

MISSISSIPPI LEVEE BOARD

"Where people come first" Fall 2017 • Vol. 16, No. 1

2017 Highwater Event

Greenville Gage Crests at 54.3' - 6.3' Above Flood Stage

uring the Winter and early Spring we were experiencing an average year of rainfall within the Mississippi River Basin. Then in April, heavy rainfalls throughout the Mississippi Valley, especially in Arkansas, pushed the Mississippi River above flood stage throughout the Mississippi Levee District. The River below the confluence of the Arkansas River was 5' to 6' above flood stage, while the River above Arkansas River was only 2' to 3' above flood stage.

The National Weather Service first predicted that the Greenville Gage would crest at 51'. With this only being 3' above flood stage

and knowing that all our problem areas from the 2011 Epic Flood have been permanently repaired, we decided not to declare a state of emergency and opted not to start a Phase I Flood Fight. Phase I flood fights necessitate the need for many Levee Inspectors from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Joint Water Management District.

As it turned out, the forecast was bumped up several more feet, but given that we were inspecting all the known problem areas and not finding anything

See HIGHWATER on Page 6 \rightarrow





Pinboil at Longwood



Aerial of Greenville City Front at Crest 54.3'





Relief Well Flowing Above Greenville



Lake Jackson Relief Well Flowing

Gage	Date	Stage
Arkansas City Greenville	May 21 May 23	42.1 54.3
Vicksburg	May 24	48.4

2017 HIGHWATER CRESTS

Corps Of Engineers Presents Award To The Mississippi Levee Board

n July 10, 2017 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented the Mississippi Levee Board 2016 Certificate of Merit for the Operation and Maintenance of Flood Control Projects. Colonel Michael Derosier, District Engineer of the Vicksburg District, commended the Board on achieving this award which recognizes the Levee Board's outstanding maintenance of flood control projects including

the levee and interior streams. The Board of Mississippi Levee Commissioners was organized shortly after the Civil War in November 1865. The Constitution of the State of Mississippi requires the Board to protect the Delta from flooding. The Board currently operates and maintains 212 miles of levees including the Mainline Mississippi River Levee, the Brunswick Extension Levee, the Yazoo Backwater Levee and the

Greenville Harbor Dike. The Board also has the maintenance responsibility for 350 miles of interior streams located throughout the Mississippi Delta. ■



Pres. Fred Ballard and Col. Michael Derosier



(left to right) Peter Nimrod, Heath **Douglas, Bobby Thompson, Jimmy House,** Roy Nichols, Kenny Rodgers, Fred Ballard, Col. Michael Derosier, Nott Wheeler, **Paul Hollis and Hank Burdine.**

CORPS CORNER: Major General Richard G. Kaiser

Incoming Commander, Mississippi Valley Division

aj. Gen. Richard G. Kaiser comes to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Mississippi Valley Division from Afghanistan where he served as commanding

general of the Combined Security Transition Command and deputy chief of staff for Security Assistance, Headquarters, Resolute Support. Kaiser has previously served as commander

of the USACE Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, Cincinnati, Ohio; deputy chief of staff (operations), Allied Rapid Reaction Corps in England; chief of staff for the 82nd Airborne Division, and commander of the 20th Engineer Brigade at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Operation New Dawn, Iraq; director of operations, 18th Airborne Corps (Rear Det.) at Fort Bragg; commander, Special Troops Battalion – 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division (Light) at Fort Drum, New York, and Operation

Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan; senior engineer observer/controller for the Combat Maneuver Training Center, U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army in Germany;

assistant division

US Army Corps

of Engineers ®

engineer (later operations officer) for the 326th Engineer Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)

at Fort Campbell, Kentucky; aide-de-camp to commanding general for the Engineer Officer Advanced Course at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; commander, Alpha

Company, 27th Engineer Battalion at Fort Bragg, and Joint Task Force-180, Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti; assistant engineer plans officer for the 20th Engineer Brigade at Fort Bragg; platoon leader and executive officer

Major General Richard G. Kaiser

for Bravo and Charlie Companies of the 8th Engineer Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, and during Operation Desert Storm in Saudi Arabia.

