DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT
7400 LEAKE AVE
NEW ORLEANS LA 70118-3651

June 6, 2025

Regional Planning and
Environment Division South
Environmental Compliance Branch

CLEAN WATER ACT, SECTION 404
PUBLIC NOTICE

Mississippi River, Baton Rouge to the Gulf of Mexico,
Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet, Louisiana
New Industrial Canal Lock and Connecting Channels Project

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New Orleans District (CEMVN), proposes to replace the existing Industrial Canal Lock, also referred to as the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal or IHNC Lock, with a 900 foot long by 110 feet wide by -22 feet North American Vertical Datum (NAVD88) navigation lock. The depth of the replacement lock is designed to safely and efficiently accommodate shallow-draft vessels navigating the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). The proposed action involves discharge of dredged material and fill into navigable waters of the U.S.; therefore, the provisions of Title 33 CFR Parts 336.1(b)(1) and 337.1, effective April 26, 1988, are applicable and issuance of this public notice is required.

This notice is being distributed to all interested Federal and state agencies and other interested parties to make known the USACE, CEMVN's intention to initiate construction in the areas of work listed herein.

PROJECT: Mississippi River, Baton Rouge to the Gulf of Mexico, Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet, Louisiana, New Industrial Canal Lock and Connecting Channels Project.

PROJECT AUTHORITY: Public Law 455 (PL 84-455), Chapter 112, 84th Congress, 2nd Session, approved March 29, 1956 (1956 Act), authorized construction of the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet (MR-GO), a navigation channel, which was completed in the mid-1960s. The 1956 Act also modified the existing Mississippi River, Baton Rouge to the Gulf of Mexico project to provide for replacement of the existing IHNC Lock, or an additional lock with suitable connections when replacement was found by the Chief of Engineers to be economically justified by obsolescence of the existing industrial canal lock or by increased traffic. Replacement of the existing lock or an additional lock with suitable connections was approved to be constructed in the vicinity of Meraux, Louisiana, with type, dimensions, and cost estimates to be approved by the Chief of Engineers. The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986, Section 844 (PL 99-62) modified the 1956 Act authorization language to state that the replacement and

expansion of the existing IHNC Lock and connecting channels or the construction of an additional lock and connecting channels shall be in the area of the existing lock site or at the Violet, Louisiana site. WRDA 1996, Section 326 (PL 104-303), amended Section 844 of WRDA 1986 to include the implementation of a comprehensive community impact mitigation plan, as described in the preliminary draft evaluation report by the New Orleans District Engineer dated August 1995, and, to the maximum extent practicable, provides for mitigation or compensation, or both, for the direct and indirect social and cultural impacts that the project will have on the affected areas.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED: The existing deep-draft IHNC navigation lock[1] is obsolete and is not efficient. Since the beginning of lock operations in 1923, the types of vessels utilizing the navigation lock has changed and the dimensions of waterborne vessels typically utilizing the lock has increased. As far back as the 1950s, the number of deep-draft vessels was declining. In the 1940s, when the GIWW was directly connected to the IHNC, the number of shallow-draft vessels (typically inland waterborne commerce) began increasing. As shallow-draft vessel numbers were increasing, the size of shallow-draft vessels was also increasing as industry standards changed. The inefficiency of the lock is related to the inability to "pack" multiple large shallow-draft vessels in the lock chamber in order to move as many vessels as possible during each lockage. The size of the largest shallow-draft (or inland navigation) vessels has essentially reached an industry maximum size of nearly 55-feet wide by 300-feet. While the overall tonnage of commodities passing through the existing lock is expected to slowly increase into the future, the percentage of large shallow-draft vessels locking through the IHNC is also expected to increase. Currently, the percentage of shallow-draft traffic that is greater than 900 feet in length passing through the IHNC is already over 50 percent of all traffic locking through the IHNC; and that proportion is not expected to decline. Furthermore, the age of the lock has led to increased costs associated with the operation and maintenance of the lock, including more and more frequent maintenance events. The purpose of a new lock is to provide a more efficient locking process by increasing lock capacity, to increase the reliability of the lock, as well as to reduce operation and maintenance costs and related delays.

PROJECT LOCATION: The IHNC and existing lock connects the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain and provides a connection with the GIWW and the remaining authorized portion of the Mississippi River-Gulf Outlet. The existing lock is 640 feet long by 75 feet wide by -31.5 feet (NAVD88) and is located on the left descending bank at Mississippi River Mile 92.6 above Head of Passes (Figure 1).

DESCRIPTION OF ACTION: In January 2017, USACE previously released an integrated Draft General Reevaluation Report (GRR) and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), evaluating four IHNC navigation lock replacement plans, to be constructed within the IHNC at a site between the Claiborne Avenue and Florida Avenue Bridges, as well as a No-Action plan in the final array of alternatives:

[1] The existing lock is 640ft.L x 75ft.W x -31.5ft. NAVD88.

- Plan 1 – No-Action
- Plan 2 - *900 feet long x 75 feet wide x -22 feet deep (NAVD88)*
- Plan 3 - *900 feet long x 110 feet wide x -22 feet deep (NAVD88)*
- Plan 4 - *1,200 feet long x 75 feet wide x -22 feet deep (NAVD88)*
- Plan 5 - *1,200 feet long x 110 feet wide x -22 feet deep (NAVD88)*.

In the 2017 Draft GRR/SEIS, Plan 3, the 900-foot-long by 110-foot-wide lock configuration, was found to result in the greatest net excess benefits over the other potential plans and was identified as the National Economic Development plan and the Recommended Plan.

After the draft 2017 report, USACE revised the proposed plan to include: construction of a 900ft.L x 110ft.W x -22ft. shallow draft cast-in-place concrete lock and associated support structures and facilities; construction of a permanent double leaf bascule bridge north of the existing St. Claude Avenue bridge, which would require acquisition of a small number of residential properties, demolition of the existing St. Claude Ave. bridge; a by-pass channel around the new lock construction site; disposal of dredged material suitable for aquatic disposal into the Mississippi River and disposal of material that is not suitable for aquatic disposal in an approved solid waste landfill site; and extension of the Mississippi River flood risk reduction levees and floodwalls along the banks of the IHNC to the site of the new lock and demolition of existing floodwalls. The revision eliminated the need for a temporary by-pass bridge north of the existing St. Claude Bridge as well as the placement of a light rail on the new permanent bridge and its approaches.

Before finalizing a report, USACE determined it would take additional steps to ensure that impacts of the project would be addressed, including updating and reformulating the Community Impact Mitigation Plan, completing a traffic analysis and developing a Traffic Mitigation Program, and developing a plan to avoid pre-existing contamination at the former Coast Guard facility. While undertaking those efforts, USACE also further refined the lock project design. Due to the extent of the changes since the draft 2017 report, USACE has prepared a 2025 supplemental draft GRR/SEIS as well as this revised Clean Water Act (CWA) 404(b)(1) Public Notice to address changes since the 2017 draft GRR/SEIS. The following project description details changes to the project since the 2017 report.

Project Description

Construction of the new lock north of Claiborne Avenue would require a complex sequence of tasks. It is anticipated that the entire construction process could take up to 14 years to complete, if adequate funding is provided (project construction would begin in year 2033 and end in year 2047, with Engineering and Design beginning in Fiscal Year 2029. (see Figure 1).

