

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN

Volume XX Issue: 087

Time: 1400

Date: August 17, 2020

Inner Harbor Navigational Canal Lock Closure and GIWW Alternate Route

Commencing on or about August 31, 2020 and continuing for approximately 60 days, the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal (IHNC) will be closed 24 hours per day to all marine traffic due to dewatering operations, repairs, and maintenance to the IHNC Lock. For the duration of the closure, an alternate route has been established utilizing the Mississippi River (Alternate Route). The Alternate Route will be completed by transiting via the Baptiste Collette Bayou Channel, through Breton and Chandeleur Sounds, as well as to and from the eastern reaches of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) near its intersection with the Gulfport Ship Channel.

The Alternate Route will be marked with a mixture of physical and virtual Aids to Navigation (ATON) and will serve as the primary means of navigation for east/west traffic along the GIWW during the planned closure of the IHNC Lock. An approximate position listing for intended ATON is provided at the bottom of this MSIB. Channel condition survey results can be found on the Army Corps of Engineers' website at http://hydrosurvey.mvn.usace.army.mil/navpgs/n_giww_chandeleur.asp.

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans will maintain a webpage containing links and current information pertaining to the Alternate Route located on Homeport under News and Events section at <https://homeport.uscg.mil/port-directory/new-orleans>. Those vessels seeking to utilize the Alternate Route should familiarize themselves with all of the sources listed in each of the sites linked on the Sector New Orleans Alternate Route Information webpage. All mariners transiting the Alternate Route shall closely monitor Automatic Information System (AIS) technology and establish appropriate bridge-to-bridge communications when interacting with other vessel traffic. Vessels requiring additional assistance entering and exiting the Mississippi River via Bayou Baptiste Collette, may contact Vessel Traffic Center Lower Mississippi River via VHF-FM channels 11, 12, and 67, and the telephone number listed below.

Additionally, mariners maintaining vessels east of the IHNC Lock to Mile Marker 22 East of Harvey Lock (Regulated Navigation Area East, or RNA) will need to maintain extra vigilance. Those mariners with vessels transiting within the RNA East not part of an Annual Hurricane Operations Plan (33 Code of Federal Regulations 165.838) will need to have immediate means of evacuating should the RNA be enforced. This includes vessels without their own propulsion systems that will need to maintain sufficient means of evacuating their vessel(s) in accordance with the RNA.

The Coast Guard recognizes the unique situation that the IHNC Lock closure, combined with the implementation of 46 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Subchapter "M" poses for the maritime community. To that end, for such vessels that normally operate only on Rivers routes (*less than three nautical miles from shore*), **the following equipment will not be required while on the Alternate Route for the duration of the IHNC Lock closure:**

1. 46 CFR 140.725 (a): fathometer
2. 46 CFR 141.370: increase of visual distress signals from 03 day/03 night to 06 day/06 night

Due to the distance from shore on this route, federal regulations require vessels to carry a rigid buoyant apparatus that meets 46 CFR 160.010. In light of this unique situation, **one or more of the following is required** to meet the intent of 46 CFR 141.305:

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1. A skiff that meets the requirements of 46 CFR 141.330 (a) through (f); **OR**
2. The vessel and company create and practice written procedures for evacuating crewmembers onto the tow or other safe location as per 46 CFR 141.305 (d)(3)(ii); **OR**
3. A four-hour communications schedule between each vessel traveling "light boat" (without any barges) and its operating company.

The following critical procedures, drills, and assessments normally expected of vessels on Lakes, Bays, and Sounds routes are **expected to be complied with and conducted by all vessels** prior to engaging in transits on the Alternate Route into the Breton and Chandeleur Sounds:

1. 46 CFR 140.425 (a): owner or managing operator of a towing vessel must establish procedures to address fall overboard prevention and recovery of persons in the water
2. 46 CFR 140.605 (b): towing vessel must be maintained and operated so the watertight integrity and stability of the vessel are not compromised
3. 46 CFR 140.635 (a): officer in charge of a navigational watch must conduct a navigation assessment for the intended route and operations prior to getting underway
4. 46 CFR 140.705 (b)(1): charts, including electronic charts, of appropriate scale to make safe navigation possible

Weather: The partial exposure of the Alternate Route to the Gulf of Mexico makes safe transit weather-dependent. It is recommended that transits not be attempted when winds exceed 15 knots and/or seas greater than 2 feet. Mariners should carefully consider weather forecasts for the length of the entire transit prior to getting underway.

Mariners are reminded to secure weather tight/watertight doors/hatches and windows as dictated by the sea state and weather conditions.

Forecasting tools from the National Weather Service:

- Spot forecasting for Alternate Route: <http://go.usa.gov/chU8G>
- Breton Sound: <https://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lon=-89.30269&lat=29.34951#.XyBXmJ5KhPY>
- Chandeleur Sound: <https://marine.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lon=-89.04732&lat=29.89126#.XyBY3p5KhPY>
- Mississippi Sound: <https://marine.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lon=-89.02322&lat=30.32032#.XyBZWJ5KhPY>
- Point and click (select your area of interest): <http://forecast.weather.gov/gridpoint.php?site=lix>

Experience: It is recommended that companies initially assign mariners familiar with eastern GIWW transits to the Alternate Route transits and that mariners expected to make later Alternate Route transits first travel with a mariner experienced on the Alternate Route.

