



MISSISSIPPI RIVER GULF OUTLET, LA DEEP DRAFT DEAUTHORIZATION STUDY

Status:

- Study initiated in FY 06 (Authorized in 4th Supplemental)
- Initial technical work performed by Galveston District and Final Report to Congress in development by New Orleans District teams.

Sponsor:

100% federally funded.

Issues:

- Governor wants to close MRGO.
- Integration into LACPR.
- Deep-draft ships have not regularly transited MRGO since Hurricane Katrina due to shoaling in channel (only empty inbound).
- **Last Event/Date:**
Stakeholder Meetings – Spring 07
- **Next Event/Date:**
Civil Works Review Board – Sept 2007







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USACE MRGO Activities

Pre-Katrina

- Channel dredging
- IHNC lock replacement
- MRGO Reevaluation Study
- CWPPRA projects
- LCA study

Post-Katrina

- No dredging
- IHNC lock new EIS needed
- Levee repairs and 100-yr upgrades
- CWPPRA projects
- MRGO-3D
- LACPR



KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO
GOVERNOR

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June 2, 2006

Major General Don T. Riley
Director of Civil Works
United States Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20314

Dear General Riley:

I am encouraged by the historic partnership formed between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State of Louisiana to develop a comprehensive master plan for the protection and restoration of our fragile coast, as mandated by the Congress and our state Legislature. I am pleased that the Corps and the State have responded quickly and are committed to making these two plans become one vision for coastal Louisiana.

Last November, our Legislature created the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) of Louisiana to develop, implement and enforce a comprehensive coastal protection master plan that for the first time in our state's history will truly integrate coastal restoration and hurricane protection. By law, this single state entity will be your partner, representing the State in the long journey to establishing a safe and sustainable coast.

Our integrated team, comprised of Corps leadership and the CPRA, has been hard at work on the comprehensive coastal protection and restoration plan, with the interim report due to Congress on June 30. I understand that this report will recommend that certain projects be advanced to bring immediate solutions for our most vulnerable coastal areas and that the final report on comprehensive protection will be made in December 2007. As we work together as partners on this critical planning effort, I believe it is essential that we communicate clearly and openly on each and every aspect of this plan.

Therefore, I write to unequivocally express the policy of this State regarding the future of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO). Our people have spoken, our Legislature has made its will clear, and my Advisory Commission on Coastal Protection, Restoration and Conservation has recommended the immediate closure of this channel.

Over the years, MRGO has compromised the safety of countless communities and contributed to the loss of vital coastal marsh areas. The closure of the MRGO must ensure that communities are safe and our ecosystems are protected from further saltwater intrusion and coastal land loss.

Specifically, our work must include a more precise plan for closure, restoration of the extensive wetlands lost as a direct result of the MRGO, and the integration of this closure into the comprehensive hurricane protection plan. We must also consider the navigation needs that will be affected by closing the MRGO to deep draft navigation, including expediting the construction of the new IHNC Lock and relocation of businesses currently depending on the MRGO.

As this report is formulated, I will be communicating this policy on MRGO through the CPRA directly to our Congressional Delegation. I urge you to join me in advocating with one voice on this issue, as well as on other critical near term aspects of our plan.

I understand, as do the people of Louisiana, that there will be many tough decisions in the coming months and years. Implementing these policy choices and determining their long term sustainability will not be easy. However, I am confident that working together, with a strong commitment to public input and thoughtful direction from our legislative leaders, we will set Louisiana on the right path for a safe and prosperous future.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor

MRGO: Views of the State of Louisiana

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General Investigations

MRGO Deauthorization

Public Law 109-234 reads:

- Chief of Engineers to develop a comprehensive plan to deauthorize deep draft navigation on the MRGO.
- Include recommended modifications to the existing authorized navigation uses of the MRGO and any navigation uses that should be maintained.
- Identify measures for hurricane and storm protection.
- Develop the plan in consultation with St. Bernard Parish, State of Louisiana, and affected Federal agencies.
- Submit interim report to Congress no later than 15 December 2006.
- Refine the plan if necessary to be fully consistent with the Final Technical Report for the LACPR Plan.