Project Construction Major Features Years 1-14:

Years 1-2.
- Install Outer Wall of Cofferdam at New Lock Site
- Dredge Bypass Channel

Years 3-9.
- Install Remainder of Cofferdam
- Unwater New Lock Site
- Construct New Lock

Years 9-14.
- Remove Cofferdam and Backfill
- Construct Flood walls and Levee(s)
- Construct New St. Claude Avenue Bridge
- Demolish Existing Lock and St. Claude Avenue Bridge

PROJECT CONSTRUCTION YEARS 1-2

- A cofferdam around the new lock construction site is required so that the site can be unwatered. Foundational support is required for the cofferdam; therefore, jet grouting of the canal bottom sediments utilizing barge-mounted equipment would be performed to strengthen the sediments. The soil improvements would occur prior to placement of sheeting for the cofferdam. The required sheet pile tip elevation for the cofferdam is elevation -90 feet (NAVD 88). The sheet pilings would be placed using a barge-mounted vibratory hammer to form cell walls, and the interior of the cofferdam cells would be filled with sand to an elevation of +3.5 feet (NAVD 88) (Figure 3).
- The north-south section (eastern wall) of the cofferdam would be constructed within the IHNC as the first actual construction feature of the project. Construction of this part of the cofferdam in the navigation channel would separate two distinct dredging areas, namely the new lock construction site on the west side and the north bypass channel on the east side. The lock construction site and the bypass channel require excavation to significantly different depths. Although the sill elevation of the lock is -22 feet (NAVD88), the dredging depth required for the new lock site is elevation -33 feet (NAVD 88). The additional 11 feet are needed to allow for placement of base and stabilization slabs. For the north bypass channel, the required elevation is -17 feet (NAVD 88). This depth includes 2 feet for advanced dredging and 1 foot over dredging to eliminate periodic maintenance dredging during construction.
- A temporary bypass channel would be excavated between the north-south cofferdam section and the new Mississippi River levee located along the east bank of the IHNC. Some of the existing east bank of the IHNC may need to be removed. The bypass channel would accommodate vessel traffic around the

new lock construction site. To protect the east bank of the IHNC and cofferdam, and the vessels transiting the bypass channel, tugboats would be permanently stationed to assist vessels transiting the area. In addition, protection cells would be placed along the west side of the bypass channel to protect the cofferdam. All vessel traffic would be rerouted through the bypass channel while the new lock is being constructed.

- Once the bypass channel is operational, the new lock site would be dredged by a combination of hydraulic and bucket dredges. Approximately 69,000 CY of dredged material from Dredged Material Management Unit (DMMU) 5 is unsuitable for discharge into the aquatic environment and would be bucket dredge and disposed of in a solid waste landfill. An additional 278,000 cubic yards of dredged material would be removed from the new lock site (DMMUs 3 and 4) by hydraulic dredging. That material is suitable for disposal in the freshwater aquatic environment and would be discharged into the Mississippi River.

PROJECT CONSTRUCTION YEARS 3-9

- After completing the dredging work at the new lock site, the east-west sections (northern and southern walls) of the cofferdam would be constructed to close the cofferdam for unwatering. Unwatering of the cofferdam would be accomplished with a combination of pumps, sumps, and wells, including pressure relief wells. All water collected within the cofferdam would be pumped into the IHNC.
- Foundation pilings would be driven within the unwatered cofferdam to support the concrete pours of the lock module. Foundation pilings would consist of 24-inch x 24-inch precast, pre-stressed concrete pilings spaced on approximately 10-foot centers with tighter spacing under lock module walls. A total of 1,386 vertical pilings would be driven to a depth of 136 feet below grade. Either a vibratory or impact hammer, or a combination of both, would be used for pile driving. Concrete pours for the lock modules would begin at the location for the gates and work inward to the chambers. Alternate sections of the module would be poured, and some concrete pours may need to occur at night with the use of lighting due to concrete technical restrictions. An on-site concrete batch plant would be necessary, and nearby staging areas for construction materials and parking area for construction workers would be required (Figure 4).
- Floodwall and levee segments outside of the immediate cofferdam location and underneath the St. Claude Avenue Bridge will be constructed throughout the duration with the main efforts falling in years 2-7.

PROJECT CONSTRUCTION YEARS 9-14

- Following completion of the lock modules, the cofferdams would be removed and the area re-watered. Areas around the lock modules would be backfilled with excess sand from the cofferdams and earthen fill material. Starting on the southwest side of the project, the new floodwall will tie-in into the existing wall on

the west of the existing IHNC Lock. The new floodwall will tie to the new lock on the west side. Starting on the southeast side of the project, the new levee will tie into the existing MRL levee on the east side of the existing IHNC Lock and travel to the new lock tie-in wall on the east side. The new floodwall segments under the St. Claude and North Claiborne Ave bridges will tie to the new levees on the east side. The new levee will consist of 1V:3H slopes, 10-ft crown, reinforcement geotextile, deep material mixing, riprap, and will be constructed to a final elevation of 24.5. Total cubic yards (CY) of Embankment, Compacted fill is 515,000 CY. The west side of the lock would be backfilled first, prior to opening the lock, so that the control house, maintenance and administration building, machinery building with emergency generators, paint shed, parking lot, and permanent access roadway can be constructed in that area and to avoid working on the west side of the lock while traffic is passing through the lock. The new lock would be expected to take approximately 8 years to build, years 2034 to 2041. The additional structures and facilities associated with the new lock are required in order to maintain operation and functionality of the lock. In addition, site access roads will be constructed for ingress and egress to these structures. The maintenance and administration building, parking lot, and access roadway is shown in Appendix B, Engineering, Annex 11, Plate Sheet C-103. During future detailed design, USACE will design and layout in further detail the various buildings to be constructed as part of the new lock and determine the logistics and suitable locations for the proposed structures.

- The proposed borrow sites for the levee are located within the Bonnet Carré Spillway and are approximately 45 acres and 18.5 acres, respectively. It is expected that the site would be cleared and grubbed prior to excavation, and then excavated to a pit depth of approximately –15.0 feet NAVD88, with side slopes of 1-foot vertical on 3-feet horizontal on all sides. Excavation activities would be conducted during dry or low water periods as much as practicable. Bulldozers would be utilized to clear the proposed borrow areas of any surface vegetation and earthen material deemed not suitable for the levee enlargement project. The vegetation and unsuitable earthen material removed would all be temporarily stockpiled on-site. Groundwater seeping into the pit would be pumped out into adjacent areas. Excavators would remove the earthen material deemed suitable for the levee project, which would be processed within the borrow sites to reduce the moisture content within the soil. Moisture content processing will be performed by mechanical methods such as utilizing bulldozers to stockpile materials and disks to further reduce the moisture content of the soil. Once the moisture content has been reduced to acceptable levels, haul trucks would be utilized to transport material to the IHNC Lock site. It is anticipated that primary transportation routes would be utilized such as U.S. Hwy 61, I-310, I-10, I-610, LA Hwy 39 (North Claiborne Avenue), LA Hwy 46 (St. Claude Avenue), and Florida Avenue (Figure 7).
- The new lock would then be opened to navigation traffic in a pass-through mode and the bypass channel backfilled with earthen fill material. Completion of tie-ins to existing levee and floodwalls on both sides of the IHNC would be achieved

after construction of the new lock, while the new lock remains in the pass-through mode (all gates open). Throughout this time, the existing lock would continue normal operation (Figure 8).

