



West Bank and Vicinity, Louisiana (WBV) Project: Future Levee Lifts

Project Purpose

The West Bank and Vicinity, Louisiana (WBV) Project provides coastal storm risk management for the greater New Orleans area on the west bank of the Mississippi River.

The project was built to reduce flood risk from a 1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) storm surge and wave event. Southeast Louisiana faces ongoing challenges from weak soils, regional subsidence, and the global effects of sea level rise. These factors were fully accounted for in the original WBV system design. For this reason, floodwalls within the system were constructed to elevations that factored in projected relative sea level rise through the year 2057. From the outset, it was understood that levees would require future "lifts"—or height increases—to maintain performance over time.

The need for future levee lifts was always part of the WBV system's lifecycle planning. Construction of levees in lifts is typical in southeast Louisiana in order to take advantage of soil strength gains over time. Those gains allow designs with a smaller cross-sectional area which minimizes costs by reducing the amount of borrow required and mitigation costs by reducing the levees footprint. Following extensive analysis, USACE completed a General Reevaluation Report (GRR), and in 2023, a Record of Decision (ROD) was signed endorsing the planned lifts as the long-term solution for sustaining the system's 1% level of risk reduction.

Overview / Authorization

In WRDA 2022, Congress authorized construction as identified in the Director's Report, signed December 17, 2021, and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) ROD, signed October 16, 2023. The authorized work will follow a 65% Federal and 35% non-Federal cost share structure and the fully funded cost estimate for multiple lifts over 50 years is \$1.8B.

The non-Federal Sponsors (NFSs) are the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board of Louisiana (CPRAB), Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-West Bank (SLFPA-W), Plaquemines Parish Government (PPG), and Lafourche Basin Conservation Levee and Drainage District (LBCLDD).

Project Location & Description

The WBV system spans four parishes—St. Charles, Jefferson, Orleans, and Plaquemines—on the West Bank of the Mississippi River. This densely populated area includes critical residential, commercial, and industrial infrastructure.

To sustain the system's designed level of risk reduction, the WBV Project, Future Levee Lifts will include approximately:

- 49 miles of levee lifts
- 268 linear feet of existing floodwall raise
- 1 mile of floodwall along the current WBV-Mississippi River Levee (MRL) co-located reach
- 10 miles of new floodwall extending the WBV-MRL co-located levee reach



West Bank and Vicinity, LA Project

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Project Status

The WBV Project, Future Levee Lifts is currently in the Pre-Construction Engineering and Design (PED) phase, which will include technical evaluations, detailed design, and preparation of construction-ready plans and specifications. A Design Agreement has to be signed between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the NFSs.

Key milestones:

Design Agreement Scheduled to be Signed: January 2026 (between USACE, CPRAB, SLFPA-W, PPG, and LBCLDD)

Current Focus Areas: Negotiating and Sign Design Agreement.



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For more information, please contact Melanie Goodman, Senior Project Manager at (504) 862-1940.