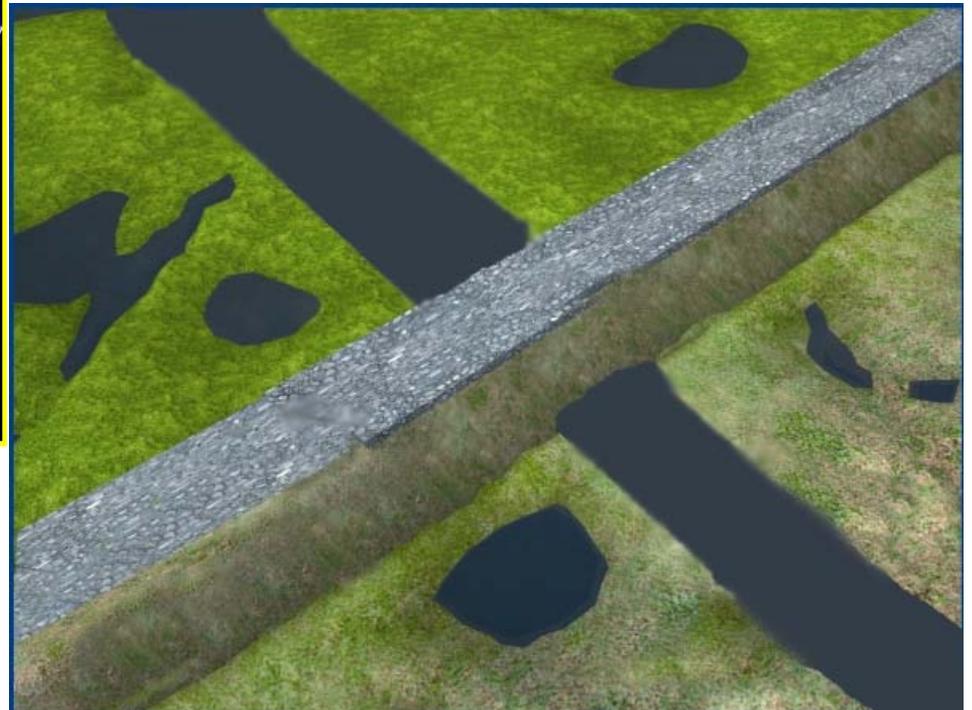


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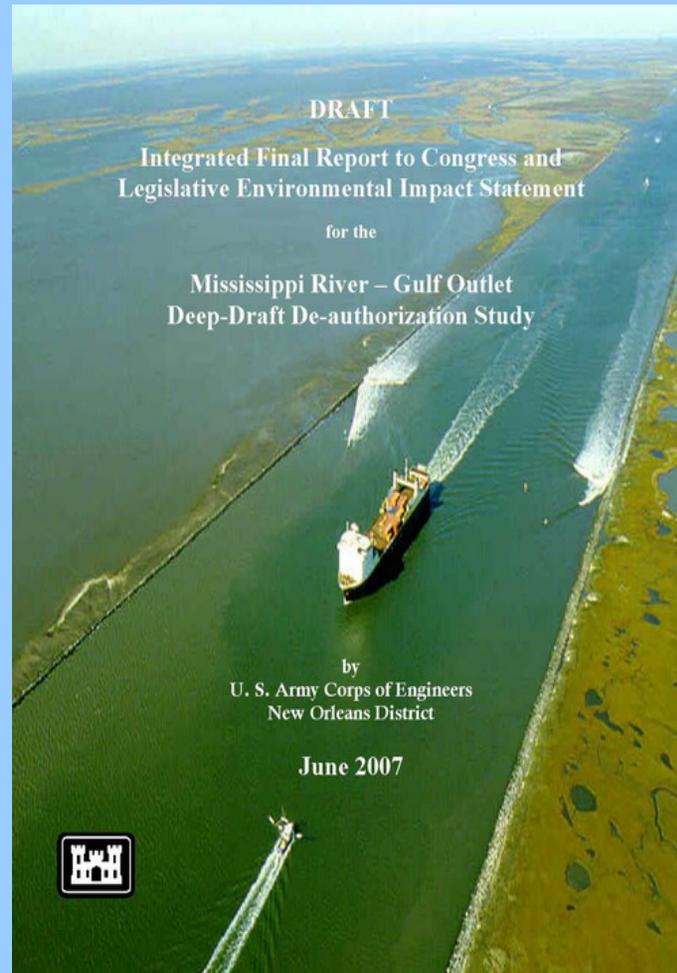
MRGO Deep Draft De-authorization Study

- Congress mandate to develop comprehensive plan by Dec 2007
- Integrate into LACPR
- 100% Federal funding
- Interim report submitted Dec 2006
- Draft report and Legislative EIS released July 2007
- Calls for total closure with rock structure on MRGO near Hopedale, LA

Proposed Location



Additional Information



<http://mrgo.usace.army.mil/default.aspx?p=MRGO>

Public Comment period ends September 4, 2007



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IHNC Storm Protection

- Work to design and build measures falls under the Hurricane Protection Office (authorized in 4th Supplemental Appropriation)
- Key piece of east bank recovery and protection – three major polders vulnerable (Orleans main, Orleans east, and Lower 9th Ward/St. Bernard)
- Possible gates and/or levees to prevent surge from entering the IHNC
- Tradeoffs between interim measures (next hurricane season), short term measures (by 2010), and long-term measures (LACPR)



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Lake Borgne Levee Connection



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