Kaiser, a native of Racine, Wisconsin, is a registered professional engineer in Missouri. He graduated from Marquette University in 1987, where he was commissioned into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He holds a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Marquette University, a master's degree in engineering management from the University of

G. Kaiser Missouri - Rolla, and a master's degree in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College. His military education includes Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the British Army Staff College and the U.S. Army War College. ■

Judy B. Ross Levee Board Treasurer Retires

Longest Serving Treasurer In Mississippi Levee Board History

Judy Berry Ross retired from the Mississippi Levee Board on June 30, 2017 after 26 years of service. Originally hired by the Mississippi Levee Board as Secretary, Judy began her career in February 1991. She ably filled that position for two years before being named Board Treasurer on July 1, 1993. Judy, with 24 years of service as Treasurer, is the longest serving Treasurer in the 152 year history of the Board.

Judy's lively and engaging personality can still be seen at Uptown Girls, a furniture restoration/re-purposing shop in Leland. This is Judy's parttime hobby which has turned into a full-time business.

Judy and her husband Ralph Ross, himself a recent retiree, are the parents of one daughter, Kelly Ross, and grandparents to Luke Ross.

Congratulations Judy on your retirement and thank-you for your exemplary service to the Mississippi Levee Board and its constituents.



Judy Berry Ross

2016 Annual Bus Inspection

On November 10, 2016, the Mississippi Levee Board hosted its Annual Levee Inspection. This year's trip inspected the southern portion of the levee system starting at the Yazoo Backwater Levee and Highway 61 and proceeding north to Mayersville, MS. Lunch was served at the Onward Store.



Members of the 2016 Annual Levee Inspection take a photo in front of the Onward Store.

Levee Maintenance Contractor Spotlight:

Johnny Brister

The Mississippi Levee Board is responsible for minor maintenance on the Mainline Mississippi River Levee, the Brunswick Extension Levee, the Yazoo Backwater Levee and the Greenville Harbor Dike. All in all this totals 212 miles of levee in length. The maintenance includes grading the gravel roadway on top of the levee, repairing minor erosions and washes, and turf maintenance. The Bermuda turf on the levee is critical to protect the levee from erosion due to rainfall or from high river stages. The grass on the 212 miles of levee turns into a pretty big yard to mow. To help the Levee Board manage this task we have Maintenance Contractors. These are valuable partners who enter into 5 year maintenance contracts on a specific pasture to either clip the levee for hay and in many cases to graze their livestock, either horses or preferably cattle, on the levee.

Johnny Brister, from Pace, Mississippi, is one of the Levee Board's outstanding maintenance contractors. Johnny has been running cattle, specifically Black Angus, on the levee in Bolivar County since 1995. What started as a partnership with his dad, now retired, has been built up over the years to a nice herd of 100 cows and 6 bulls. Johnny, who was born and raised in Rosedale, graduated from Bayou Academy in 1972. He attended Delta State and has been farming since his high school days; first with his dad and now with his son. In addition to his well-maintained cattle operation, Johnny row crops around 1,200 acres of soybeans and corn. As do most farmers, Johnny has a love for and enjoys the outdoors and hunting. His marksmanship skills are at higher levels than most of us, and he is a Grand Master Competition Shooter using semi-automatic pistols.

Johnny is one of our benchmark maintenance contractors. We always know his pastures are going to be in great shape, his fences and treelines are maintained and he just does an all-around outstanding job. ■



Johnny Brister cows



Winter wheat for winter forage



Johnny Brister

Floodways Do Not Help The Mississippi Delta Above Vicksburg, MS

There is a belief within the Mississippi Delta that the Corps of Engineers should open up the Floodways (Old River Control Structure, Morganza Floodway and Bonnet Carre' Spillway) earlier in a flood event to help lower stages of the flood within the limits of the Mississippi Delta. Over the

past year riverside landowners at Lake Mary below Natchez, Mississippi in testimony before the Mississippi River Commission have requested that more water be diverted from the Mississippi River over to the Atchafalaya River through the Old River Control Structure.