- The reconfiguration of the new lock would maintain flood risk reduction for the communities and remove the risk at the existing lock. The reconfiguration of the fronting of the new lock facing the Mississippi River will be brought to the appropriate design elevation and will maintain the level of risk reduction pursuant to the Mississippi River & Tributaries authority level of risk reduction. The Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity levee system will tie into the new lock and maintain the storm risk reduction capability of the LPV project. IHNC construction will not interfere with the ability of the non-Federal sponsors of the LPV and MRL to operate and maintain appropriate levels of risk reduction.
- Once the new lock becomes operational and all new levees and floodwalls are constructed, the old lock would be put into pass-through mode. The new St. Claude Bridge would be constructed by building the bridge piers and protective dolphins, installing lift bridges and constructing the tie-in into the existing road. The floodwalls underneath the new bridge would be constructed as well.
- The new St. Claude Avenue bridge will be a 70 ft wide with two (2), 12 ft wide eastbound lanes and two (2), 12 ft wide westbound lanes. Four (4) foot shoulders are provided on the outside and minimum one-foot shoulders are provided on the inside. A 6-ft wide pedestrian/bicycle lane is provided on the outside edge of the eastbound lanes, separated by traffic with a concrete barrier. A 7-inch reinforced concrete slab/deck was preliminary sized for the bridge approaches. Eighteen-inch steel pipe piles were assumed to support the approach piers. Pile capacity curves used for the floodwalls were utilized for the pile tip selection. Initial design and quantities are based on a similar bascule bridge design constructed in another location. The foundation design will be site adapted for this project (pile design, bridge pier design, etc.). Bascule spans were selected to span the existing/future channel alignment and the demolition bypass channel alignment during demolition of the existing lock.
- Construction of the new St Claude Avenue Bridge will be phased such that thru traffic along the existing St. Claude Avenue Bridge will be maintained, with the exception of any typical bridge closures to pass navigation, for the entire construction duration. In the event that restriction of thru traffic is required for construction of tie-ins; closures will be minimized to nights and weekends during low traffic volume periods. Additional details regarding traffic control will be developed with the Port of New Orleans, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA-DOTD) and the City of New Orleans during future detailed design.
- The proposed bridge deck elevation is (+) 39 ft, whereas the existing bridge deck elevation is approximately (+) 20 ft. However, the approach ramps have to tie back to the existing tie-ins along St. Claude Avenue at both Poland Avenue and Reynes Street. The approach ramps are steeper in grade than the existing ramps, but with the addition of longer vertical curves, still suitable for traffic.

Three existing homes along the west side will require demolition in order to construct the new St. Claude bridge.

- Construction would begin on the replacement bridge approximately 10 years into the project construction and it would take approximately 36 months to complete. Demolition could take approximately 6 months for 2 lanes, or a total of 1 year to demolish all four lanes.
- The old St. Claude Bridge would then be demolished, and the floodwalls under the footprint of the now demolished bridge would be constructed. It is expected that it will take approximately 18 months to demolish the old lock and associated support structures and facilities and the structural material hauled away to be salvaged or scrapped. About 181,000 CY of dredged material would then be removed from the lock demolition site (DMMU 9) with hydraulic and or mechanical dredges. This material is suitable for open water discharge into the Mississippi River, and most or all of it would likely be disposed there unless needed elsewhere for backfill. Upon completion, the new lock and connecting channels would be fully functional (Figures 9 and 10).

METHODS OF DISCHARGE: Soils and sediments that require excavation for project construction have been thoroughly evaluated under regulations and procedures developed under requirements of the CWA and may be divided into two categories:

- Approximately 614,000 CY of dredged material that would be excavated from Dredged Material Management Units (DMMUs) 3, 4, 6, 9, and 10 is “suitable for open water discharge” (see Figure 2 for DMMU Map). This material is non-toxic to sensitive benthic organisms, does not contain contaminants at concentrations that would adversely bioaccumulate or bio-magnify in aquatic food webs, and would not violate or exceed regulatory water quality criteria or drinking water standards upon discharge into the proposed Mississippi River open-water disposal site. The dredged material would mix with the river’s normal suspended and bedload sediments and be carried downstream. Approximately 105,000 CY of dredged material that would be excavated from DMMUs 5 and 7 is “unsuitable for open water discharge” because it is toxic to sensitive benthic organisms. This material would be excavated with an environmental bucket dredge to minimize on-site loss of material and turbidity and would be hauled to and permanently disposed in a permitted solid waste landfill.
- Dredging depths and widths required for this plan do not warrant vertical or lateral subdivision of DMMUs into “native layer” and “fill” categories as for previously evaluated deep draft lock alternatives. However, results from chemical and biological testing of the material within these DMMUs were utilized in assessing current dredged material disposal alternatives in that contaminant maximums and worst-case toxicity determinations for overlapping units were considered to represent a dredging unit. As an example, testing results from the non-native or fill layer of DMMU 7 which contained higher levels of contaminants than the native layer was used to represent the entire unit, and were not averaged or weighted with native and fill layers.

- DMMUs previously evaluated for deeper lock alternatives that have sufficient depth and would not be dredged as part of this plan are DMMUs 1, 2, 8, and 11 (IHNC Channel).
- Approximately 106,100 CY of sediment would need to be dredged to construct the bypass channel. The majority of this dredged material – approximately 70,000 CY from DMMU 6 – is suitable for open water placement and would be discharged into the Mississippi River. The remaining dredged material, about 36,000 CY from DMMU 7, is not suitable for discharge into the Mississippi River and would be bucket dredged and disposed of in a solid waste landfill.

ADJACENT PROPERTIES: Several residential neighborhoods are located in the vicinity of the project area including Holy Cross, St. Claude, Lower Ninth Ward, and Bywater (see Figure 12). There are other businesses in the area including Southern Scrap and Recycling and marine related businesses.

DREDGING BY OTHERS: No dredging by others is anticipated.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT DOCUMENTATION: The existing lock is 640 feet long by 75 feet wide, has a sill depth of 31.5 feet, and is located at Mississippi River Mile 92.6 Above Head of Passes on the Industrial Canal, also known as the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal or IHNC. In January 2017, USACE previously released an integrated Draft GRR and SEIS, evaluating four IHNC navigation lock replacement plans, to be constructed within the IHNC at a site between the Claiborne Avenue and Florida Avenue Bridges, as well as a No-Action plan in the final array of alternatives:

- Plan 1 – No-Action
- Plan 2 - *900 feet long x 75 feet wide x -22 feet deep (NAVD88)*
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In the 2017 Draft GRR/SEIS, Plan 3, the 900-foot-long by 110-foot-wide lock configuration, was found to result in the greatest net excess benefits over the other potential plans and was identified as the National Economic Development plan and the Recommended Plan.

After the draft 2017 report, USACE revised the proposed plan to include: construction of a 900ft.L x 110ft.W x -22ft. shallow draft cast-in-place concrete lock and associated support structures and facilities; construction of a permanent double leaf bascule bridge north of the existing St. Claude Avenue bridge, which would require acquisition of a small number of residential properties, demolition of the existing St. Claude Ave. bridge; a by-pass channel around the new lock construction site; disposal of dredged material suitable for aquatic disposal into the Mississippi River and disposal of material that is not suitable for aquatic disposal in an approved solid waste landfill site; and extension of the Mississippi River flood risk reduction levees and floodwalls along the banks of the

IHNC to the site of the new lock and demolition of existing floodwalls. The revision eliminated the need for a temporary by-pass bridge north of the existing St. Claude Bridge as well as the placement of a light rail on the new permanent bridge and its approaches.

