

METRO EAST UPDATE

Covering the Levee Systems of Metropolitan East Sanitary District, Wood River, Chain of Rocks, Prairie du Pont/Fish Lake

September 2013

EVENTS & ACTIVITY

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Continued design of Wood River cutoff walls.

Initiated design of the cutoff wall for the Mel Price portion of the Wood River LD (see page 2).

Continued coordination with FPD/AMEC

CURRENT CONSTRUCTION

Wood River relief wells

MESD relief wells

FUTURE EVENTS

Oct. 17- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold a public open house in East St. Louis to discuss the upcoming fiscal year activities planned for Metro East Sanitary District levee system.

Oct. 24- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will hold a public open house in Wood River to discuss the upcoming fiscal year activities planned for Wood River levee system.

From the St. Louis District Commander

Corps working underground to reduce risk on Metro East levees

Twenty years ago, the Flood of 1993 brought the issue of underseepage in the Metro East to the attention of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and local levee districts.

Since that time, the Corps has worked tirelessly to reduce risk to those living and working behind the levees.

Our focus thus far has been the reconstruction and rehabilitation of structures and facilities above-ground, many of which had outlived their design life. The critical work remaining will be done mostly below-ground to combat underseepage, which is being addressed throughout the system in several ways.

The next part of the system we're working are the cutoff walls that will permanently correct underseepage on the Wood River Levee. This is only one piece of the \$134 million dollars the Federal government has committed to reducing risk to the public to date.

We will continue the work to correct underseepage in the entire system and restore the levees to protect against floods higher

than we saw in 1993.

These corrections, and the partnerships we have with the levee districts and the Southwestern Illinois Flood Prevention District Council, are essential to keep the levees in the Corps Levee Rehabilitation and Inspection Program

This program ensures the levee system will perform as expected, and helps those living and working behind the levees make informed decisions. The program can also bring technical expertise to levee sponsors and Federal dollars to rehabilitate levees following floods.

Partnership between the Corps and the local sponsors is crucial to continue correcting underseepage and reducing risk to the Metro East.

As we begin a new fiscal year, I look forward to what we will accomplish together.



Col. Chris Hall

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St. Louis District Commander

Metro East: Rehabilitating to the Authorized Level

\$134,000,000
Federal dollars spent
through FY13

3 Levee Systems

- Wood River
- Metro East Sanitary District/Chain of Rocks
- Prairie du Pont/Fish Lake

288,00
residents and
employees;
\$4.6 billion in
property and
infrastructure



The Metro East Levee System is authorized to 54 feet on the St. Louis river gage. This graphic illustrates features of the system that are part of the ongoing U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Federal project to rehabilitate the levees, as well as general information on the system. The system also includes 57 closure structures, 99 gravity drains and more than 16,000 feet of floodwall.

Cutoff wall on Wood River Levee moves into design phase

Eight thousand, three hundred feet.

Over the next few months, engineers and surveyors working for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Louis District will come to know the 8,300 ft. that make up a portion of the Wood River Levee System like the back of their hand.

Drilling deep into the surface, the crews are extracting critical subsurface information, such as what type of material lies beneath the surface and how strong it is, that will be used in the final determination of a slurry cut-off wall design. The wall will correct the underseepage problem in this portion of the levee.

Found throughout the entire Metro East, underseepage occurs when the natural process of water moving under the levee to equalize pressure begins to carry soils material with it that can compromise the stability of the levee.

The Federally-constructed Melvin Price Locks and Dam contributed to the underseepage problems that this stretch experiences. The Federal government, through the St. Louis District, is funding this stretch of the underseepage correction.

“The design of the slurry cutoff wall is critical in reducing risk to those living and working in Metro East,” Greg Kohler, St. Louis District’s Wood River project manager, said.

The wall will serve as a permanent solution and bring this portion of the levee system to authorized level of protection.

“In the interim, we have a plan in place to control underseepage during floods,” Kohler said. “The plan was implemented successfully



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contractors, Palmerton & Parrish, Inc., drill through the levee at Mel Price.

Photo by Seth Weidner

twice this year and we’re confident it will work until the permanent solution is constructed.”

The St. Louis District has been working with their partners to upgrade the entire length of the Wood River Levee and the Metro East Levee System for the last twenty years.

The total Metro East Levees project cost is \$454M. The total Federal spending is \$322M. Federal dollars provided thru fiscal year 2013 are \$134M, with \$34M in the President’s fiscal year 2014 budget for projects on the MESD and Wood River levees.

Project Labor Agreements: What you need to know regarding Metro East

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ top priority is to reduce risk to the communities and businesses behind the Metro East levees. As the Federal partner, the Corps’ share is 65 percent of the cost to fully restore the levees. Accordingly, the Corps must ensure federal investment will deliver the best value to the nation.

A Project Labor Agreement (PLA) requires contractors to negotiate a pre-hire collective bargaining agreement with one or more labor organizations that establishes the terms and conditions of employment for a construction project.

By request of the local sponsor, the Corps explored the possibility of a PLA on the Wood River cutoff wall, similar to the PLA established by the Flood Prevention District for the local levee project, aimed at meeting FEMA flood insurance requirements.

In addition to reviewing applicable regulations and guidance, the Corps contracting team performed market analysis on the availability of skilled

labor, examined prior use of PLAs on comparable projects in the region, and consulted subject matter experts regarding some of the highly technical work needed on the levees.

The Corps considered whether a PLA would achieve economy and efficiency in completing the project. Federal policies promote competition and ensure all contractors receive impartial, fair and equitable treatment on all federal contracts. On Federal projects, PLAs are generally used for contracts above \$25 million, or for work in areas without an adequate skilled labor force. None of the contracts currently planned for the Federal restoration of the Metro East levees approach \$25 million.

The market analysis was completed in June and returned 76 responses from stakeholders that determined there is no shortage of skilled labor that would necessitate a PLA.

The Corps also consulted with the Deep Foundation Institute, a worldwide,

nonprofit technical association of experts in deep foundations construction. The DFI noted the expertise and technical skill needed to construct deep cutoff walls would require considering a wider pool of expert contractors for the work.

The Corps determined that a PLA is not in the federal government’s best interest in the solicitation for the Wood River cutoff wall contracts. The Corps cannot mandate that the contractor submit a proposal with a PLA.

Under current policy, the contractor can submit a proposal for consideration with a PLA, without a PLA, or both. Also, contractors that are awarded federal contracts may still voluntarily enter into PLAs with local labor organizations.

“The local economy stands to benefit beyond 2015,” Dell’Orco said. “The partnership between the Corps and the local communities to rehabilitate the Metro East levees will reduce flood risk and improve the safety, economy and quality of life to the Metro East long-term.”