Tow size: Barge tow lengths should not exceed 600 feet (plus typically-sized pushboat of up to 120 feet long), and widths should not exceed 108 feet. This translates to a six-pack of standard barges (each 35 feet x 195 feet) or a two

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30K barrel tank barge tow (each 54 feet x 300 feet). Other than the aforementioned lengths and dimensions, there are no limits to the types of barges or cargoes carried on the Alternate Route.

Draft restrictions: Surveys conducted in July 2020 indicated a minimum water depth of 12 feet, so loading is not recommended past 10 feet vessel draft. Tows should be made up and secured consistent with a typical eastern GIWW tow, as dictated by company policies and practices. Experience has shown that tows transiting the eastern GIWW have been adequately secured, however additional wires, lines, and bridles may be prudent.

Traffic management: One-way traffic at the northern portion of Baptiste Collette will be required during transit of the Alternate Route. Tows will have to hold up in the River prior to transiting the Sound. Westbound tows will have priority due to the lack of safe refuge in the Sound. To avoid meeting in the narrow portions of Baptiste Collette, mariners should closely monitor AIS, make timely (estimate one hour ahead) radio Sécurité calls when outbound or inbound at Baptiste Collette, and establish appropriate bridge-to-bridge radio communications with other vessels.

Deep draft pilots recommend that tows entering Bayou Baptiste Collette from the Mississippi River travel south of the Jump Shoal buoy (#10A) and top around then proceed northbound on the east side of the River, and out of the deep draft sailing line, to the Baptiste Collette entrance. Additionally, it is recommended that tows use the shallow east bank of the River between Jump Shoal Buoy #10A and Wilders Flats light #8 for pushing in while awaiting transit.

Vessel-to-vessel communications on the Mississippi River are made on VHF-FM channel 67.

Tows inbound to Gulfport should check in with the Gulfport Pilots on VHF-FM channel 10 at a point four miles from Ship Island Pass to ascertain the traffic situation and to avoid meeting in the Pass. Tows departing Gulfport should also contact the Gulfport Pilots Port prior to departing the GIWW and entering the Ship Channel.

Breton/Chandeleur ICW Alternate Route:

Aid Name	Latitude	Longitude
Turn/wpt 5 - Ship Island Pass		
Lighted Buoy 1	30-10°10.090"	088-59°24.151"
Lighted Buoy 2	30-10°10.192"	088-59°26.426"
V-AIS 3	30-09°10.770"	088-59°27.662"
Lighted Buoy 4	30-09°10.872"	088-59°29.937"
Lighted Buoy 5	30-08°11.362"	088-59°31.177"
V-AIS 6	30-08°11.464"	088-59°33.452"
Lighted Buoy 7	30-07°12.141"	088-59°34.680"
Lighted Buoy 8	30-07°12.243"	088-59°36.954"

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Aid Name	Latitude	Longitude
V-AIS 9	30-06'12.899"	088-59'38.183"
Lighted Buoy 10	30-06'13.001"	088-59'40.457"
Lighted Buoy 11	30-05'13.501"	088-59'41.694"
V-AIS 12	30-05'13.603"	088-59'43.967"
V-AIS 13	30-04'14.191"	088-59'45.198"
Lighted Buoy 14	30-04'14.293"	088-59'47.472"
Light 15	30-03'14.871"	088-59'48.702"
V-AIS 16	30-03'14.973"	088-59'50.975"
V-AIS 17	30-02'15.579"	088-59'52.204"
Buoy 18	30-02'15.680"	088-59'54.476"
V-AIS 19	30-01'16.241"	088-59'55.707"
Light 20	30-01'16.343"	088-59'57.979"
Buoy 21	30-00'16.921"	088-59'59.207"
V-AIS 22	30-00'17.023"	089-00'01.479"
Light 23	29-59'17.570"	089-00'02.708"
V-AIS 24	29-59'17.671"	089-00'04.980"
V-AIS 25	29-58'18.249"	089-00'06.207"
Buoy 26	29-58'18.351"	089-00'08.478"
Light 28	29-57'19.071"	089-00'11.972"
Buoy 29	29-56'19.651"	089-00'13.197"
V-AIS 30	29-56'19.752"	089-00'15.467"
Light 31	29-55'20.331"	089-00'16.692"
V-AIS 33	29-54'21.009"	089-00'20.186"
Buoy 34	29-54'21.110"	089-00'22.455"
Light 36	29-53'20.440"	089-00'26.027"
Turn/wpt 4		
Light 37	29-52'34.528"	089-00'41.707"
V-AIS 38	29-52'35.171"	089-00'43.856"
Buoy 40	29-51'38.994"	089-01'05.976"
V-AIS 41	29-50'42.166"	089-01'25.944"
Light 42	29-50'42.809"	089-01'28.092"