Before finalizing a report, USACE determined it would take additional steps to ensure that impacts of the project would be addressed, including updating and reformulating the Community Impact Mitigation Plan, completing a traffic analysis and developing a Traffic Mitigation Program, and developing a plan to avoid pre-existing contamination at the former Coast Guard facility and along the railroad tracks. While undertaking those efforts, USACE also further refined the lock project design. Due to the extent of the changes since the 2017 draft GRR/SEIS, USACE has prepared a 2025 supplemental draft GRR/SEIS. An electronic copy of the 2025 report and its appendices, along with prior reports and supporting documents are available on the project web page at: http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/About/Projects/IHNC-Lock-Replacement. The comment period for the draft GRR/SEIS report starts **May 30, 2025** and ends on **July 17, 2025**.

STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: The Clean Water Act sets and maintains goals and standards for water quality and purity. Section 401 requires a Water Quality Certification from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) that a proposed project does not violate established effluent limitations and water quality standards. A Section 401 Water Quality Certificate (WQC 170209-01/AI 161278/CER 20170001) was issued for the proposed project by the LDEQ by letter dated April 4, 2017. An amended WQC (CER 20170001) is currently being coordinated with LDEQ and will be included in Appendix A in the Final Report.

COASTAL ZONE CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION: The Coastal Zone Management Act establishes a partnership structure allowing states and the Federal government to work together for the protection of U.S. coastal zones from environmentally harmful over-development. Potential project-induced impacts were evaluated during feasibility level design and were described in a Consistency Determination submitted to the Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources to review for consistency with the Louisiana Coastal Resource Program. The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), Office of Coastal Management, in a letter dated March 29, 2017, determined that the proposed project was consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program in accordance with Section 307 (c) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended (Coastal Zone Consistency C20170002). An amended Coastal Zone Consistency Determination (C20170002 Mod 01) is currently being coordinated with LDNR and will be included in Appendix A in the Final Report.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES: Pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act, the CEMVN has determined that the proposed project may affect but is not likely adversely affect any threatened or endangered species or their associated critical habitat. Consultation with the USFWS is currently ongoing and will be included in Appendix A in the Final Report.

The CEMVN has determined that the proposed project will not affect any threatened or endangered species or critical habitat under the purview of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries), Protected Species Division (Atlantic sturgeon and its critical habitat). Under the January 13, 2017, NMFS Procedural Instruction 02-110-20, the NOAA Fisheries reviewed its consultative responsibilities under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), 16 U.S.C. § 1536, and associated regulations at 50 C.F.R. part 402 and determined it will not provide formal written responses to requests for concurrence with a federal action agency's determination that its actions will not affect any ESA-listed species or designated critical habitat ("no effect" determination) (http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/op/pds/index.html). As such, endangered species consultation with NOAA Fisheries is complete.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: USACE, as a Federal agency, is required to assume responsibility for the preservation of historic properties or resources that are owned or controlled by the agency and that such properties are maintained and managed in a way that considers the preservation of the historic, archeological, architectural, and cultural values pursuant to Executive Order 13175, NEPA, as amended (42 U.S.C. Sections 4321 et seq), Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), as amended, (54 U.S.C. Section 306108) and its implementing regulations, (38 CFR Part 800) and Section 110 of the NHPA.

The Section 106 of the NHPA process, implemented by regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), 36 CFR Part 800, requires federal agencies to define a project's Area of Potential Effect (APE), identify historic properties that may be directly or indirectly affected by the project, assess the potential for adverse effects, resolve those adverse effects, and provide the ACHP a reasonable opportunity to comment on the undertaking.

The impacts to cultural resources under the RP have increased since those described in the 1997 EIS; however, the effect determination remains the same: Adverse Effect (See Chapter 6, Section 6.3.3 for the specific impacts discussion). At this time, CEMVN has an executed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) from 2000 and is in the process of developing an Amended Memorandum of Agreement (AMOA). The current MOA executed in 2000 is entitled, Memorandum of Agreement, IHNC Lock Replacement Project. It was executed based on the Recommended Plan in the 1997 Evaluation Report and associated Environmental Impact Statement. Demolition of the Galvez Street Wharf and other businesses adjacent to the channel, in preparation for construction, began in 2000 as did completing some of the provisions of the existing MOA, such as the development of Historic Preservation Plans for the Holy Cross and Bywater National Register Historic Districts. In 2006, IHNC Lock construction activity was halted until CEMVN complied with NEPA and the CWA. Since then, the confined dredge material disposal areas were determined unnecessary (GRR/DSEIS 2017), the deep draft lock was removed (GRR/DSEIS 2017), and the alignment of the St. Claude

Avenue Bridge has been altered to eliminate the need to construct a temporary bridge (2024). Some of these changes to the proposed plan impact historic properties. Additionally, the ACHP regulations (36 CFR 800) have been revised and updated, changing both the requirement to consult with federally recognized Tribes and the content of MOAs.

In 2019, CEMVN initiated Section 106 of the NHPA consultation to amend the MOA executed in 2000 among the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation (ACHP), CEMVN, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer (LA SHPO), and the Port of New Orleans for the IHNC Lock Replacement Study. On February 25, 2019, CEMVN distributed a determination of Historic Properties Adversely Affected to the LA SHPO, ACHP, and Federally-recognized Tribes. LA SHPO concurred with CEMVN's eligibility and adverse effects determination via letter dated December 10, 2019. Further, CEMVN invited various additional consulting parties and hosted three Section 106 consultation meetings on March 22, 2019, April 9, 2019, and April 24, 2019.

In May 2024, CEMVN re-initiated Section 106 of the NHPA consultation to develop an AMOA for the RP, which includes several design changes to key features of the IHNC Lock Replacement Project since it was presented in 2019. CEMVN re-initiated consultation with the LA SHPO, the ACHP, Federally-recognized Tribes, and various other consulting parties. In July 2024, the NHPA Public Notice was posted to the project website: http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/About/Projects/IHNC-Lock-Replacement. [see Important Links - NHPA Public Notice July 2024] CEMVN held a Section 106 of the NHPA re-initiation consultation meeting on July 16, 2024 to discuss consultation efforts completed to-date and the RP. A total of 14 consulting parties attended the re-initiation meeting. Subsequent Section 106 of the NHPA consultation meetings were held on August 22, 2024, September 27, 2024, November 14, 2024, March 14, 2025, May 16, 2025, and additional meetings are planned after the release of the draft integrated re-evaluation report.

Section 106 of the NHPA consultation is still ongoing as of the release of the 2025 draft integrated re-evaluation report. CEMVN intends to carry forward the previous treatment measures in the MOA, executed in 2000, as much as practicable and address the new impacts due to design changes. The Amended Memorandum of Agreement (AMOA) will include stipulations to mitigate for the adverse effects to historic properties and govern other aspects of the undertaking. The AMOA will replace and supersede the MOA in full. Eventual execution of the AMOA, and compliance with its terms, is required as part of CEMVN's environmental commitments and will be reflected in the Record of Decision (ROD). CEMVN's Section 106 of the NHPA responsibilities for the lock replacement will be satisfied upon completion of the specified treatment measures outlined in the AMOA.

Once finalized, the executed AMOA will be included in Appendix A, Annex 4. The AMOA will be executed prior to the ROD.

