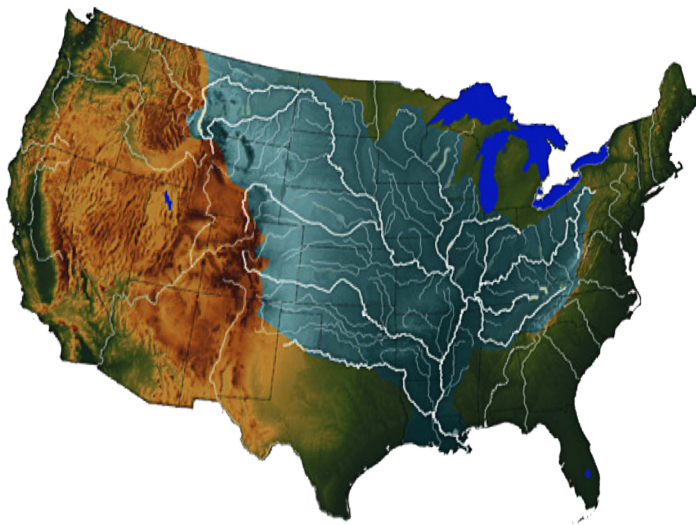




BIG RIVER COALITION

5600 Janice Avenue
Kenner, LA 70065

Direct Line: (504) 338-3165
sean.duffy@bigrivercoalition.org

May 6, 2025

LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER (LMR) DREDGING UPDATE 5625

Members,

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) began Fiscal Year 2025 (FY 25) channel maintenance dredging on the Mississippi River Ship Channel with the industry hopper dredge GLENN EDWARDS (Manson Construction) on March 2, 2025. The latest crest on the Mississippi River at the Carrollton Gage was recorded at 16.67 feet on May 1, 2025 at 1800 hours. The stage level remained at 1.245 million cubic feet per second (cfs) just below the trigger point flow of 1.25 million cfs for the operation of the Bonnet Carré Spillway.

INDUSTRY HOPPER DREDGE(S) WORKING IN SOUTHWEST PASS (SWP):

NEWPORT: The NEWPORT (Manson Construction) is working on assignment at the Venice Jump from Mile 10.6 Above Head of Passes (AHP) to Mile 9.2 (AHP). The NEWPORT is working on the second FY 25 Early Award hopper contract (Gulf Coast Regional Hopper Contract Early Award #2-2024).

GLENN EDWARDS: The hopper dredge GLENN EDWARDS is dredging on assignment at the Head of Passes from Mile 0.5 AHP to Mile 1.25 Below Head of Passes (BHP). The GLENN EDWARDS is working under Southwest Pass Hopper Early Award #1-2024, the first of the two Early Award hopper dredge contracts for Fiscal Year 2025 (FY 25). The GLENN was working on the area of severe flocculation that led to the high tide transit restriction for all inbound vessels with draft of 38 feet or greater from the Bar Pilots that went into effect at 1000 hours on April 19, 2025, the Notice is attached. **The Bar Pilots have reported more stringent flocculation based high tide restrictions could be implemented soon, as an inbound vessel had to anchor in SWP earlier today.** Updates will be provided upon receipt.

DODGE ISLAND: The USACE also awarded a hopper dredge contract to Great Lakes Dredge & Dock. The DODGE ISLAND is expected to begin dredging in SWP tomorrow.

GOVERNMENT HOPPER DREDGE(S) WORKING IN SOUTHWEST PASS (SWP):

WHEELER: The USACE hopper dredge WHEELER dredged in SWP from April 12 to April 27 (2025) under Readiness Exercise #3. The WHEELER is expected to resume work under Readiness Exercise #4-2025 tonight in the New Orleans Harbor at Nashville Avenue, before a possible return to SWP. The WHEELER is scheduled for dry dock repairs in early June (2025).

BIG RIVER COALITION

CUTTERHEAD DREDGE(S) WORKING IN SOUTHWEST PASS (SWP):

R.S. WEEKS: The R.S. WEEKS (Weeks Marine) began dredging in SWP on May 3, 2025 and is concentrating on the most shoaled in area from Mile 12 BHP to Mile 13.5 BHP. The cutterhead will work the present reach and then focus on the full assignment starting at Mile 9.0 BHP and extending to Mile 15 BHP on the western side of the Channel. All material removed will be beneficially used to create marsh along the bank line in SWP.

MAXIMUM DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS PER PILOT ASSOCIATION: (UNCHANGED SINCE July 7, 2023)

The updated maximum draft recommendation for each Pilot Association as adjusted by the Mississippi River Ship Channel Deepening is detailed below:

Associated Branch Pilots of the Port of New Orleans (Bar Pilots): The Bar Pilots returned their maximum draft recommendation to 50 feet (freshwater) on July 6, 2023. The Bar Pilots originally increased their maximum draft recommendation to 50 feet (freshwater) on March 16, 2022, prior to the temporary reduction to 49 feet from May 22 to July 6 (2023).

Crescent River Port Pilots Association (CRPPA): The CPPRA raised their maximum draft recommendation to 50 feet (freshwater) in coordination with the Bar Pilots on July 7, 2023, after also temporarily reducing their maximum draft to 49 feet (freshwater).

New Orleans Baton Rouge Steamship Pilots Association (NOBRA): The NOBRA returned their maximum draft recommendation to 50 feet (freshwater) from Mile 175 AHP to Mile 88 AHP on July 7, 2023. The maximum draft recommendation from Mile 175 to 180 remains 47 feet and from Mile 180 to Mile 233.8 it remains 45 feet.

Associated Federal Pilots and Docking Masters of Louisiana (Federal Pilots): The Federal Pilots increased their maximum draft recommendations to the following to match the draft adjustment to 50 feet by the other Pilot Associations.

1. 50 feet from Sea Buoy to Mile 175 AHP
2. 45 feet Mile 175 AHP to 232.4 AHP
3. 40 feet Mile 232.4 AHP to 233.8 AHP

The controlling maximum freshwater draft for the MRSC from Mile 175 AHP (Smoke Bend) to the Southwest Pass Sea Buoy is 50 feet (freshwater) remains unadjusted since July 7, 2023.

Sincerely,

Sean M. Duffy, Sr.

Sean M. Duffy, Sr.
Executive Director