Official Newsletter from the Office of Congressman Garret Graves, LA-6

Hello John,

The East Baton Rouge Flood Control Project is a Corps of Engineers-administered initiative to efficiently drain the watersheds of Jones Creek, Ward Creek, Bayou Fountain, Beaver Bayou and Blackwater Bayou.

Also called the “Five Bayous Project,” funding for this project was made available in 2018 when we secured **$1.4 billion** for Corps of Engineers projects like the Comite Flood Control Project, Five Bayous and others, along with another **$1.6 billion** to address future flood risks. Originally projected to be completed in the 1st Quarter of 2023, this project is now expected to be completed in the 4th Quarter of 2024.

Meanwhile, we will keep you updated on progress:

Bayou Fountain

The project consists of clearing and snagging approximately 4.6 miles of channel from Bayou Manchac to Burbank Drive. Discovery of an unexpected pipeline has delayed the project, but the Corps advertised for contractor bids in February 2022.

Jones Creek (and Tributaries Lively Bayou and Weiner Creek)

The project consists of clearing and snagging approximately 15.2 miles of channel and placement of rip rap (large rocks to protect streambank) for 4.3 miles. The proposed clearing and snagging work extends from mouth of the Amite River and continues upstream to O’Neal, from the mouth of Weiner Creek to Cedarcrest Avenue, from Sherwood Forest Blvd to Wooddale Blvd, from Old Hammond Hwy to the Railroad

crossing at N. Flannery Road, and from the mouth of Lively Bayou's tributary to Tams Road. The proposed placement of rip rap would extend from O'Neal Lane to Sherwood Forest Blvd and Old Hammond Highway. The Corps awarded the contract for Lower Jones Creek (Amite River to O'Neal Lane) earlier this year. Crews will begin work tis spring. Upper Jones Creek (O'Neal Lane to Sherwood Forest and Old Hammond Highway) still requires (a) additional design work, (b) utility identification and relocation and (c) right of way acquisition. See below for Upper Jones Creek.

Ward Creek

The proposed plan consists of clearing and snagging approximately 3.3 miles of channel. Proposed modifications begin 4,000 feet upstream of the mouth of Bayou Manchac and continue to 1,200 feet upstream of Pecue Lane. The proposed improvements are designed to reduce the risk of flood damages caused by out of bank flooding during heavy rainfall events. Right of way acquisition continues to delay this project. Differences in appraisal processes and identifying locations to stockpile debris has proven problematic, though a resolution appears to be near. The Corps was scheduled to advertise for contractor bids in February, and contracts were to be awarded last month and actual clearing and snagging to occur this month; however, these deadlines have slipped and remain indefinite until rights-of-way acquisition is settled.

Beaver Bayou

The proposed plan consists of 1.6 miles earthen enlargement and 6.4 miles of clearing and snagging. The planned enlargement work extends from Frenchtown Road upstream to Central Thruway. The proposed clearing and snagging work extends from Central Thruway upstream to Hubbs Road.

Blackwater Bayou

The proposed plan consists of 4.1 miles earthen enlargement and 10.5 miles of clearing and snagging. The planned enlargement work extends from Hooper road upstream to Blackwater Road and Gurney Road. The proposed clearing and snagging work extends from the mouth of Blackwater Bayou upstream to Hooper Road, Blackwater Road upstream to Greenwell Springs Road, and Gurney Road upstream to McCullough Road. The combination of the Comite Diversion Canal, Beaver Bayou improvements and Blackwater Bayou improvements will provide significant flood protection to the City of Central.

Environmental Clearances for Upper Jones Creek, Beaver Bayou, Blackwater Bayou

These waterways involve more engineering and construction, which requires extensive environmental impact analyses, rights of way acquisition and utility relocation. An exhaustive Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) is required for Beaver

Bayou, Blackwater Bayou and Upper Jones Creek, which was originally projected to be completed in the 4th Quarter of 2021. The SEIS is now projected to be completed by September 2022.

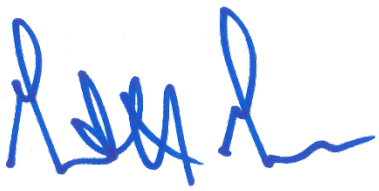
A SEIS is an exhaustive, very detailed, time consuming analysis of a project's impact to the environment, culture and habitat of the area in which it will exist. This is required of all major infrastructure projects. Completion is required prior to constructing Upper Jones Creek and tributaries, Beaver, and Blackwater Bayou Improvements. This SEIS is adding 2 years to the EBR Flood Control timeline. Until it is completed, EBR and Central cannot proceed with necessary property acquisitions in which to construct the project.

Also causing delay are site visits from US Fish and Wildlife for the wetlands assessments, which were anticipated to be completed by mid-November 2021, but have yet to be completed.

Additional delay is attributed to the required cultural survey (historic, anthropological analysis). This effort requires property owners to provide the Corps of Engineers with permission to enter property to conduct the survey. Property owners must first be identified, then solicited for their permission. This has not happened yet.

Do you want to stay updated on these flood prevention and drainage projects?

Sincerely,



Garret Graves

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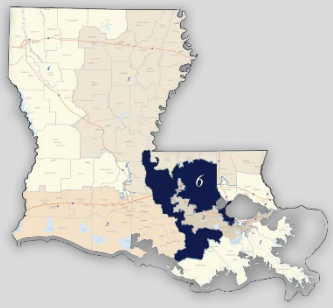

About Louisiana's Sixth District

More than 750,000 people live in the 13 parishes that make up the sixth district, which includes most of Baton Rouge, the bulk of the Capital City's suburbs, parts of parishes along both sides of the Mississippi River to the western shores of Lake Pontchartrain and continues south through Thibodaux to Houma. Click here to verify that Rep. Graves is your Representative.

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