In the next 15 years from now, I have been doing environmental studies for the last 22 years with some of the top people in the United States, and the next 15, 16 years, Rushville, Naomi, all of that will be the Gulf of Mexico if we don't fight to get these levees all the way through this Parish and stop thinking about just certain areas, and let me tell you something else, any of you that live within a 15 miles radius from that garbage dump, your property is depreciated. You are affected. If you live more than 15 miles from that facility, well, then you don't have to worry but trust me, anybody that comes through this Parish looking to buy land below that facility, that's the first thing they see and they're going to think twice if they know about environmental issues. They're going to think twice about buying a piece of property next to a dump. I live there. They're going to think twice. My house, my brick home has been depreciating years ago. If you live within a two miles radius your home is being depreciated, the value. So, the floodgate is not the one

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that's going to really going to do it to you. The floodgate is going to protect you from getting that crap washed on your property. So, its not going to affect Jesuit Bend, it's going to keep that crap from coming out, once they close it, if it gets flooded in Oakville its going to keep all that mess from coming on your property and getting it where your children is. But, in Jesuit Bend and all the other areas, you have an even bigger problem, you have the worst hell impact in the world because all those homes there, none of them are hooked to sewage. You have septic tanks. Your leach's go into drainage ditches, into the wetlands. Your children play in your yard, when it rain those ditches overflow and they're playing in mercury and meth so that's your problem.

Female speaker: For the same reasons that she has talked about how the dump has affected her property, we're worried that the floodwall and that same economic, she feels like its taking her property down. That's the same way we feel about the floodwall. I do have a question about, that's why I wanted to address all the questions in front of the group because I'm learning. And, so I sit here this morning and it pops up other questions, I'm learning. Thank you guys for having the courage to get up and speak because I'm learning from so much of what you're saying. And, one of the things that I thought about today was, are we the only Parish that has one way in and out that we depend on getting out that is being blocked off, possibly by a floodgate? Are we the only Parish?

Nancy Allen: Can you answer that question, Colonel Lee?

Female speaker: No. Let me just say two things so that you can answer them both at the same time, and then if you could answer that and then what I'd like to know is if it's shut because my fear is, once again, being educated by people is that I never thought about people wanting to leave at the last minute, and then they decide I made a wrong decision and then they're going to run for it and they're going to pull everything they have with them. However they get out and over, can they pull big things, can fire trucks come in? Can...

Nancy Allen: Yes.

Colonel Lee: So, the first answer is Larose to Golden Meadow, and then below that, of course, is LA1 that goes to Grand Isle and to Port Fourchon. So, there is a floodgate at Golden Meadow that cuts off that entire evacuation route and there is no bypass there.

Female speaker: And, what are they getting?

Colonel Lee: There's a mandatory evacuate to push through.

Female speaker: Do they have a floodgate across...?

Colonel Lee: They have a floodgate across the highway.

Female speaker: What kind of floodgate do they have?

Colonel Lee: It's a mechanical, its not an invisible floodwall, it's a floodgate and they don't have emergency bypass route, they have to either fly a helicopter or somebody stays down, I mean, during Gustav and Ike there were some emergency responders that stayed in Grand Isle and Port Fourchon even though they were flooded.

Female speaker: And, do you have a slide of the road that you could show us?

Colonel Lee: From LaRose to Golden Meadow?



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Female speaker: No, for us, for how would you get people out if it's shut.

Nancy Allen: It's in the resource room, in the resource room there is a display.

Colonel Lee: The resource room has it for some reason we don't have it on a slide here. But, the resource room, we, based on the comments from the April or May meeting, somebody I think it was the April meeting in Oakville, somebody, a firefighter in Burriss came up and said that he had concerns if you were going to put a floodgate up that you didn't have an emergency evacuation route where he could pull a loaded fire truck full of water through that. And, so that's one of our criteria now is to make sure that we do have an emergency route.

Female speaker: In heavy rains?

Colonel Lee: Right. And, it will be sloped so that you can drive or pull things across it. So, it will be an improved road.

Female speaker: And, my final thing, once again, sir, I'd like to address you, who chose 2011 for this headache of we have to hurry up and have all this done by 2011? Who did that?

Colonel Lee: I have to use the word we, and when I say we, the Corps of Engineers.

