

Acoustical Society of America

154th Meeting – New Orleans, Louisiana

Technical Tour of New Orleans Levees

Tuesday morning, 27 November 2007

8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

This tour is open to attendees and accompanying persons at the ASA New Orleans meeting

The tour will be conducted by the Army Corps of Engineers and consists of a short briefing to explain the impact that Hurricane *Katrina* had on this area and how the sites that you will be visiting were affected by the hurricane. The tour usually takes about 3 hours—generally 4 with questions and photos. Tour participants will leave the bus and walk around so it is required that you wear long pants and closed toed shoes as some of the tour areas are active construction sites.

The first stop will be the 17th St. Canal control structure and breach site. Prior to *Katrina* this particular outfall canal emptied into Lake Pontchartrain through a small fishing boat marina and tourist site with many lakeside restaurants. There was no control structure prior to the storm. What you will see is a massive structure which was built in record time from February 06 to June 06. This project which would have taken several years to plan and three to four years to build was constructed in record time by engineers working 24-7. It is, in the engineering world, considered a marvel. In the past year it has grown even more.

The second stop will be the London Ave. Canal control structure and breach site. Same scenario—slightly smaller construction project. It is more complete than the 17th St. Canal structure and you can get an idea of what the 17th St. Canal structure will look like when completed, just on a smaller scale.

Between the two outfall canals the tour will pass through the Lakeview neighborhood where you will be able to view the destruction for which the canal wall breaches were responsible. The tour will also include the lakefront levee where the difference between an earthen levee and a canal wall will be shown. The differences in the foot print of each structure and why things were built the way they were will be pointed out, as well as what worked and what didn't during *Katrina*.

From the lakefront area the tour will proceed to lower 9th Ward. The guide will take you on top of the canal wall structure that failed and you will have a bird's eye view of the entire 9th Ward, the upper 9th Ward across the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal as well as the new wall which has been constructed. This site also gives you a glimpse of the old wall that failed.

If time permits the tour will include a drive over the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO) and it will be explained why this has been such a huge issue. The guide will explain the misconceptions that many have had, calling it the hurricane highway into the guts of the City.

The tour bus will leave the Sheraton New Orleans Hotel at 8:00 a.m. and return by 12:00 noon. The cost to participate is \$15. There will be no food or beverages available on the tour. Register online at <http://asa.aip.org> or download a registration form at <http://asa.aip.org/neworleans/regform.pdf>.