COORDINATION: The following is a partial list of agencies to which a copy of this notice is being sent:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region VI
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Marine Fisheries Service
U.S. Coast Guard, Eighth District
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer

This notice is being distributed to these and other appropriate Congressional, federal, state, and local interests, environmental organizations, and other interested parties.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Interested parties may submit comments regarding the proposed work in writing to Mr. Mark H. Lahare, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, 7400 Leake Avenue, New Orleans, Louisiana 70118. Mr. Lahare may also be reached by e-mail at mark.h.lahare@usace.army.mil and by telephone at (504) 862-1344.

A public meeting will be held on **Saturday, June 28, 2025**, at the **Andrew P. Sanchez & Copelin-Byrd Multi-Service Center**, 1616 Fats Domino Ave, New Orleans, LA 70117. The public meeting will run from **9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m**.

You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any parties who may have an interest in the proposed action.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Smith
Chief, Environmental Compliance Branch

Enclosures

COMMENT PERIOD FOR THIS PUBLIC NOTICE EXPIRES: **July 7, 2025**

Years 1-2	1. Install Outer Wall of Cofferdam New Lock Site 2. Dredge Bypass Channel
Years 3-9	3. Install Remainder of Cofferdam 4. Unwater New Lock Site 5. Construct New Lock
Years 9-14	6. Remove Cofferdam and Backfill 7. Construct Flood Walls and Levee** 8. Construct New St. Claude Avenue Bridge*

Figure 1 **Project Construction Sequence Years 1-14.**

*The new St. Claude Avenue Bridge will be built before demolishing the existing bridge. The St. Claude Avenue Bridge will remain open during construction.

** The Flood Walls and Levees will be constructed throughout the construction duration in segments. The majority of construction will occur in Years 2-7.

