



BIG RIVER COALITION, LLC

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July 21, 2026

MISSISSIPPI RIVER SHIP CHANNEL (MRSC) DREDGE UPDATE 72126

Members,

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) started Fiscal Year 2026 channel maintenance dredging on the Mississippi River Ship Channel (MRSC) with the hopper dredge NEWPORT on February 27, 2026. The Carrollton Gage (New Orleans) year-to-date crest of 9.26 feet on July 11, 2026. The stages are expected to quickly spike with the approach of Tropical Storm Bertha to 9.5 feet later this week. The Bar Pilots continue to operate with their inbound flocculation-based transit recommendation for all inbound vessels with a draft of 40 feet or greater to only enter Southwest Pass “10 hours before high tide in Pilottown to the time of high tide in Pilottown due to flocculation conditions” The official Notice is attached. The dredges are expected to continue working but may seek shelter as Bertha approaches, the pilots also intend to keep moving vessels but may temporarily cease operations based upon storm conditions.

INDUSTRY DUSTPAN DREDGE(S) WORKING THE CROSSINGS ABOVE NEW ORLEANS:

WALLACE McGEORGE: The industry dustpan dredge WALLACE McGEORGE continues dredging on assignment at Red Eye Crossing (Mile 224 Above Head of Passes [AHP]). The dustpan began dredging on the Crossings in FY 26 on May 26, 2026.

JADWIN: The government dustpan dredge JADWIN continues dredging at Alhambra Crossing (Mile 190 AHP). The dredge began dredging on the Crossings on June 11, 2026.

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

NEWPORT: The hopper dredge NEWPORT (Manson Construction) is dredging from Mile 6.5 Above Head of Passes (AHP) to Mile 5.0 AHP. The hopper dredge is working under the 2026 Early Award #1 regional hopper dredge contract for a small hopper dredge and did previously work on the Calcasieu River (Lake Charles) under this regional contract.

FREDERICK PAUP: The large new hopper dredge FREDERICK PAUP (Manson Construction) is dredging from Mile 3.8 Below Head of Passes (BHP) to Mile 6.5 BHP. The new hopper dredge replaced the GLENN EDWARDS on Early Award Hopper Contract #2-2026 on June 7, 2026. Manson began work under this contact on April 9, 2026.

GOVERNMENT HOPPER DREDGE(S) WORKING IN SOUTHWEST PASS:

WHEELER: The USACE hopper dredge WHEELER is dredging under Readiness Exercise #3-2026 (July 7 to July 27) from the Head of Passes (Mile 0) to Mile 3.3 BHP. The WHEELER is performing agitation dredging to break up the flocculation in this reach of the channel.

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MAXIMUM DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS PER PILOT ASSOCIATION (UPDATED December 12, 2025 50-feet, the first adjustment since July 7, 2023)

New Orleans Baton Rouge Steamship Pilots Association (NOBRA): The NOBRA maximum draft recommendation is 50 feet (freshwater) from Mile 180 AHP to Mile 88 AHP as implemented on December 11, 2025. The maximum draft recommendation from Mile 180 AHP to Mile 233.8 AHP remains 45 feet.

Crescent River Port Pilots Association (CRPPA): The CPPRA maximum draft recommendation throughout their route remains 50 feet (freshwater).

Associated Branch Pilots of the Port of New Orleans (Bar Pilots): The Bar Pilots maximum draft recommendation remains 50 feet (freshwater) throughout their route.

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 to Mile 180 on December 12, 2025: **50 feet from Sea Buoy to Mile 180 AHP, 45 feet Mile 180 AHP to 232.4 AHP and 40 feet Mile 232.4 AHP to 233.8 AHP.**

The controlling maximum freshwater draft for the MRSC from Mile 180 AHP (Philadelphia Point) to the Southwest Pass Sea Buoy is 50 feet (freshwater) as revised on December 12, 2025.

Sincerely,

Sean M. Duffy, Sr.

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President and CEO