Female speaker: Because, it seems like, I remember Mary Landrieu speaking out and saying we should do all this right the first time, and it seems like that deadline is what's keeping us from doing it right the first time. All this headache, all this stress, you're stressed, everybody here's stressed. It seems like if that deadline, because I think probably what you got going on anyways, is that you're not going to make that deadline so give yourself, look great before American, admit it, and just let's do it right the first time.

Colonel Lee: I think we're fully committed to meet the deadline. You know, there are a few projects that are kind of straddling the fence on the date but we're going to press to try to meet it, I mean, that's our commitment and, you know, we are doing the right things. I mean, if we wouldn't have been doing the right things I would have signed the record of decision back in May saying, "We're going to build a floodgate and that's the decision." But, we took the input from the public, we looked at it, we recognized there were substantial comments that we hadn't addressed properly, we went back and did additional analysis, we went back and looked at the alternatives to make sure to see if any improvements could be put in to them, we incorporated public comment. And, I think that's where we are today.

Female speaker: But, I think if you would address us like we should've been addressed in the spring when we brought attention, when we found about this, basically, that we wouldn't be where we are, and that you would be way more ahead and that we would be part of IER 13 and be fast-tracked along with everybody else heading on down to LaReussitte but two seasons have been wasted.

Colonel Lee: One of the challenges we have is, what do you do with new information, and so there's been a lot said about, you know, what the Corps did pre-Katrina and all that, and I don't want to dwell on that but what our commitment is now, the Corps of Engineers, is when we get new information and its presented to us, we're going to act on it and try to make the best decision we can to incorporate if there's impacts, if there's unintended consequences, whatever those things are, that's what we're trying to do and that's part of the new way that we're operating since hurricane Katrina. And, it doesn't always address everyone's concern but I think it tries to get at the right decisions and that's what we're trying to do.

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Female speaker: Well, if you postpone the date from 2011 then it would address everybody's concerns and we wouldn't be here. And, again, like I said, I know Mary Landrieu a leader and she said do it right the first time, and if we do it right the first time and just back up that date a little bit. If you find, let me ask you this, if you find that you're not going to make it, can't you just say, admit it, and let's all do this right the first time?

Colonel Lee: I believe we are doing it right. I'll reiterate that. I mean, we have the entire region focused on this effort. When I say the region, we've got six districts in the Corps of Engineers in the Mississippi Valley Division from St. Paul to St. Louis to Rock Island to Memphis to Vicksburg, New Orleans, and the Hurricane Protection Office so we actually have seven organizations focused completely on this mission. And, then we have other resources from academia from LSU from the Netherlands from Dutch engineers that we have on staff across the United States, \$800 million worth of architect and engineer contracts with private sector engineers to help us get the right decision. So, I think we're doing the things we need to do to make the right decisions and, you know, that's why we've extended the comment periods and done other things to make sure that we do make the right decision.

Female speaker: But, I'm still asked to trust, and I just want to have me be encompassed in the right decision not me having to ask to trust that it's going to be done. And, I feel like I'm coming down to the David and Goliath scenario where everybody's going to be tying in around the fort and it's going to be everybody down in Plaquemines Parish causing trouble, and I don't want to be that because I'm a team person, I'm a team builder, and I don't want to be the person that's dividing and everyone's looking at us all of the sudden thinking that we're holding it up when we've been yelling since the spring. So, I really hope we do the right thing and bring this down to LaReussitte, 100-year protection.

Nancy Allen: I do want to point out, we found the graphic that shows the emergency bypass. You can see the local landmark of Captain Larry's. That's to orient you to Highway 23 and then that up on to the Mississippi River Levee will be the emergency bypass. And, Julie, it can hold up to a fire truck full of water?

Julie Vignes: **[Inaudible 01:24:04 – 01:24:18 Speaking too low, too far from mic]**

Female speaker: Fire truck, people pulling boats, a Winnebago, all that? Thank you.

Nancy Allen: Okay. I think we're going to wrap-up. Oh, sorry, go ahead, ma'am.