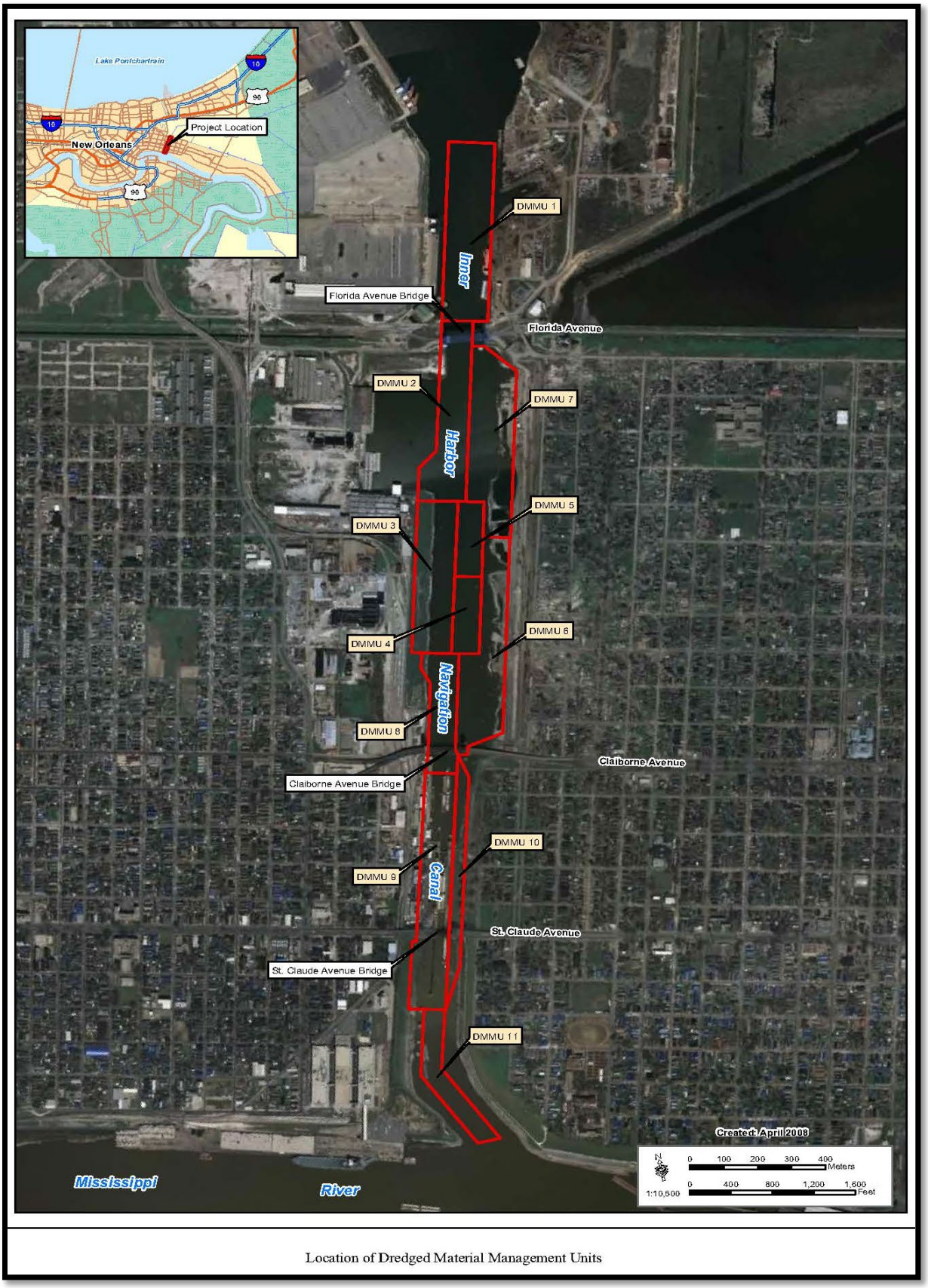

Figure 2 Location of IHNC DMMUs

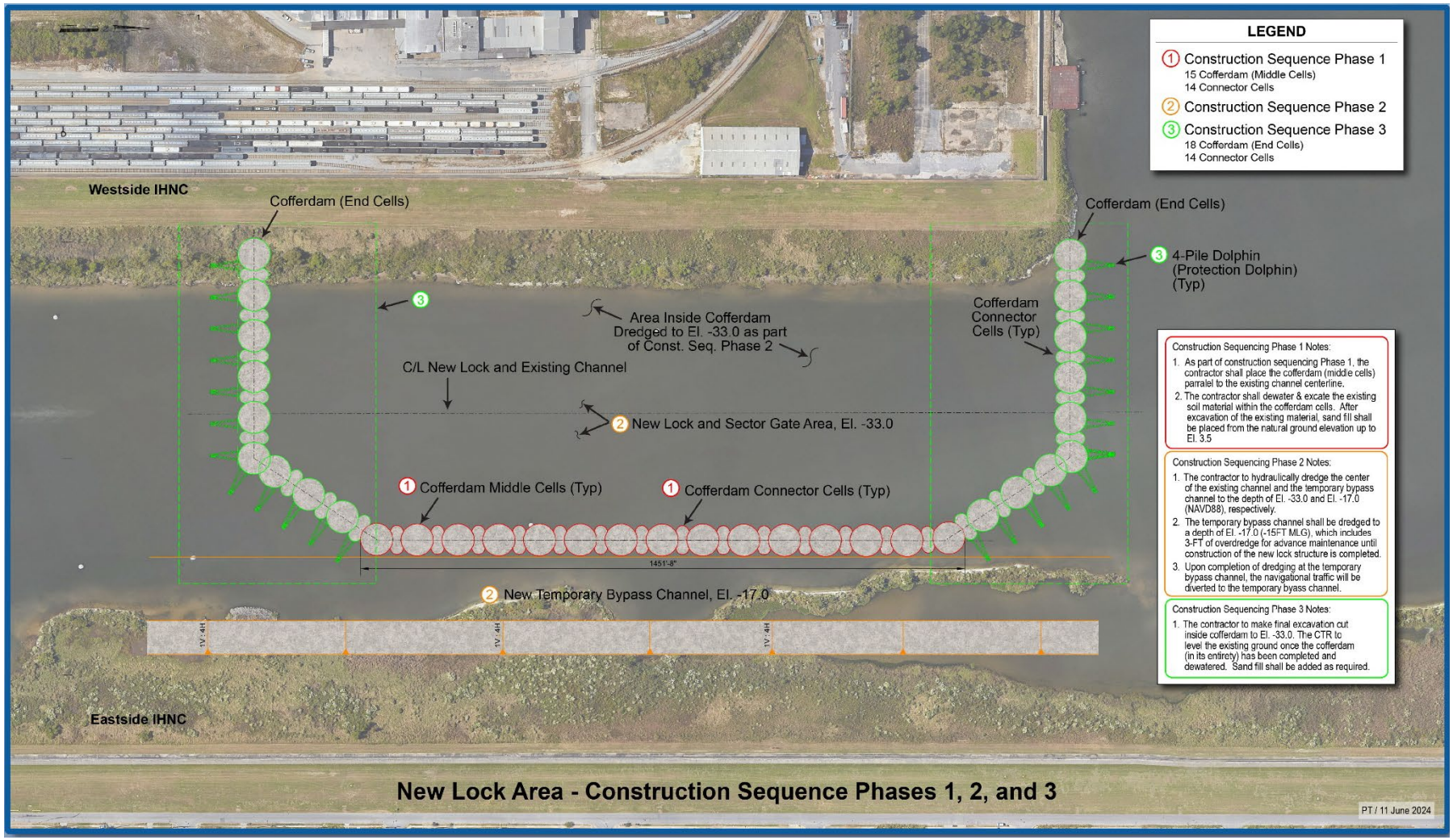

Figure 2 New Lock Construction Sequence Phases 1, 2 (Construction Years 1-2) and 3 (Construction Years 3-4).

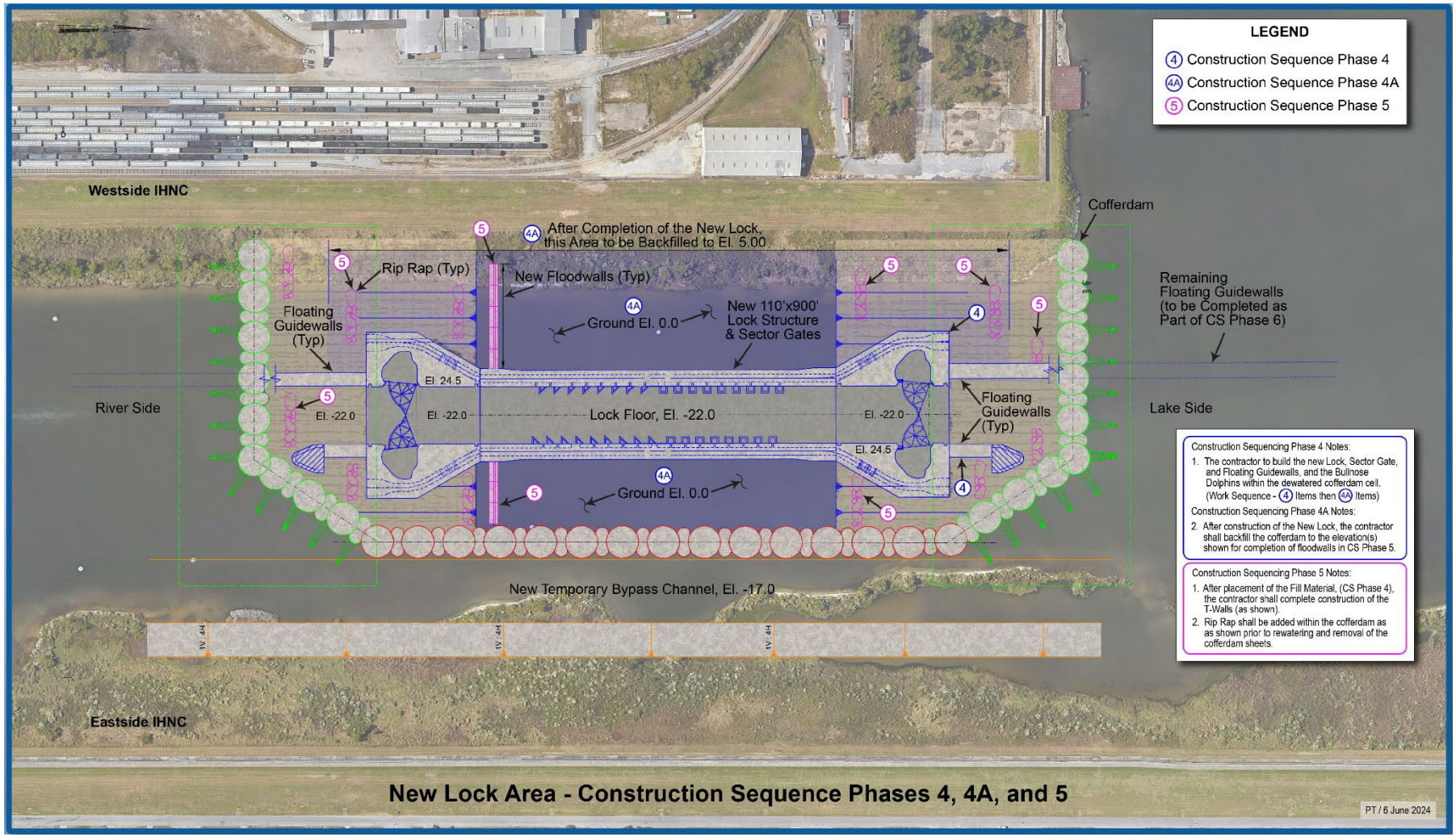

Figure 3 New Lock Construction Sequence Phases 4, 4A, and 5 (Construction Years 3-9).

