



BIG RIVER COALITION

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May 27, 2025

LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER (LMR) DREDGING UPDATE 52725

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 recent crest on the Mississippi River at the Carrollton Gage was recorded at 16.67 feet on May 1, 2025 at 1800 hours. **River stages continue to recede but are expected to remain above 10 feet until late June (2025).**

DUSTPAN DREDGES(S) WORKING ON THE CROSSINGS ABOVE NEW ORLEANS:

HURLEY: The USACE dustpan dredge HURLEY commenced dredging at Baton Rouge Front Crossing (Mile 231.0 Above Head of Passes [AHP]) on May 21, 2025.

WALLACE McGEORGE: The industry dustpan dredge WALLACE McGEORGE (Pine Bluff Sand & Gravel) commenced dredging at Alhambra Crossing (Mile 190.5 AHP) on May 22, 2025.

INDUSTRY HOPPER DREDGE(S) WORKING in the area of SOUTHWEST PASS (SWP):

NEWPORT: The NEWPORT (Manson Construction) is dredging on assignment from Mile 13.0 AHP to Mile 12.0 AHP. The NEWPORT is working on the second FY 25 Early Award hopper contract (Gulf Coast Regional Hopper Contract Early Award #2-2024).

DODGE ISLAND: The DODGE ISLAND (Great Lakes Dredge & Dock) is working on assignment from Mile 2.0 AHP to Mile 1.0 AHP. The hopper dredge commenced dredging operations in SWP on April 7, 2025.

GLENN EDWARDS: The hopper dredge GLENN EDWARDS is dredging on assignment from Mile 11.5 Below Head of Passes (BHP) to Mile 12.0 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 Bar Pilots flocculation based high tide transit restrictions for inbound vessels with drafts of 38 feet or greater as adjusted on May 7, 2025 remains in effect.** The official Notice is attached.

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

WHEELER: The USACE hopper dredge WHEELER completed dredging under Readiness Exercise #4-2025 on May 26, 2025. The WHEELER is tentatively scheduled to perform Readiness Exercise #5-2025 from June 9 to June 20 (2025) in SWP.

CUTTERHEAD DREDGE(S) WORKING IN THE NEW ORLEANS HARBOR:

CAPTAIN FRANK: The USACE is processing the award of the cutterhead dredge contact for channel maintenance in the New Orleans Harbor to Weeks Marine. The CAPTAIN FRANK is expected to start work under this contract by this weekend.

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

R.S. WEEKS: The cutterhead dredge R.S. WEEKS (Weeks Marine) is currently dredging at Mile 13.9 BHP and is concentrating on the heaviest shoaling in the assignment from Mile 12.0 BHP to Mile 15.0 BHP. The dredge assignment is being revised to extend below Mile 15.0 BHP. The cutterhead began dredging in SWP on May 3, 2025.

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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.
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Executive Director