The Old River Control Structure maintains a 70/30 split of water down the Mississippi River and the Atchafalaya River. The Lake Mary Area is only 15 miles upstream of the Old River Control Structure. The Old River Control Structure is 48 miles below Natchez MS and 120 miles below Vicksburg MS.

After hearing all the testimony from the Lake Mary Area, residents the Mississippi River Commission instructed the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to run the Hydraulic Model to see what affect upstream the Mississippi River would see if

See FLOODWAYS on Page 7 \rightarrow



Levee Board Tour of Morganza Structure March 13, 2017



Morganza Structure



Old River - Auxillary Structure Gates



Old River - Low Sill Structure

Mississippi Levee Board Meeting Recaps

OCTOBER 2016

The Board took the following action at the October 3, 2016 regular board meeting: authority was given to advertise for Worker's Compensation Insurance; November 10, 2016 was set as the date for annual levee inspection trip; and received report from the Chief Engineer on all ongoing projects in the Mississippi Levee District.

JANUARY 2017

The Board took the following action at the January 9, 2017 regular board meeting: reviewed bids and awarded Worker's Compensation Insurance to South Group Insurance; authorized advertisement of bids for Business Auto/Public Officials & Employees/Liability/ Contractors Equipment Insurance, chemicals and vehicles; authorized advertisement for one ½ ton 4WD pick-up and two (2) ¾ ton 4WD

crew cab pick-ups; authorized a delegation to the MVFCA Congressional Meetings March 6 – 8 in Washington, D.C. to discuss FY 2017 Appropriations for Corps projects in the Mississippi Delta; and received status reports on all the ongoing projects in the Mississippi Levee District and meetings attended.

APRIL 2017

The Board took the following action at the April 3, 2017 regular board meeting: reviewed bids and agreed to accept low bids on chemical purchases for next 12 months, awarded general liability, automobile and property insurance to South Group Insurance, and awarded purchase of a 2017 4WD $\frac{1}{2}$ ton pick-up truck and two (2) 2017 4WD $\frac{3}{4}$ ton crew cabs to James Ceranti Motors; and received status reports on all ongoing projects in the Mississippi Levee District and meetings attended.

JULY 2017

The Board took the following action at the July 10, 2017 regular board meeting: adopted 2017-2018 budget; set ad valorem tax rate of 2.90 mils (no change); received Chief Engineer's Annual Report; accepted bid on helicopter application work by Provine Helicopters; concurred with permits issued; authorized a delegation to the MVFCA Annual Fall Congressional Meeting September 12-13 in Washington, D.C. to discuss FY 2018 Appropriations for Corps projects in the Mississippi Delta; authorized a delegation for the National Waterways Conference September 26-28 in St. Louis, MO; and received status reports on all ongoing projects in the Mississippi Levee District and meetings attended. ■



Staff Profile: Rachel McIntire, C.P.A. Treasurer

Rachel McIntire, CPA has been hired by the Mississippi Levee Board to fill the Treasurer position upon the retirement of Judy B. Ross.

Rachel was born in Baton Rouge, LA and grew up in Greenville, MS.

She holds a bachelor and a master's degree in accounting from Delta State University.

Prior to joining the Levee Board, Rachel was a staff accountant at Sayle-Sandifer and Associates, LLP. Rachel and her husband Benson reside in Greenville. They are the proud owners of a Labrador Retriever named Tebow and a Morkie named Brody. Welcome to the Levee Board, Rachel. ■

2017 MISSISSIPPI LEVEE BOARD



COMMISSIONERS:

Fred A. Ballard, Jr., President, Washington County Kenneth Rodgers, Vice-President, Humphreys County

James W. House, Jr., Bolivar County Nott Wheeler, Jr., Bolivar County

Roy Nichols, Issaquena County Hank Burdine, Washington County Paul Hollis, Sharkey County

STAFF:

Peter Nimrod, Chief Engineer
Robert M. Thompson, Assistant Engineer
Heath Douglas, Attorney
Rachel McIntire, Treasurer
Ginger Morlino, Secretary
Patrick Bolls, Maintenance Superintendent
Rick Boyd, Engineering Technician



Levee Board Attends Meetings in D.C.

