EXISTING PROJECT

Limits Project Dimensions

Mile 89 (Phillips Bluff) to Mile 35 (Lake Charles Harbor) Improvement with no specific dimensions.

Mile 35 to Mile 0 (Gulf Shoreline) 35 ft. x 250 ft.

Mile 0 to Sea end of jetties 35 ft. to 37 ft. x 250 ft.

Sea end of jetties to 37 feet contour in Gulf of Mexico 37 ft. x 400 ft.

PERTINENT DATA

Calcasieu River is tidal below Lake Charles. Normal variation at mouth 10 to 14 inches due to tides.

The mean low water flow at Lake Charles is 800 cubic feet per second.

The maximum discharge is 65,000 cubic feet per second.

Phillips Bluff (mile 89) is head of navigation.

HIGWAY DISTANCES TO LAKE CHARLES FROM POINTS LOUISIANA

Alexandria ..................................................... 95 miles
Baton Rouge ................................................... 135 miles
New Orleans ................................................... 214 miles
Shreveport ..................................................... 184 miles

1951
CALCASIEU RIVER AND PASS, LA.

The development and improvement of Calcasieu River and Pass as a navigation project is under the immediate supervision of the District Engineer, Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District. The project provides for the construction and maintenance of a ship channel from the docks at the Port of Lake Charles to deep water in the Gulf of Mexico, a distance of 50 miles, and the general improvement of the waterway upstream from Lake Charles to Phillips Bluff, a distance of 51 miles. Seagoing traffic is limited to the ship channel between the Port and the Gulf.

PURPOSE

Ocean-going vessels were unable to reach Lake Charles until local interests completed a lateral channel connecting this Port with the Sabine-Neches Waterway in 1927. The exceedingly rapid growth of commerce through this lateral channel, despite the proximity of Lake Charles to older and more active ports on the Gulf of Mexico, justified and led to the assumption of responsibility by the Federal Government for the maintenance of this lateral channel.

STATUS

The work of improving Calcasieu River and Pass was begun in 1873 by dredging a cut at the head of Calcasieu Pass and Calcasieu Lake. From this time until 1915, redredging of this cut and channels in Calcasieu Pass, Calcasieu Lake, and extending the jetties to the 15-foot-depth contour in the Gulf, was considered complete in 1915.

In 1946 Congress authorized the deepening of this 250-foot ship channel to 35 feet, and work of deepening was completed to the shore line of the Gulf of Mexico in August 1950.

Work remaining to be done consists of continuing the deepening of the ship channel from the shore line to the 15-foot-depth contour in the Gulf, and extending the jetties to the 15-foot-depth contour in the Gulf, if and when found necessary.

THE PORT OF LAKE CHARLES, LA.

The Port of Lake Charles, known as the Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District, occupies 93 square miles of area in Calcasieu Parish, and includes the city of Lake Charles and the towns and communities of West Lake, Mossville and Mallard Junction. Within the limits of the Harbor there are twenty-eight piers and wharves, eighteen of which are located on the Calcasieu River below the Lake, two on the River above the Lake, and eight on Lake Charles.

Twelve of the wharves are used for handling oil, two are public terminal wharves for handling general cargo, three are on private slips of a chemical plant, and one is a base for towboats.

Continued industrial and commercial growth of the Port and the corresponding increases in seagoing traffic resulted in hazardous congestion in the latest channel, which, as an integral part of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the Sabine-Neches Waterway, was already heavily burdened by coastwise traffic and internal shipping. To relieve the congestion, Congress adopted on the 26 of August 1937 the Calcasieu River and Pass project and the Corps of Engineers constructed the 30-foot by 250-foot channel between Lake Charles and the Gulf of Mexico, which is presently being deepened to 35 feet, and will permit the use of deeper draft tankers for oil shipments. The present channel limits tanker cargoes to about 11,000 tons, whereas the 35-foot channel will accommodate tankers of 15,000 to 19,000-ton class with obvious savings in cost.

Many attempts to protect the mouth of channel were made by constructing revetments of wood planks, piling, slab, and creosoted timber. These revetments were in turn destroyed by teredos (or shipworms), storms, and hurricanes. Several times the construction was abandoned, but later rebuilt.

A channel 100 feet wide and 7 feet deep, following the natural waterways and through the Lake, was considered complete in 1915.

A 30 by 250-foot ship channel between Lake Charles Harbor and and the Gulf of Mexico was authorized in 1937 and completed in 1941.

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AGRICULTURE

Lake Charles is located in one of the richest strips of land in the world, and is served by three trunk line railroads, two trunk line highways, an intracoastal canal, a transcontinental air line, and a ship channel connected to the Gulf of Mexico.

The principal agricultural products in this area are rice, cotton, and lumber. Rice is the major crop produced in this area, and many varieties of it are grown and milled each year. Rice is the largest item of export.

The largest rice mill in the world, the Louisiana State Rice Mill, is in Lake Charles. A photograph of the mill is shown above.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Heavy production of Gulf Coast oil, supplemented by the many pipelines that feed in from Southwest Louisiana and East Texas and other points in the State to the large refineries located at Lake Charles, assures this area of an expansion not only in the refining of crude but also in the utilization of innumerable by-products.

Salt deposits and an abundant supply of clam shells in the coastal area furnish two base products for use in the manufacture of alkalis and by-products produced from them.

There are large deposits of sand north of Lake Charles and an unlimited supply of high grade, very fine sand located southwest of Lake Charles. This sand is low in ferrous oxide and offers the opportunity for development of the glass industry.

Shrimp are caught in unlimited quantities along the Gulf Coast and, combined with quick-freezing methods, are processed and shipped to all parts of the nation. Several fish factories are located in this area where menhaden fish are processed into fertilizer and oil.

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