



LCA Beneficial Use of Dredged Material

August 2014

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Louisiana is losing coastal wetlands at an alarming rate. Restoring these wetlands is imperative to protecting the state's coastal ecosystems and abundant resources from devastating storms and hurricanes. A very promising option for restoring coastal wetlands and reducing land loss is the beneficial use of dredged material.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District has the largest annual navigation channel Operations & Maintenance (O&M) program in the Nation. Based on data from 1996 through 2013, the New Orleans District dredges an average of 78 million cubic yards (mcy) of material annually during maintenance dredging of federal navigation channels. Excluding dredged material

that is unsuitable for beneficial use (~17.7 mcy) or too remote from coastal Louisiana (~19 mcy), approximately 38 percent (15.8 mcy) of the material dredged under the New Orleans District's O&M program is used beneficially within the Federal standard, which represents the least-cost, environmentally acceptable disposal alternative. There is a reasonable potential to use an additional 20 mcy of material beneficially each year if sufficient funding was made available.

The Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Program is authorized by the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007 - Section 7006(d) within the Louisiana Coastal Area program.

Project Location

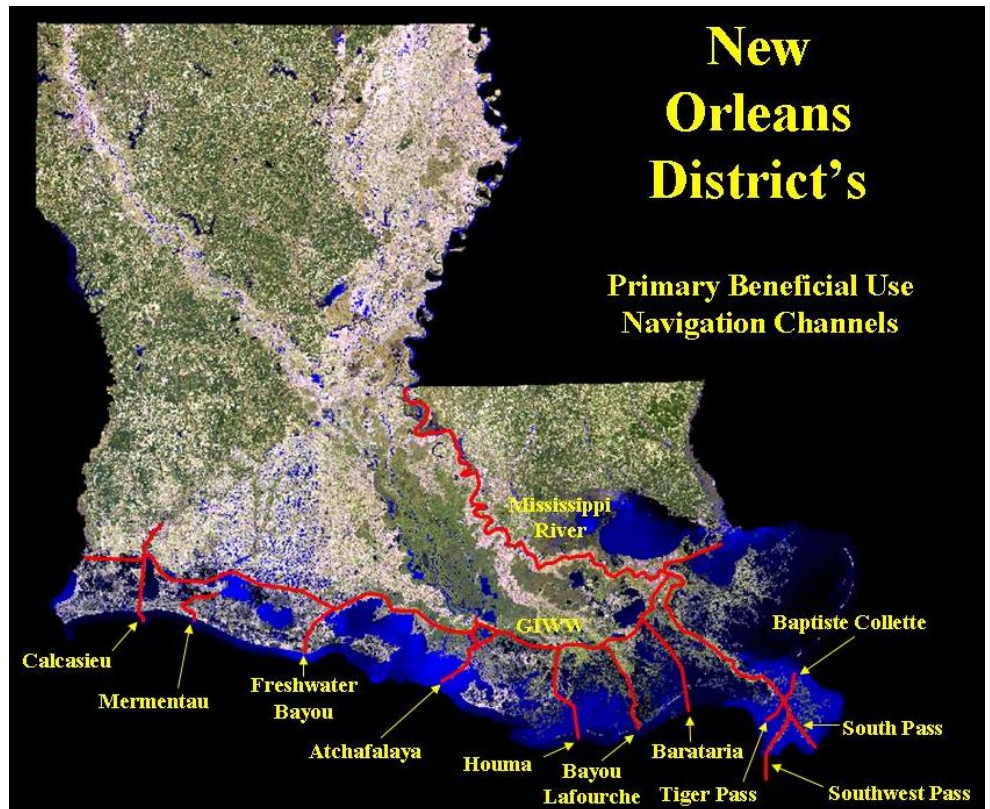
The study area is Louisiana's coastal area from Mississippi to Texas.

Project Goals

The goal of this project is to reverse the trend of land loss in the coastal Louisiana area.

Objectives

The LCA BUDMAT Program objectives are:





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1. To cost effectively increase the beneficial use of material dredged from federally maintained waterways at a total cost of \$100 million over a ten year period.
2. To address the critical needs of the LCA Program by using material dredged from the federally maintained waterways to solicit, select, plan, design and construct individual beneficial use projects that:
 - a. Restore and create coastal landscape features such as, but not limited to, marshes, ridges and islands that provide wildlife and fisheries habitat, with emphasis on ecological and hydrologic functions that support the ecosystems of coastal Louisiana.
 - b. Reduce the loss of existing coastal landscape features such as, but not limited to, marshes, ridges and islands to help sustain the ecosystems of coastal Louisiana.
 - c. Provide risk reduction to Louisiana's coastal infrastructure.

Project Features

Under the LCA BUDMAT Program, future site-specific beneficial use projects are to be selected, planned, designed and implemented as the program proceeds over a 10-year duration.

Funds from the LCA BUDMAT Program would be used for disposal activities associated with individual, cost-shared ecosystem restoration beneficial use projects that are above and beyond the disposal activities that are covered under the New Orleans District's O&M dredging Federal Standard base plan. The base plan is determined by applying the Federal Standard which requires maintenance dredging and disposal activities to be conducted in the most cost effective, environmentally acceptable manner based on sound engineering.

LCA BUDMAT Program funds are to be cost-shared at 65% Federal and 35% non-Federal.

Project Status

The LCA BUDMAT programmatic report was submitted to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) in March 2010 and to the Office of Management and Budget in April 2010. A Record of Decision was signed on 13 August 2010, and the BUDMAT Study report was transmitted to Congress on 13 August 2010.

Currently, the New Orleans District will sign two Design Agreements with Plaquemines Parish Government for two beneficial use projects, located in Tiger Pass and West Bay, which will utilize sediments dredged from the Southwest Pass reach of the lower Mississippi River.

Anyone seeking additional information on the LCA Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Program Study can visit the New Orleans District LCA website at

www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/LouisianaCoastalArea.aspx.

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