Annual meeting with the Mississippi Congressional Delegation seeks appropriations for flood control projects and provides ongoing project updates

The Mississippi Levee Board traveled to Washington, D. C. and met with the Mississippi Congressional Delegation during March 6-8, 2017. This annual trip, under the auspices of the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association (MVFCA), provides the delegation with a status update of ongoing flood control projects in the Mississippi Delta and it is an opportunity for the Levee Board to discuss funding requirements for U. S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control projects in the Mississippi Delta as well as Federal legislation which affects Levee Board projects. The Levee Board also attended a meeting of the Mississippi River Congressional Group on March 8th at the U.S. Capitol.

Joining the Levee Board this year were representatives from the Greenville Port, Rosedale Port, Washington County and South Delta Planning & Development. The Ports discussed the need for annual dredging money to help keep the ports operating at full capacity during the low-water season which coincides with the farm harvest season.

The MVFCA was established in 1922 and it includes members from 16 states. The Mississippi Levee Board was one of the founding members of the MVFCA and its Board President, Fred Ballard, sits on the Executive Committee of the Association. The MVFCA hosted a reception the evening of March 7th which gives an opportunity to informally meet with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters personnel and with Congressional staff.

Mississippi Levee Board President Fred Ballard said, "Our entire Mississippi Congressional Delegation has been very helpful and supportive for our flood control projects. It is always a pleasure and honor to visit with our delegation. We appreciate their service to our great country, the State of Mississippi, and especially the Mississippi Delta."



Senator Thad Cochran and the Levee Board



U.S. Capitol



Senator Roger Wicker with Levee Board



The Levee Board in front of the U.S. Capitol

FY 2018 Appropriations

\$500M needed for the MR&T Project for FY18

President Obama's FY 2017 Budget released on February 9, 2016 included only \$222M for the Mississippi River & Tributaries (MR&T) Project. On April 12, 2016 the House passed \$345M. On April 14, 2016 the Senate passed \$368M. On May 1, 2017 an Omnibus Agreement was reached giving the MR&T Project \$362M for FY 2017.

FY 2017 MR&T Project Appropriations

	TT T
President's Budget	\$222M
Levee Board Request	\$500M
House Committee	\$345M
Senate Sub-committee	\$368M
Omnibus Agreement	\$362M

President Trump's FY 2018 Budget released on May 23, 2017, included only

\$253M for the MR&T Project. On July 12, 2017 the House Appropriations Committee passed \$301M. On July 20, 2017, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed \$375M.

FY 2018 MR&T Project Appropriations

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President's Budget	\$253M
Levee Board Request	\$500M
House Committee	\$301M
Senate Sub-committee	\$375M
Conference Report	\$???M

The MR&T Project is only 85% complete. The Corps needs a \$500M appropriation each year to fully fund all of our much-needed flood control projects. The MR&T Project protects over 4 million people living in the Mississippi River Valley. Since 1928,

the MR&T Project has cost \$14B and has prevented over \$800B in damages. The MR&T Project has a 54 to 1 return on each dollar invested!

Unfortunately "Funding Pot" money is not "no year" money - this means it has to be spent by September 30, 2017. Congress didn't officially pass the FY 2017 budget until May 1, 2017. The Corps didn't get the money until June. The Corps needs 90 days to advertise and open bids. That will be mid-September. The Corps likes to open bids September 1st to iron out any issues. Congress needs to pass future budgets on time, or much earlier, or they need to say this appropriated Funding Pot money is "no year" money.

