

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

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Regulatory Division Central Evaluation Branch

Project Manager S. Gail Gainey (504) 862-1545 Sandra.G.Gainey@usace.army.mil Application Number: MVN-1998-02879-CG

PUBLIC NOTICE

Interested parties are hereby notified that a permit application has been received by the New Orleans District of the US Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to: [X] Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151; 33 USC 403), [X] Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (86 Stat. 816; 33 USC 1344).

MAINTENANCE DREDGING AND BATTURE DEGRADATION AT AN EXISTING DOCK FACILITY ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER RDB RM 228 IN WEST BATON ROUGE PARISH

NAME OF APPLICANT: Greater Baton Rouge Port Commission, PO Box 380, Port Allen, LA 70767.

LOCATION OF WORK: On the Mississippi River at river mile 228 on the right descending bank, in Port Allen, Louisiana, in West Baton Rouge Parish, within the Mississippi River Basin in hydrologic unit (HUC 08070100), as shown on the attached drawings (Latitude 30.437777 N, Longitude -91.200017 W).

CHARACTER OF WORK: The applicant has requested Department of the Army authorization to perform maintenance dredging to maintain a minimum berthing depth of -40 ft N.G.V.D around an existing dock facility and degrade a portion of the batture to include excavation, grading and deposition of fill in a stockpile location. No more than approx. 125,000 cubic yards of silt material would be dredged and disposed of beyond the -55 ft N.V.G.D. contour of the Mississippi River annually and approx. 9,000 cubic yards will be excavated from the batture and removed from site. The proposed project is situated on the batture and water bottom of the Mississippi River and would temporarily impact approximately 4.4 acres of emergent wetlands and 26 acres of water bottoms.

<u>MITIGATION</u>: The applicant proposes to avoid additional direct impacts and minimize secondary impacts by limiting the construction activity to the designated construction areas onsite, placing excavated material directly into contracted third-party commercial dump trucks for disposal at an off-site non-wetland facility, and performing only the required

batture degradation to maintain engineering standards resulting in only temporary impacts to wetlands.

As compensation for unavoidable wetland impacts, the applicant proposes to use a Corps approved mitigation bank within the watershed of impact, if necessary.

The comment period for the Department of Army will close in <u>30 days</u> from the date of this public notice. Written comments, including suggestions for modifications or objections to the proposed work, stating reasons thereof, are being solicited from anyone having interest in this permit and must be submitted so as to be received before or by the last day of the comment period. Letters and/or comments concerning the subject permit application must reference the applicant's name and the Permit Application Number and preferably emailed to the Corps of Engineers project manager listed above or forwarded to the Corps of Engineers at the address above <u>ATTENTION: REGULATORY DIVISION</u>, <u>RGC</u>, <u>S. Gail Gainey</u>. This public notice is also available for review online at https://go.usa.gov/xennJ.

Corps of Engineers Permit Criteria

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public, federal, state, and local agencies and officials, Indian Tribes, and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine whether to make, modify, condition, or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Further, all factors that may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the potential cumulative effects associated with the proposed project.

The New Orleans District utilizes the National Register of Historic Places to identify properties listed on or near the proposed work and the U.S.S. Kidd and the Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad Company Depot are within a 0.5-mile radius of the project site. The possibility exists that the proposed work may damage or destroy presently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistorical, historical sites, or data. However, extent of impacts

is undetermined at this time pending a National Historic Preservation Act compliance determination. As deemed necessary, copies of this notice are made available to the State Archeologist and the State Historic Preservation Officer, and federally recognized Native American tribes regarding potential impacts to cultural resources.

Our initial finding is that the proposed work would have no effect on any species listed as endangered by the U.S. Department of Commerce, nor affect any habitat designated as critical to the survival and recovery of any endangered species under their jurisdiction.

Utilizing the Information & Planning Consultation (IPaC) tool for Endangered Species in Louisiana protocol, as signed on January 27, 2020, between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District (CEMVN) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, CEMVN has determined that the proposed project is located in waters known to be utilized by the Pallid Sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*); however, the proposed work has been determined not likely to adversely affect this species as the USFWS cutterhead/suction dredge operational parameters will be included as permit conditions.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal would result in the destruction or alteration of <u>0</u> acres of EFH utilized by various life stages of red drum and penaeid shrimp. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

If the proposed work involves deposits of dredged or fill material into navigable waters, the evaluation of the probable impacts will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency. Also, a certification that the proposed activity will not violate applicable water quality standards will be required from the Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Services, before a permit is issued.

Any person may request, (preferably by email to the project manager, or in writing), within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

You are invited to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.

John M. Herman Chief, Central Evaluation Branch Regulatory Division



















