



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
P.O. BOX 60267  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160-0267

February 14, 2012

Reply To:  
Public Affairs Office

Mrs. Sandy Rosenthal  
1421 Soniat Street  
New Orleans, LA 70115

Dear Ms. Rosenthal:

Reference your letter dated January 12, 2012, wherein you requested "supporting documentation to back up statements" made by Lieutenant General (LTG) Carl Strock in June 2006, as reported by the New York Times, and by Major General (MG) Don Riley in December 2007, as reported by the Times Picayune, regarding the Corps of Engineers' (Corps) original plan for the drainage canals. The newspapers reported similar statements by LTG Strock and MG Riley, relating that the Corps originally "proposed floodgates at the city's drainage canals – but local officials of the levee boards and sewerage and water boards blocked that plan...and so the Corps went with the next fallback plan of building floodwalls in the canals." You stated that you were previously referred to the 2008 Hurricane Protection Decision Chronology but you have not found any supporting documentation in that study.

It is not possible to determine exactly which documents, among the large volume of records associated with Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project, were relied upon, considered, reviewed, read, or discussed by two former Corps military leaders in statements attributed to them many years ago. While there are documents which reference the difference of opinion between the Corps and local authorities regarding the use of butterfly gates at the London and Orleans outfall canals, we cannot say with certainty which of the documents may have been relied upon by these individuals.

As you know, the Corps has collected the historical records associated with the outfall canals and made those records available to all. Specifically, the Corps' Institute for Water Resources website includes the Hurricane Protection Decision Chronology (HPDC) and a library of project-related documents: <http://www.iwr.usacc.army.mil/docs/hpdc/hpdc.cfm>. We recommend that you review the underlying documents upon which the HPDC is based, as they form the basis for the HPDC's chapter subtitles such as, "4.3 Choice of Protection Approach for the Outfall Canals"; "4.3.1 Frontage versus Parallel Protection"; "4.3.2 District Recommends Frontage Protection (Butterfly Gates)"; "4.3.3 Local Agencies Adamantly Favor Parallel Protection"; "4.3.6 Congress Mandates Parallel Protection and 70% Federal Financing."

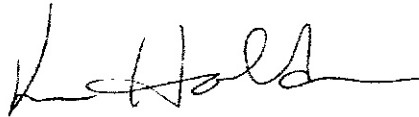
In addition to the library of documents on the Institute for Water Resources website, there are other historical reviews which describe the difference of opinion regarding the type of protection to be provided at the outfall canals. Some can be found via commonly used internet search engines. Examples of search results are the Congressional Research Service Report for

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Congress dated December 13, 2005 (updated on January 26, 2006) and a Los Angeles Times article dated December 25, 2005. Both describe the difference of opinion and the fact that the ultimate decision on the type of protection provided at the outfall canals was made by Congress in the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act of 1992, which directed the Corps to provide parallel protection along the entire lengths of the outfall canals.

I trust that this response satisfies your request. Per his request, I will forward a copy of this letter to the levees.org attorney, Mr. Mark Surprenant of Adams and Reese LLP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Holder". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ken Holder  
Chief, Public Affairs

cc: Mark C. Suprenant