Levee Enlargement Projects



465L - Landside Berm Construction

Work is progressing on the levee enlargement and berm projects in the Mississippi Levee District. The Corps has completed 40.1 miles of levee and currently has another 12.7 miles under contract of the original 69 miles of deficient levee. Item 468L, a 4.7 mile levee enlargement project was completed on Sept. 1, 2016 and has been returned to the Levee Board for maintenance. This item is on the northern portion of MS Hwy 465 to Goose Lake Road. Item 463L, a 2.7 mile levee enlargement project, is currently 96% complete. This item goes from just above Chotard Resort to just below



465L - Hauling Material

Laney's Camp on MS Hwy 465. Item 509L, a 3.9 mile levee enlargement project is currently 99% complete. This item goes from Lake Jackson to the completed Item 502L. Item 511L, a 3.4 mile levee enlargement project was awarded to My Company, Inc. of Topeka, KS and is currently 86% complete. This item goes from Leota to Lake Jackson. Item 465L, a 2.7 mile levee enlargement and berms project, was awarded to Carter's Contracting Services, Inc. on September 24, 2015 and is currently 31% complete. This item ties Items 468L and 463L together between Goose Lake Road and Chotard Resort. ■



465L - Riverside Levee Enlargement



468L - Finished Turf



511L - Placing and Spreading Material

Levee Enlargement Project Update:

Completed Work – 40.1 miles Items 468L, 474L, 477L, 488L, 496L, 502L

On-going Construction -

Item 463L - 2.7 miles -96% Complete Item 509L - 3.9 miles -99% Complete Item 511L - 3.4 miles -86% Complete Item 465L - 2.7 miles -31% Complete

Future work remaining - 16.2 miles



511L - Placing New Limestone



511L - Planting Grass Seed on Enlarged Levee

HIGHWATER from Front Page 1



Crew Installing Box Culvert Weir Insert at Valewood Ditch



Levee Inspectors - Dillon Smith & Major Rice



Greenville Yacht Club Flooded

significant happening, we decided to have very limited patrols of inspectors working and handled the majority of inspection ourselves.

We discovered more sandboils in the bottom of Valewood Ditch. Tim Hovas with New South Marine had constructed us four 60" dia. Culvert Weir Inserts and an 8' wide by 40" tall Box Culvert Weir Insert for the box culvert at Addie. The Levee Board Crew installed two Culvert Weir Inserts at Sta. 6330 on May 16th and installed the Box Culvert Weir Insert at the Addie box culvert at Sta. 6367 on May 19th. The Weir Inserts worked almost perfectly by adding 18" to 24" of additional water over the top of the sandboils in the bottom of Valewood Ditch. The Inserts also saved the Levee Board Crew a lot of time with their quick installation and removal on May 30th.

Inspectors discovered numerous pinboils at Longwood at Sta. 5353, however, no remedial action was required. A few minor sandboils were again discovered in Black Bayou Cut-off north of Greenville. In years past we have constructed a weir in the bottom

of this channel, however, this year no remedial action was required.

Eagle Lake Residents had to again drive the 9.6 miles of Yazoo Backwater (YBW) Levee from Hwy 61 to Hwy 465 because Hwy 465 between Hwy 61 and the YBW Levee went under water from May 16 until June 2nd when the Vicksburg Gage was above 46.5'. To further complicate the inconvenience to the Eagle Lake Residents, the Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) had to close the Hwy 465 bridge at Muddy Bayou for emergency repairs. The residents had to drive 4.2 miles of the Mainline Mississippi River Levee (MRL) and Brunswick Extension Levee (BEL) from Brunswick (Lou Parkers) to Eagle Lake Shore Road (Tara). This bridge was closed from March 29th until May 25th while MDOT designed the repair, advertised, awarded the contract, and the contractor repaired the bridge.

The Mississippi River at Greenville crested at 54.3 on May 23, 2017. ■

2016 Helicopter Application

123.3 miles sprayed in Fall 2016

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began work on the Big Sunflower River & Tributaries Project in 1947. This project included channel improvements to over 700 miles of interior streams located within the Mississippi Delta. These streams provide the outlet for flood water in the Delta. In 1950, the Mississippi Legislature authorized the two (2) Mississippi Delta levee boards to participate as local sponsors of Corps of Engineers projects within the Yazoo Basin. The Mississippi Levee Board is responsible for minor maintenance for 350 miles of interior streams within the Mississippi Levee District.

To perform this much needed maintenance, the Mississippi Levee Board contracts with a helicopter applicator to spray a portion of the interior streams each year. A mixture of aquatic herbicides is sprayed on the underbrush and privet that is encroaching into the required clear width of the channel. This required clear width must be maintained to ensure the streams have adequate flood storage and passage capacity.