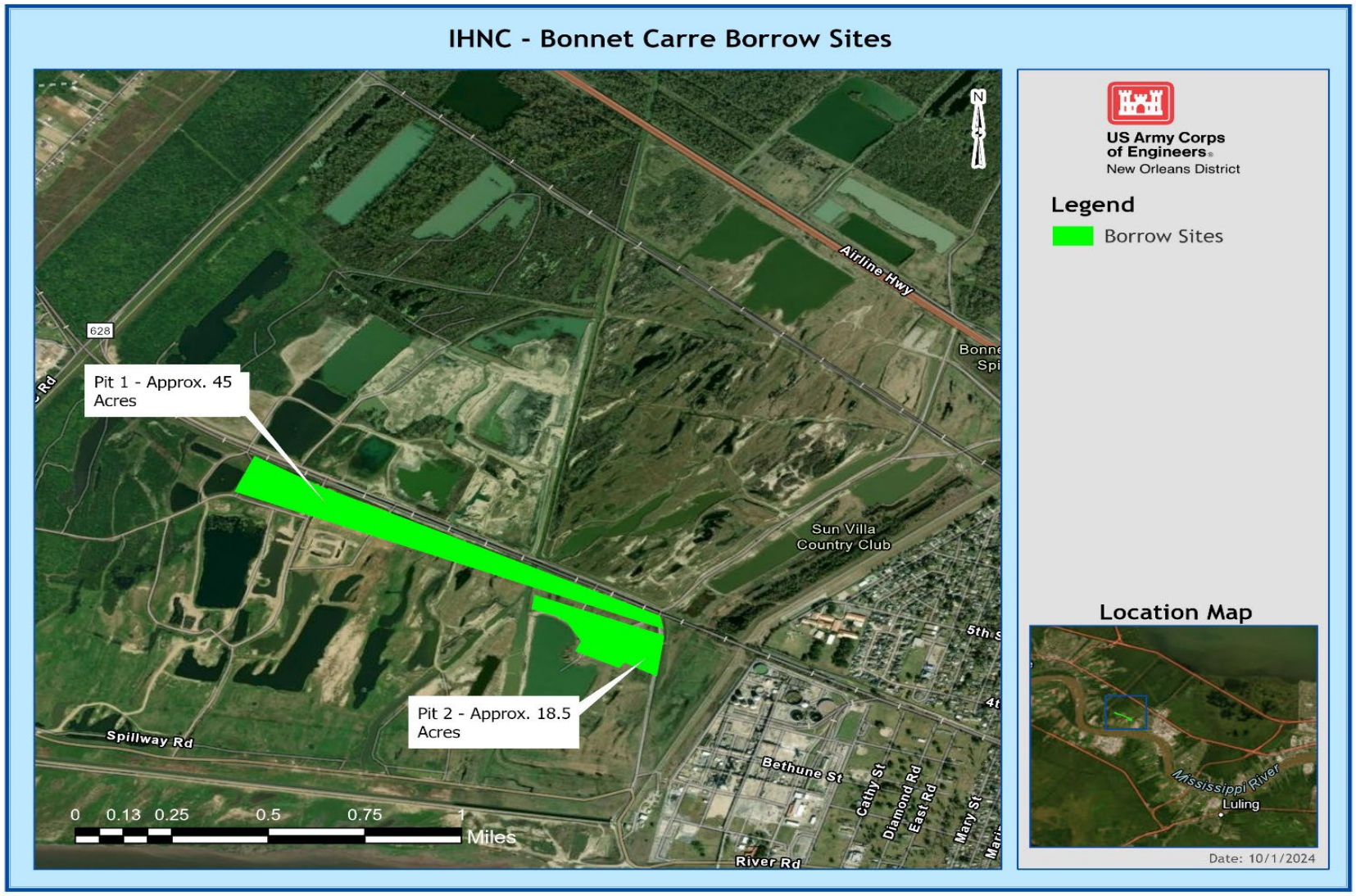

Figure 4 Proposed Bonnet Carré Spillway borrow sites for IHNC Lock Levee Construction.

Figure 5 Anticipated Transportation Routes from Bonnet Carré Borrow Location to IHNC Project Location

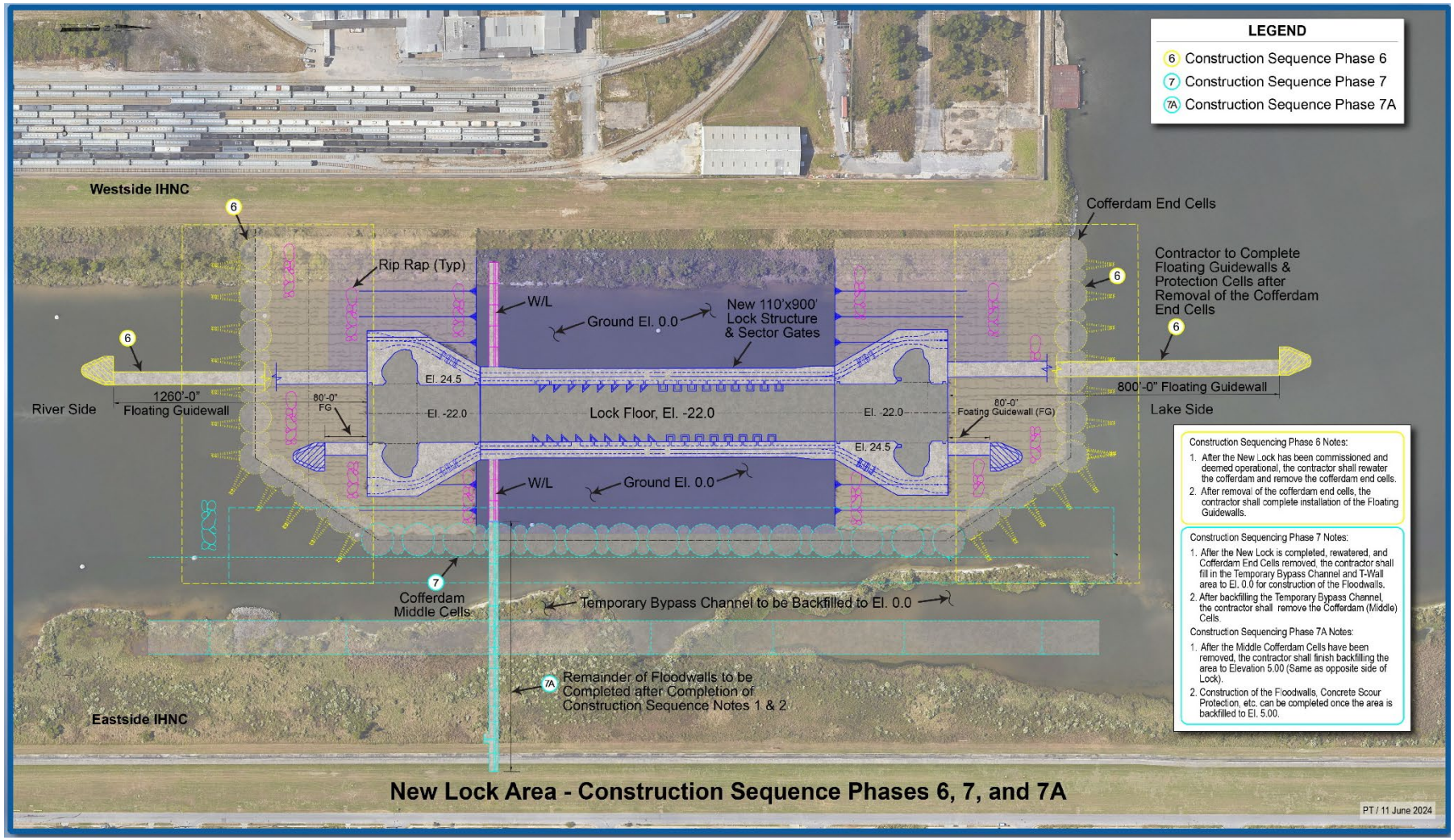

Figure 6 New Lock Construction Sequence Phases 6, 7 and 7A (Construction Years 7-9)

