Corps Report Sets Stage for Historic Project

The rebuild of Louisiana’s coastal wetlands took a step forward on March 5 with the release of an environmental impact report by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The upshot: The benefits of the proposed $1.4 billion project are well worth the risk, reports Engineering News-Record.

The project would be one of the largest environmental infrastructure projects in the nation’s history. “As a concept, it’s a game changer,” says Kristi Trail, professional engineer and executive director of the Pontchartrain Conservancy, a nonprofit that advocates for environmental sustainability through scientific research. “We see it as something that must move forward in order to change how things are going with our current land loss.”

Industry Overuse Puts Capital City Drinking Water At Risk

Deep beneath Baton Rouge, the Southern Hills Aquifer System provides water to 650,000 people in six parishes. It also supplies hundreds of oil and gas plants, chemical manufacturers, and commercial support contractors. “But the aquifer is being depleted faster than it is being replenished, just as it is in at least four of Louisiana’s 11 major aquifers,” according to New Orleans Public Radio. Industries withdraw an average of more than 56 gallons of groundwater per person — more than anywhere else in the country. A state audit manager said, “Essentially, the capital area has not effectively regulated groundwater usage from this aquifer. The Southern Hills aquifer needs to be regulated, so it can continue to provide drinking water for the citizens for years to come.”

Advocacy for New Bridge Continues

A new Mississippi River bridge has been called a unicorn, but the Advocate reports that the latest talks may lead to a different outcome. A new bridge could provide
relief from the gridlock on the Interstate-10 bridge, which is crossed by about 150,000 cars and track daily. Big questions remain, however, about funding and the bridge location. An earlier attempt to build a bridge failed in 2011 after vocal opposition from parishes that stood to be affected.

Stay up to date on legislative issues through the NSPE Advocacy Center.

FAA safety engineer goes public to slam the agency’s oversight of Boeing’s 737 MAX

Haunted by the two deadly crashes of Boeing 737 MAX jets and his agency’s role in approving the plane, veteran Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) safety engineer Joe Jacobsen is stepping forward publicly to give the victims' families “a firsthand account of what the truth is.” In a detailed letter sent last month to a family that lost their daughter in the second MAX crash in Ethiopia two years ago this week, and in interviews with The Seattle Times, Jacobsen gave the first personal account by an insider of the federal safety agency’s response to the MAX crashes. Jacobsen should have been among the FAA specialists who reviewed the MAX’s critical new flight control software during its original certification, which was largely controlled by Boeing. He’s confident that he and other FAA engineers would have flagged its serious design flaws.

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graduated its first class of diverse, super achieving professionals in February.

Between August 2021 and February 2022 participants will learn how to be successful at higher levels of leadership responsibility. Participants will engage in 90-minute leadership training sessions each month with learning discussions and mentoring on topics such as ownership, team development, communication skills, giving/receiving feedback, and presentation skills. There will also be ample networking opportunities with peers and national NSPE national leaders.

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Ethics Webinars for PEs and Those on the Licensure Path

Don’t miss NSPE’s upcoming ethics webinars on truthfulness and fidelity to employers and clients, with insight from Rebecca Bowman, P.E., Esq., NSPE’s senior director for ethics and professional practice and NAFE executive director, and other NSPE ethics experts.

**April 7**

**Engineering Ethics–Canon III–Truthfulness**

Learn from a variety of situations in which circumstances can tempt (and even encourage) engineers to dance around the edges of Canon III.


**May 5**

**Engineering Ethics–Canon IV–Fidelity to Employers/ Clients**

Examine the duties to employers and clients, and circumstances under which those duties can be pre-empted by higher duties, especially to the public health, safety, and welfare.

*Presenters: David Kish, Ph.D., P.E., Jeff Greenfield, Ph.D., P.E., F.NSPE, and Rebecca Bowman, P.E., Esq.*
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