



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

June 8, 2012

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Operations Division
Regulatory Branch
Project Manager
Stephen D. Pfeffer
(504) 862-2227

SUBJECT: MVN-2011-00226-MS

PUBLIC NOTICE

Interested parties are hereby notified that an application has been received by the District engineer for a Department of the Army permit to authorize the following pursuant to () Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of March 3, 1899 (30 Stat. 1151; 33 USC 403); and/or (X) Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (86 Stat. 816; 33 USC 1344).

**PROPOSED HARRY L. LAWS AND COMPANY, INC. MITIGATION BANK
IN IBERVILLE PARISH**

NAME OF APPLICANT: Harry L. Laws and Company, Inc. c/o Coastal Environments, Inc.,
1260 Main Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802.

LOCATION OF WORK: The project area is located between Interstate 10 and Louisiana Hwy 190 in portions of Sections 9 through 13, Township 7 South, Range 10 East approximately 5 miles north-northwest of the village of Grosse Tete in Iberville Parish, Louisiana.

CHARACTER OF WORK: The Sponsor proposes to re-establish approximately 197 acres of agricultural land to a functioning bottomland hardwood forest by topographic modifications and planting of species commonly associated with this habitat type. The two main tasks of project construction will be the hydrologic modifications and the planting of the desired hardwood species. Hydrologic modifications will include leveling of the furrows currently on the property and modifications to the current drainage ditches within the project area. Currently, the area is mechanically drained using a pump and canals to facilitate sugarcane growth. The proposed mitigation bank construction would include the elimination of drainage ditches which funnel surface water to the pump. The resulting drainage would allow for retention of water from overbank flooding of the bordering canals and precipitation. The modifications to the drainage system and removal of the pump's influence are intended to restore the natural wetland hydrology that has been removed for the farming processes, without inhibiting the farming activities on neighboring farm properties. Additional details of the proposed restoration plan are attached for review in the mitigation banking prospectus.

The comment period will close **30 days** from the date of this public notice advertisement. Written comments, including suggestions for modifications or objections to the proposed work, stating reasons therefore, are being solicited from anyone having interest in this permit request.

Letters must reference the applicant's name and the subject number, be addressed and mailed to the above address, ATTENTION: REGULATORY BRANCH.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit that reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

No properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are near the proposed work. The possibility exists that the proposed work may damage or destroy presently unknown archeological, scientific, pre-historical or historical sites or data. Copies of this notice are being sent to the State Archeologist and the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Our initial finding is that the proposed work would neither affect any species listed as endangered by the U.S. Department of Interior nor affect any habitat designated as critical to the survival and recovery of any endangered species.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnus-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The applicant's proposal would result in the alteration of 0 acres of EFH utilized by various life stages of red drum and penaeid shrimp. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not have a substantial adverse impact on EFH or federally managed fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

If the proposed work involves deposits of dredged or fill material into navigable waters, the evaluation of the probable impacts will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and certification that the proposed activity will not violate applicable water quality standards will be required from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Water Resources, before a permit is issued.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

You are requested to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.

Martin Mayer
Chief, Central Evaluation Section