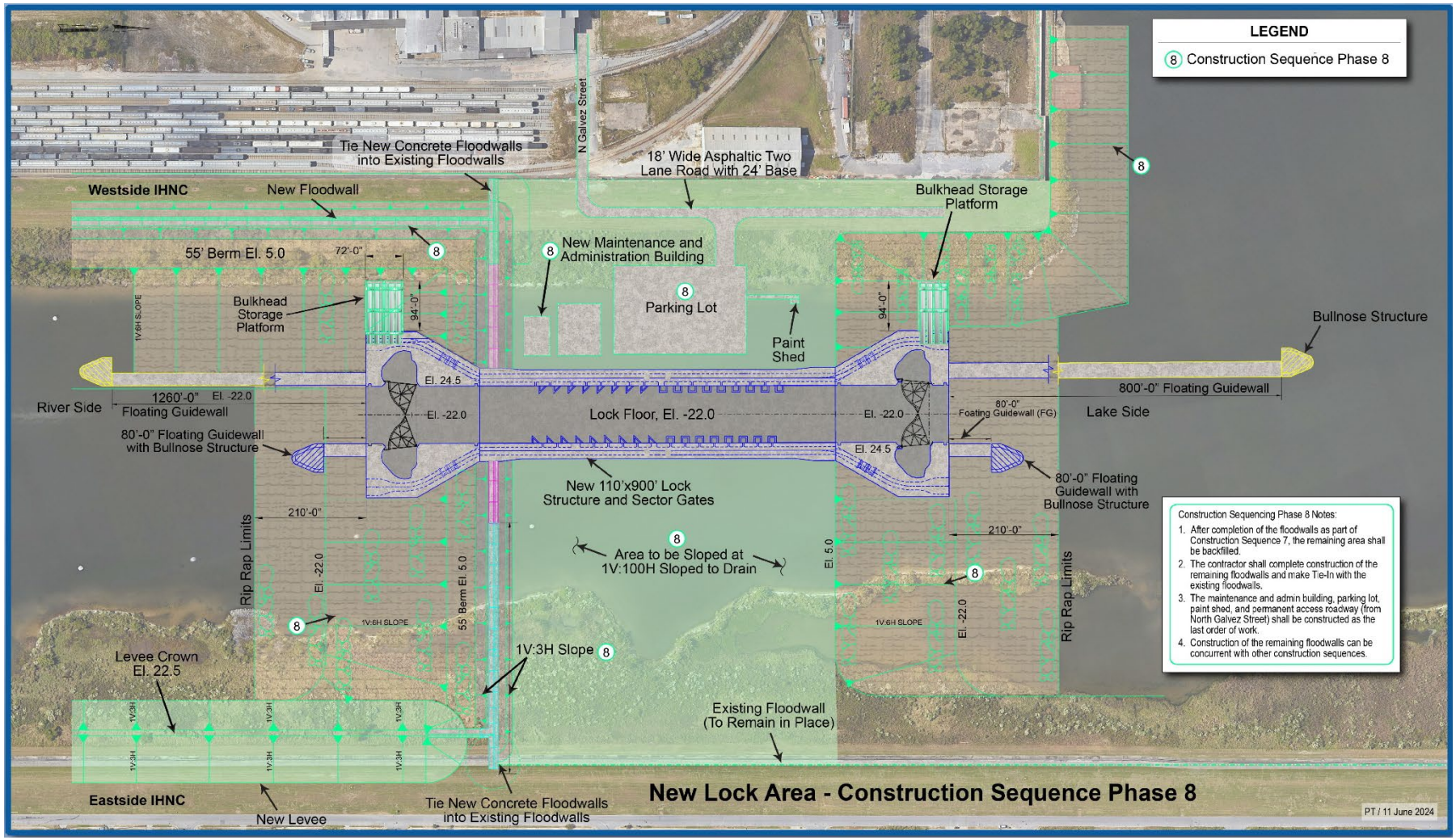

Figure 7 New Lock Construction Sequence Phase 8 (Construction Years 8-9).

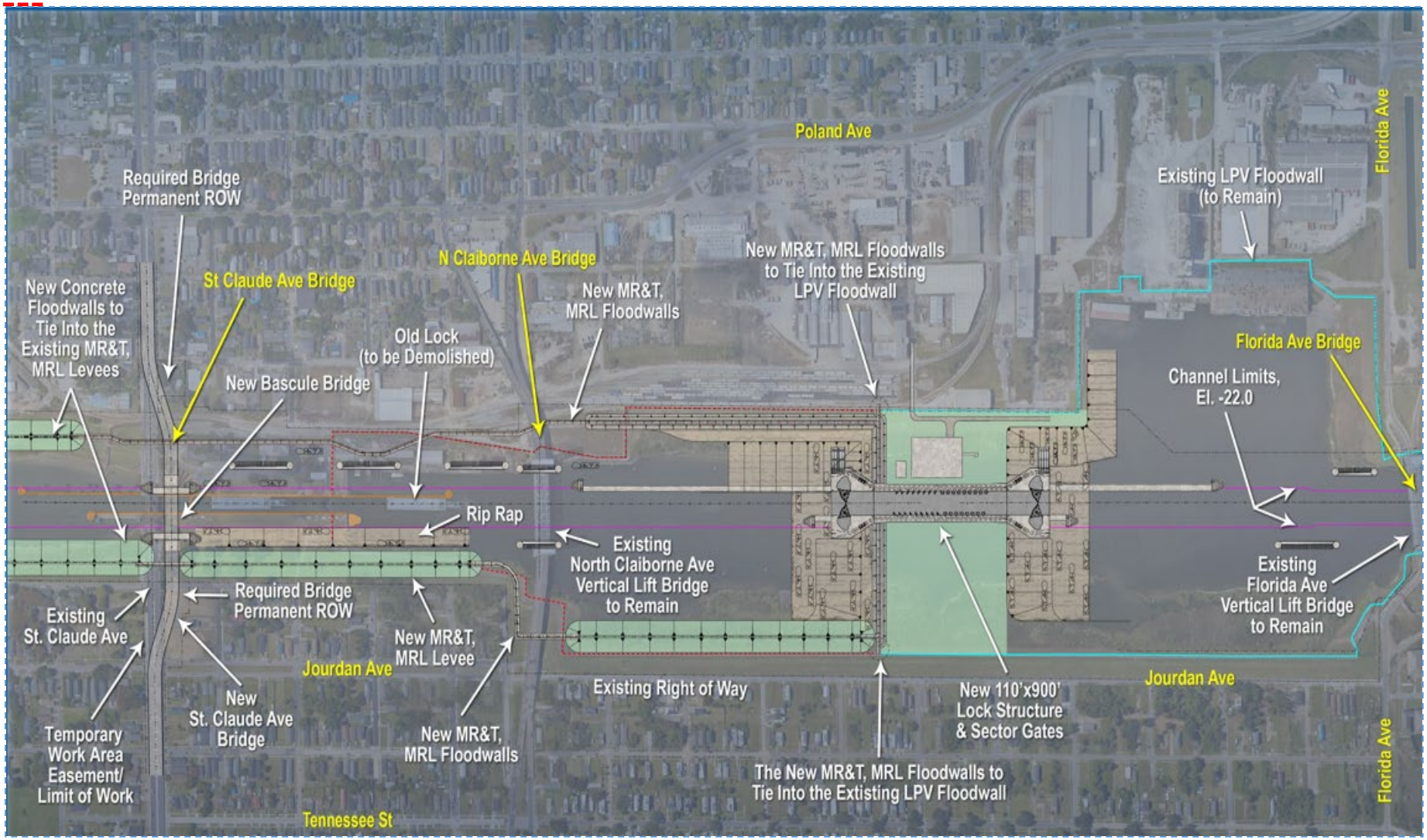

Figure 8 **IHNC Lock Construction Project Sequence Complete.**

Figure 9 **Conceptual Rendering of IHNC Lock Construction Project Sequence Complete.**