Melinda Boudreaux: Hi, my name is Melinda Boudreaux and I did look at all four options. There's one option that is lesser of the four evils but I think there's something else that could be addressed. The ramp option, if it could be built up nine feet we would never have our evacuation route blocked and you would not need that road on the levee. I know that the project did not originally include Oakville and it was moved to include Oakville. Can that ramp be moved a few hundred feet further south and build it to nine feet to where we're never having to block off our evacuation route or having to build a road on the levee?

Nancy Allen: Julie, can you answer that?

Julie Vignes: All right. The top of the ramp has to be to an elevation higher than nine feet to get to the level of risk reduction for the West Bank project. For the current condition it would have to be to elevation 10 ½ feet, it would have to have the ability to be raised in the future for subsidence and sea level rise to elevation 14 feet. We did look at different alignments as to how to close that system at Oakville and, you know, what we're proposing is just the alternatives that are most feasible and cost effective to do that.

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Melinda Boudreaux: The property south of that site is not as congested as by Captain Larry's, and why can't it be moved just a few hundred feet further south?

Julie Vignes: We can move it a couple hundred feet but the ramp profile itself is a couple of thousand feet, we'd have impacts to residential or commercial property, we'd have to extend the protection behind it further south as well. It's just not where the ramp is, it's where the levees that have to be constructed to reach the ramp has more environmental impacts and more cost than what we're proposing here.

Melinda Boudreaux: And, is this a recent environmental study or is this the same study that we were reading in April?

Julie Vignes: It was the environmental evaluation we've gone through recently for the IER document number 13.

Melinda Boudreaux: A recent evaluation.

Julie Vignes: Yes.

Melinda Boudreaux: I would just like for you to consider that as an option. You would not have to worry about manpower in the future of erecting any type of gate even in 2021. The highway would never be blocked. There's a similar hump like that down at St. Jude, I've never heard anybody referred to it at St. Jude as the wall or being closed off, it's a natural looking environment and no eye sores.

Nancy Allen: Thank you, ma'am. Yes, sir.

[Applause]

Male speaker: I just have a quick question. I hadn't been able to have the opportunity to go to the sessions, is there, on the website or anything, these four different proposals?

Nancy Allen: Yes.

Male speaker: Is there a timeframe or is there a time stated how long it takes to like close the roller gate, how long it takes to close the swing gate?

Nancy Allen: All of that information, all of our presentations will be online, you can see the presentations. Each option has benefits and limitations just too sort of guide discussion. Is that in the resource room?

[Faint speaker in background 01:28:11 – 01:28:22]

Male speaker: Okay. I'll try to make the opportunity, okay, thank you.

Nancy Allen: Everything will be nolaenvironmental.gov.

Male speaker: Okay. Thank you.

Nancy Allen: Okay. We're going to wrap-up the, oh, I'm sorry.

Male speaker: You guys got a very tough job to do, cost benefit ratios, and that type of thing. We're spending a lot of money per person to get the benefits that we're getting and we appreciate that and

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the nation needs this to be done to support the oil and gas port or to keep the oil and gas industry running. You're going to have portions of this project, when you start looking at it and you're going to be doing cost benefit ratios whether you keep this guy in Naomi within some borders or something like that. We start looking at it and saying, okay, it may cost us \$200,000.00, we're looking at \$48,000.00 per person for this project right now and if it cost us to add him in, \$200,000.00, I hate to have him disenfranchised, maybe we should be looking at some sort of economic solutions associated with this, open the door for the economic solutions in a way of insurance support or temporary insurance support, permanent insurance support, relocation support, something along that line where it makes economic sense. I don't want to see us, you know, everybody wants to say, hey, put me in here, but, you know, you can't afford to put everybody in the same box, it's just not here. But, you don't want to disenfranchise certain people. So, if they can't get coverage somehow and they're not being supported as part of the Parish, I'd like to see that they get included if not just in an economic point.

Nancy Allen: Let me clarify. The project we're referring to is the non-federal levees, the New Orleans to Venice project. These have all been fully funded; they will not have benefit cost ratios. Future work could include a benefit cost ratio but all of the current work is fully funded and we are authorized to do the things that we've laid out today and previous meetings.

All right. We're going to wrap it up. We will stay here; our panel up here is willing to answer questions. We still have Colonel Wehr with us who's the Vicksburg District Commander. You're welcome to visit the other rooms, the session are still going on. And, the resource room if you have any questions, there are folks down there, too.