This year the Mississippi Levee Board treated 123.3 miles of its interior streams. This included 1,320 acres of interior streams located primarily in the northern half of the Mississippi Levee District. Provine Helicopters sprayed on October 15-17, 2016 and October 19-20, 2016. Streams treated this year included the Big Sunflower River, Bogue Hasty, Bogue Phalia, Clear Creek, Huspuckena River, Snake Creek and Dowling Bayou.



Helicopter - Loading Chemical & Refueling



Helicopter Spraying Steele Bayou

FLOODWAYS from Page 3

the split was 50/50 at the Old River Control Structure. The Mississippi Levee Board was very interested to see these results of the model because if you can lower stages at Vicksburg MS - this would help lower stages in the South Delta, Yazoo City, Wolf Lake and the Carter Area.

The Mississippi Levee Board took a tour of the Old River Control Complex and the Morganza Control Structure on March 13, 2017, in order to fully understand the operation and benefits of these Floodways.

The Corps ran the model and discovered that the Lake Mary Area would indeed see lower river stages and there would be a little benefit at Natchez; however there would be no benefit at all at Vicksburg.

The Morganza Floodway is located 32 miles below the Old River Control Structure and cannot physically open any faster because the River has to be 5.2' above flood stage before it overtops the levee. Morganza is located 152 miles south of Vicksburg MS. The Bonnet Carre' Spillway is located 306 miles below Vicksburg. The hydraulic drop benefit due to the opening of Bonnet Carre' doesn't even reach Baton Rogue, LA.

Therefore, diverting more water through the Old River Control Structure or opening the Morganza Floodway (which you can't physically do) or opening up the Bonnet Carre' Spillway earlier will unfortunately not help anyone along the Mississippi Delta north of Vicksburg MS.

2016 Gravel Supply Contract 11.4 miles of new limestone

Congress provided much needed funding for Mainline Mississippi River Levee Maintenance for FY 2017. The Vicksburg District Corps of Engineers awarded a \$507,000 gravel supply contract for maintenance gravel along one reach of the Mississippi Levee District. This reach was on the Mainline Levee in Bolivar County from stations 2699 to 3300 (Catfish Point to the Bolivar/Washington County Line). This work was performed by Riverside Construction from October 3 to October 14, 2016. The 23,000 tons of limestone provided 11.4 miles of maintenance surfacing. This annual program has allowed us to plan ahead for areas that need maintenance and will

assure that we have adequate access for flood fight activities in the event of a high water.



Loading Trucks from Gravel Barge



Dump Trailer Placing Crushed Stone on Levee



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BACK IN TIME: Charles H. West

Levee Board Chief Engineer and Mississippi River Commissioner

harles Hunter West was born on November 25, 1858, in Jefferson County near Fayette, Mississippi. He was the great-grandson of Cato West, the Acting Governor of the Mississippi Territory from 1803 to 1805.

For two years Charles attended Jefferson Military College near Natchez before moving to Charles H. West Greenville, where he clerked in a store. Under

the guidance of Major O'Hea, West began night studies to become a Civil Engineer. He later attended the University of Illinois from which he graduated in 1884 with a Civil Engineering degree.

West returned to Greenville and worked for a contractor supplying willows for bank revetment on the Mississippi River. He soon went to work for the Mississippi River Commission as a surveyor and levee construction inspector. From 1886 to 1892 West was engaged in private practice in surveying, drainage and bridge work. In 1898 West was appointed Chief Engineer of the Mississippi Levee Board. He served the Board until 1910 when President Taft appointed him to the Mississippi River Commission.



His advice and guidance, due to his knowledge of the Mississippi River and the problems it posed, was sought and respected.

West married in 1886. Sadly, his wife and their five children all died by 1899, most as a result of a scarlet fever epidemic. West remarried Miss Birdie Hanway Robertshaw in 1908.

Mr. Charles West continued to serve the Mississippi River Commission until his death on June 7, 1933.

The Corps of Engineers honored his work on the Mississippi River by naming a snagboat the "Charles H. West".

