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November 21, 2007

CEMVK-PP-PQ

PUBLIC NOTICE

PROPOSED USE OF ADDITIONAL AREAS IN CREWBOAT CUT FOR DREDGE MATERIAL DISPOSAL

Interested parties are hereby notified that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposes to utilize additional areas in “Crewboat Cut” adjacent to the Horseshoe reach of the Federal navigation project, Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf and Black, Louisiana, for disposal of shoal material removed during routine maintenance dredging (Figure 1).

Designation of the proposed disposal areas involves modification of the previously approved disposal plan and the disposal of dredged material into navigable waters. Therefore, the provisions of Title 33 CFR, Part 336-338, effective April 26, 1988, are applicable and issuance of this Public Notice is required.

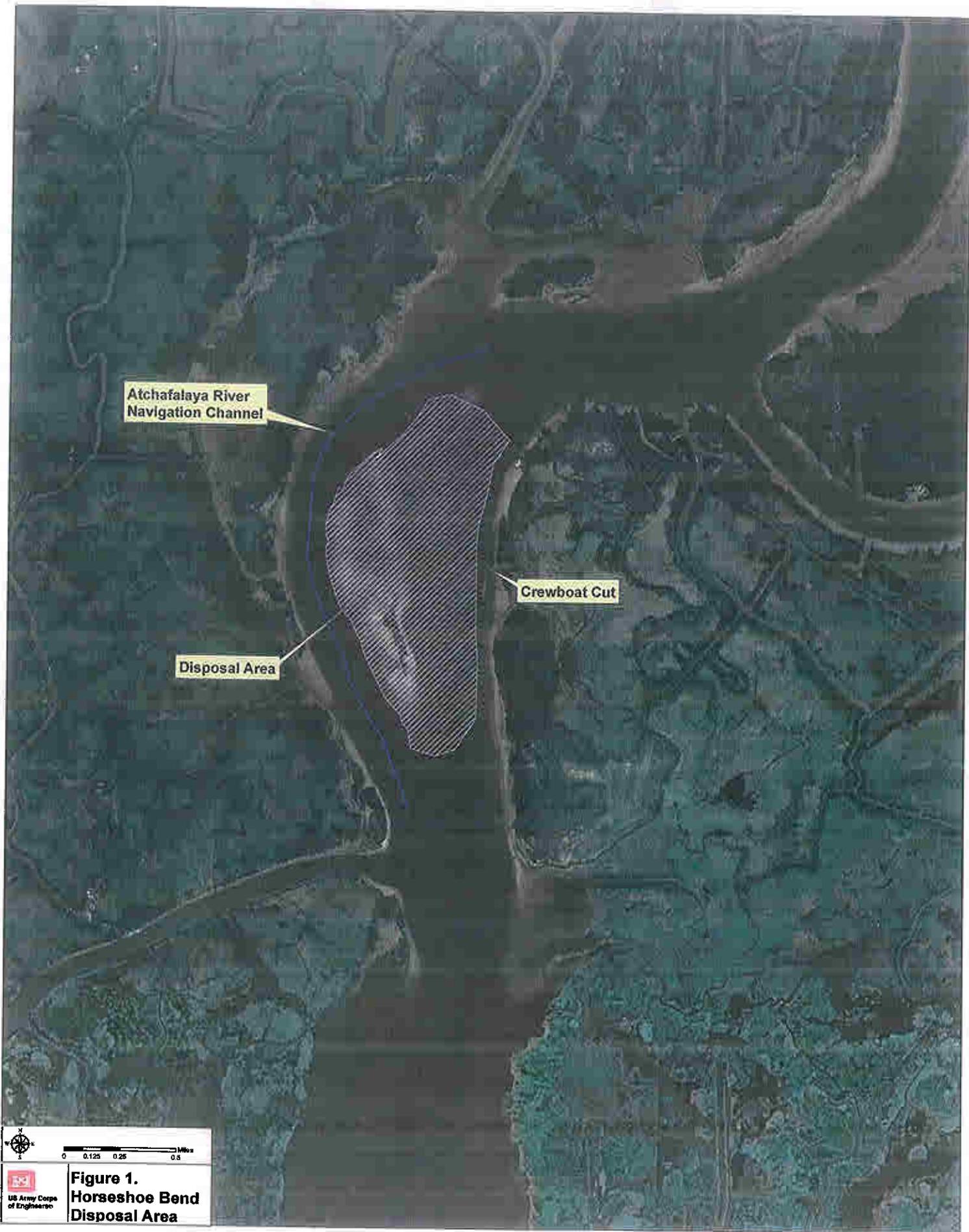
PROJECT AUTHORITY: Construction and maintenance of this 54-mile-long navigation channel was authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1968, House Document 155, 90th Congress, 1st Session, which provided for the following plan of improvement.

(a) A channel 20 feet deep over a bottom width of 400 feet from the vicinity of the U.S. Highway 90 crossing over Bayou Boeuf to the Gulf of Mexico via the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW), Bayou Chene, the Avoca Island-Cutoff Bayou Drainage Channel, the Lower Atchafalaya River, and the existing project across Atchafalaya Bay to the 20-foot depth contour in the Gulf of Mexico, except that the width in Bayou Boeuf would be reduced to not less than 300 feet where necessary because of industrial developments on both sides of the bayou, and

(b) a 20- by 400-foot channel in Bayou Black and the GIWW from the major shipyard on Black Bayou at U.S. Highway 90 to Bayou Chene.

