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Jacksonville District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announces new design approach for Herbert Hoover Dike Major Rehabilitation Project

Jacksonville, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District announced today that it has developed a new design approach for the Herbert Hoover Dike Major Rehabilitation Project. The new design concept was developed following a recent Independent Technical Review (ITR) of the original design.

The Jacksonville District convened the ITR panel, which included 11 nationally recognized experts from the Corps and the South Florida Water Management District, several of whom had also served on the Interagency Performance Task Force to evaluate the New Orleans and Southeast Louisiana Hurricane Protection System following Hurricane Katrina. A subsequent meeting of about 40 experts, hosted by the Corps last month, reviewed the ITR findings and discussed future actions for strengthening the Herbert Hoover Dike.

The group concluded that the rehabilitation project, as originally designed, met the objectives identified in Corps studies conducted in 1990s; however, in light of lessons learned following Katrina and considering input from a variety of

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expert sources, a reevaluation of the original design to ensure a stronger dike was warranted.

The new design concept, proposed by the Corps and endorsed by the ITR panel, includes a seepage berm to decrease piping (internal erosion) and a cutoff wall to increase stability. The design closely mirrors an alternative developed by the Corps in 2000, but not chosen by the state and federal partners because it required additional and costly acquisition of real estate and may have impacted regional groundwater. “That decision was based on the team’s knowledge and best professional judgment at that time,” said Col. Paul L. Grosskruger, district commander. “The post-Katrina environment enabled us to overcome significant constraints.”

The Corps is currently working to expedite the redesign and resume construction on the first of eight reaches in the rehabilitation project, which was begun in December 2005 but placed on temporary hold until new design elements could be incorporated.

“We remain committed to meeting the needs of the public by enhancing the effectiveness and safety of the dike,” said Grosskruger. “We are grateful to the ITR panel members and to all who participated and provided valuable input throughout this inclusive process. We listened, we learned, and we are confident that we have the right fix to enable Herbert Hoover Dike to continue protecting lakeside communities, as it has for more than 70 years.”

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