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Aid Name	Latitude	Longitude
Buoy 43	29-49°45.984"	089-01°48.051"
Light 45	29-48°49.795"	089-02°10.154"
V-AIS 46	29-48°50.437"	089-02°12.302"
Buoy 48	29-47°54.258"	089-02°34.394"
V-AIS 49	29-46°57.425"	089-02°54.335"
Light 50	29-46°58.068"	089-02°56.482"
Buoy 51	29-46°01.240"	089-03°16.415"
Light 53	29-45°05.049"	089-03°38.490"
V-AIS 54	29-45°05.690"	089-03°40.636"
Buoy 56	29-44°09.507"	089-04°02.670"
V-AIS 57	29-43°12.672"	089-04°22.615"
Light 58	29-43°13.313"	089-04°24.760"
Buoy 59	29-42°40.991"	089-04°35.049"
Light 61	29-41°20.283"	089-05°06.715"
V-AIS 62	29-41°20.925"	089-05°08.860"
Buoy 63	29-40°24.090"	089-05°28.754"
V-AIS 65	29-39°32.925"	089-05°48.814"
Light 66	29-39°33.567"	089-05°50.959"
Turn/wpt 3		
Light 67	29-38°56.604"	089-06°36.514"
V-AIS 69	29-38°17.792"	089-07°27.989"
Buoy 70	29-38°19.291"	089-07°29.470"
V-AIS 71	29-37°38.974"	089-08°19.454"
Light 72	29-37°40.473"	089-08°20.935"
Buoy 73	29-37°00.106"	089-09°10.967"
V-AIS 74	29-37°01.604"	089-09°12.449"
Light 75	29-36°21.339"	089-10°02.329"
V-AIS 76	29-36°22.837"	089-10°03.810"
V-AIS 77	29-35°42.498"	089-10°53.768"
Buoy 78	29-35°43.996"	089-10°55.249"
V-AIS 79	29-35°03.650"	089-11°45.199"
Light 80	29-35°05.148"	089-11°46.680"

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Aid Name	Latitude	Longitude
V-AIS 81	29-34'31.297"	089-12'28.017"
Buoy 82	29-34'32.795"	089-12'29.499"
Light 83	29-33'58.909"	089-13'10.869"
V-AIS 84	29-34'00.406"	089-13'12.350"
Light 86	29-33'46.145"	089-13'31.215"
Turn/wpt 2		
Light 87	29-33'25.868"	089-13'40.840"
V-AIS 88	29-33'26.788"	089-13'42.845"
Buoy 89	29-32'54.079"	089-14'00.810"
V-AIS 90	29-32'55.422"	089-14'02.799"
Turn/wpt 1		
V-AIS 91	29-32'01.521"	089-14'31.476"
Light 92	29-32'02.441"	089-14'33.481"
Buoy 93	29-31'08.923"	089-15'03.038"
V-AIS 94	29-31'10.004"	089-15'05.464"
Light 95	29-30'16.345"	089-15'34.579"
V-AIS 96	29-30'17.016"	089-15'36.103"
Buoy 97	29-29'23.729"	089-16'06.130"
V-AIS 98	29-29'24.650"	089-16'08.135"
V-AIS 99	29-28'31.141"	089-16'37.657"
Light 100	29-28'32.060"	089-16'39.661"
Buoy 101	29-27'38.526"	089-17'09.188"
V-AIS 102	29-27'39.445"	089-17'11.192"
Light 103	29-26'45.950"	089-17'40.690"
V-AIS 104	29-26'46.868"	089-17'42.690"
V-AIS 105	29-25'54.045"	089-18'07.558"
Light 106	29-25'54.846"	089-18'09.626"
Lighted Buoy 107	29-25'16.460"	089-18'26.150"
Lighted Buoy 108	29-24'49.670"	089-18'38.130"
Lighted Buoy 110	29-24'36.200"	089-18'36.880"
wpt 0 Baptiste Collette		

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For further information, contact:

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans Command Center: (504) 365-2200

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans Waterways Management: (504) 365-2280 OR Secnola-wpm@uscg.mil

Coast Guard Sector New Orleans, Domestic Vessel Branch: (504) 365-2242 OR (NOLADOM@uscg.mil) ATTN

Inspected Towing Vessel Regulatory Team – for any 46 CFR Subchapter “M” questions/comments

Vessel Traffic Service Lower Mississippi River: (504) 365-2514, VHF FM Ch. 11, 12, 67

Coast Guard Sector Mobile Command Center: (251) 441-5976

Coast Guard Sector Mobile Waterways Management: (251) 441-5166 OR Sectormobilewaterways@uscg.mil

Coast Guard Sector Mobile Domestic Vessel Branch: (251) 441-5262 OR Mobinsp@uscg.mil


CAPTAIN W. E. WATSON

Captain of the Port New Orleans


CAPTAIN L. A. ALLEN

Captain of the Port Mobile

For a current list of MSIBs in the COTP New Orleans Zone visit: <https://homeport.uscg.mil/port-directory/new-orleans> under “Safety Notifications”