Construction of the inland portions of Bayous Boeuf and Black were completed in June 1978. Construction of the Bayou Chene and Avoca Island-Cutoff reaches were completed in September 1981.

The navigation channel is maintained to project dimensions of -20 feet Mean Low Gulf by 400 feet, except as noted above for Bayou Boeuf.



Atchafalaya River
Navigation Channel

Crewboat Cut

Disposal Area

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



Figure 1.
Horseshoe Bend
Disposal Area

Figure 1

PROJECT PURPOSE: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is in the process of developing a long-term Dredge Material Management Plan for the Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf, and Black Project. As part of this plan, dredge material disposal alternatives are being evaluated for different channel reaches of the project. In the Horseshoe Bend reach, an alternative is being considered to place dredge material in “Crewboat Cut” (Figure 1). Studies have shown that using this area for open water dredge material disposal will not increase upstream flooding. The authorized navigation channel will remain in the current location along Horseshoe Bend.

In addition to this long-term plan, information developed as part of this process will be used to evaluate this site for near term dredge material disposal.

PROPOSED ACTION: The proposed action consists of designing confined or unconfined open water disposal areas in Crewboat Cut for the placement of dredge material removed during routine maintenance of the channel (Figure 1). A hydraulic cutterhead pipeline dredge would remove shoal material from the channel to restore authorized project depth.

QUANTITIES, FREQUENCIES, AND TYPES OF MATERIAL: Approximately 500,000 to 1,500,000 cubic yards of shoal material would be removed from the Lower Atchafalaya River annually and deposited into the proposed disposal area.

PROPERTY ADJACENT TO THE DISPOSAL AREA: Property adjacent to the proposed disposal area includes freshwater marsh and open waters of the Atchafalaya Bay and Gulf of Mexico.

EVALUATION FACTORS: The decision whether to proceed with the proposed action will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact 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 that 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; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain 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.

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) COMPLIANCE: An Environmental Assessment evaluating the impacts of the proposed dredging and disposal operation will be prepared by the U.S. Army Engineer District, Vicksburg.

STATE WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Section 401 of the Clean Water Act necessitates state water quality certification for the proposed action. The Corps of Engineers will coordinate with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to obtain water quality certification.

SECTION 404(B)(1) GUIDELINES: Designation of the proposed disposal area in Crewboat Cut for placement of dredged material will be made through the application of guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, the Environmental Protection Agency, in conjunction with the Secretary of the Army. If these guidelines alone prohibit the designation of the disposal area, any potential impairment to the maintenance activities for the Atchafalaya River and Bayous Chene, Boeuf, and Black, Louisiana, Project that would result from the failure to use the disposal area would also be considered.

COASTAL ZONE CONSISTENCY DETERMINATION: The Corps of Engineers will provide the Coastal Management Division, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, a Federal consistency determination for the proposed action.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The Corps of Engineers will consult the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service to determine the impact of the proposed action on threatened or endangered species or critical habitat thereof.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The Corps of Engineers will consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service to determine the impact of the proposed action on Essential Fish Habitat and Federally managed species in the Gulf of Mexico.

CULTURAL RESOURCES: A cultural resources survey may be conducted for the proposed action. The Corps of Engineers will consult with the Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer to assess the potential effects of the proposed action on cultural resources.

COORDINATION: The following is a partial list of agencies to which a copy of this Notice is being sent for coordination purposes:

Region VI, Environmental Protection Agency
Regional Director, National Marine Fisheries Service
Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Commander, Eighth Coast Guard District
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
Louisiana State Historic Preservation Officer

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: Interested persons may submit comments on the proposed action, and/or suggest modifications to the same in writing to the District Engineer, U.S. Army Engineer District, Vicksburg, ATTN: CEMVK-PP-PQ/Mr. Larry Marcy, 4155 Clay Street., Vicksburg, Mississippi 39183-3435. Mr. Marcy also can be reached at (601) 631-5965. Comments can also be submitted by e-mail to mvkccda@usace.army.mil.

All comments received within 15 days of the date of this Notice will be considered. Any person who has an interest that may be affected by the proposed action may request a public hearing. The request must be submitted in writing to the District Engineer within the comment period of this Notice and must clearly set forth the interest that may be affected and the manner in which the interest may be affected by this activity. You are requested to communicate the information contained in this Public Notice to any parties who may have an interest in the proposed maintenance work.

INFORMATION: Additional information concerning the proposed work can be obtained by writing to: District Engineer, U.S. Army Engineer District, Vicksburg, ATTN: CEMVK-PP-PQ/Mr. Larry Marcy, 4155 Clay Street, Vicksburg, Mississippi 39183-3435. Mr. Marcy also can be reached at (601) 631-5965.

Douglas J. Kamien, P.E.
Chief, Planning, Programs, and Project
Management Division

Copies Furnished:

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