JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE

December 7, 2020

United States Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District Regulatory Branch 7400 Leake Avenue New Orleans, Louisiana 70118

(504) 862-1545 Project Manager S. Gail Gainey <u>Sandra.G.Gainey@usace.army.mil</u> MVN-2019-01197-CG State of Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Water Permits Division Post Office Box 4313 Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4313

(225) 219-3225 Project Manager Elizabeth Hill WQC Application Number WQC # 201203-01

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: [] Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151; 33 USC 403); and/or [X] Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (86 Stat. 816; 33 USC 1344).

Application has also been made to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Environmental Services, for a Water Quality Certification (WQC) in accordance with statutory authority contained in LRS 30:2074 A(3) and provisions of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

SHIPYARD, DRYDOCK, DREDGE, AND SAND PIT OPERATIONS ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER LDB RM 208.5 IN IBERVILLE PARISH

NAME OF APPLICANT: Plaquemine Point Shipyard, c/o Tim Kimmel of Providence Engineering and Environmental Group, LLC., 1201 Main Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802.

LOCATION OF WORK: In the Mississippi River, LDB, River Mile 208.5 on and west of LA Highway 991 in Sunshine, Louisiana, Iberville Parish, within the Mississippi River Basin in hydrologic unit (HUC 08070100), as shown on the attached drawings (Latitude 30.293418N, Longitude -91.224211W).

The work described below was partially completed prior to obtaining a Department of the Army permit and was in violation of Section 301 of the Clean Water Act. All legal issues concerning the unauthorized work have since been deferred.

CHARACTER OF WORK: The original permanent mooring for the drydock, shop, and access barges described herein was previously authorized as LMNOD Mississippi River 1046 to Baton Rouge Marine Repair and Drydock, Inc. on June 25, 1979, and modified to include 7 anchor pilings for additional barge fleeting on May 20, 1983. Additional structures were subsequently installed without authorization which include a second flotilla and appurtenant shipyard and spoil pits. The applicant has requested Department of the Army authorization to bring the unauthorized structures into compliance as well as to deposit spoil material to expand operations to include commercial sale of dredged sand. Approximately 14,000 cubic yards of

dredged material would be removed annually from 18.8 acres of waterbottoms and approx. 6.4 acres of batture would continue to be used for the spoil placement and sand sale operation. Approx. 1.6 acres of traditionally navigable waters would be impacted by the structures for the drydock facilities.

The applicant has designed the project to avoid forested batture adjacent to the facility by using previously authorized roads for access and by proposing the use of non-forested areas for spoil placement. As compensation for unavoidable wetland impacts, the applicant proposes to mitigate in-kind wetland credits from a Corps approved mitigation bank located in the watershed. The applicant may be required to fully or partially restore the site to pre-project conditions if issuance of a permit is determined to be contrary to the public interest.

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 mailed so as to be received before or by the last day of the comment period. Letters concerning the Corps of Engineers permit application must reference the applicant's name and the Permit Application Number, and be mailed to the Corps of Engineers at the address above, <u>ATTENTION: REGULATORY BRANCH</u>. Similar letters concerning the Water Quality Certification must reference the applicant's name and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality at the address above.

The application for this proposed project is on file with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and may be examined during weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Copies may be obtained upon payment of costs of reproduction.

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 US 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 US 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.

The New Orleans District is unaware of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places near the proposed work. The possibility exists that the proposed work may damage or destroy presently unknown archeological, scientific, prehistorical, historical sites, or data. Copies of this notice are made available to the State Archeologist and the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Our initial finding is that the proposed work would neither affect any species listed as endangered by the U.S. Departments of Commerce or Interior, nor affect any habitat designated as critical to the survival and recovery of any endangered species. The New Orleans District has determined that the proposed project is located in waters known to be utilized by the West Indian Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*). Utilizing the Information & Planning Consultation for Endangered Species in Louisiana protocol, dated January 27, 2020, between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ecological Services Office, the Corps has determined that the proposed work is not likely to adversely affect Pallid Sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*) as the cutterhead/suction dredge operational recommendations 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 up to <u>n/a</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 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, 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 requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.

(for) JOHN M. HERMAN Chief, Central Evaluation Section Regulatory Branch

Enclosures



Providence Engineering and Environmental Group LLC









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