



NEWS Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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La. Guardsmen continue building, monitoring flood barriers

By Spc. Joshua Barnett, Louisiana National Guard Public Affairs Office

NEW ORLEANS – Approximately 300 Louisiana National Guardsmen continue working across the state to build protective barriers against the approaching flood waters and to patrol levees in support of local, parish and state officials at the request of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.

The 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team has installed more than 2.3 miles of HESCO barriers and is currently filling them with sand to create a levee on Avoca Island to prevent backwater flooding from reaching Morgan City and other towns in south Louisiana.

"We had a hard night, it was very cold, it was muddy, but our Soldiers were motivated," said Lt. Col. Rich Hanes, executive officer, 256th IBCT. "They stayed up all night with no complaints. I'm very proud of them. They're hard working, great Soldiers and great Americans."

The levee project is part of a larger effort designed to prevent high water from the Atchafalaya River from travelling through Bayou Chene, over Avoca Island and into the Intracoastal Waterway, where it could flood Morgan City and other towns. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working to seal off the waterway, which, without this levee, would divert the water over the island.

More than 100 Soldiers have been conducting 24-hour operations to build the barrier in time.

In Krotz Springs, Soldiers also completed construction of 2,600 linear feet of protective levees in St. Landry Parish.

The 225th Engineer Brigade is conducting 24-hour patrols in the parishes of Concordia, East Carroll, Madison and Tensas in the 5th Levee District to inspect for leaks or seepage along the levee.

Two sand-bagging chutes have been provided to state officials in Tensas Parish. The LANG has also issued 78,000 sandbags to Angola, Avoyelles Parish, St. Martin Parish and West Feliciana Parish.

"As a Citizen-Soldier, this is what we're here for. We do deploy, but the real reason we're here is to help our home land," said Staff Sgt. Craig Smith, a weapons squad leader with B Company, 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th IBCT.

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Louisiana's Guardsmen are trained, ready and equipped to stand up at any moment to protect lives and property, maintain communications, and ensure the continuity of operations and government.

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Cutlines:



160110-Z-AC723-005

The Louisiana National Guard continues to work around the clock, constructing HESCO barrier levees on Avoca Island, La., Jan. 10, 2016. The project will prevent backwater flooding from reaching Morgan City and other towns in south Louisiana due to high river levels. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Joshua Barnett)



160111-Z-AC723-033

Louisiana National Guard Staff Pfc. Dustin Mooney, a horizontal construction engineer with the 843rd Engineer Company, 205th Engineer Battalion, 225th Engineer Brigade, from Bush, La., fills HESCO barriers to construct a levee while Sgt. Craig Smith, an infantryman with B Company, 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team guides him on Avoca Island, La., Jan. 11, 2016. The barrier will be used in the construction of a 2-mile long levee to prevent backwater flooding from reaching Morgan City and other towns in south Louisiana due to high river levels. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Joshua Barnett)



160111-Z-AC723-062

The Louisiana National Guard continues to work around the clock, constructing HESCO barrier levees on Avoca Island, La., Jan. 11, 2016. The project will prevent backwater flooding from reaching Morgan City and other towns in south Louisiana due to high river levels. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Joshua Barnett)



160111-Z-AC723-149

The Louisiana National Guard continues to work around the clock, constructing HESCO barrier levees on Avoca Island, La., Jan. 11, 2016. The project will prevent backwater flooding from reaching Morgan City and other towns in south Louisiana due to high river levels. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Joshua Barnett)



160111-Z-AC723-185

Louisiana National Guard Pfc. Dylan Jordan, a horizontal construction engineer with the 843rd Engineer Company, 205th Engineer Battalion, 225th Engineer Brigade, guides an M400W skid-steer loader, during construction of a HESCO barrier levee on Avoca Island, La., Jan. 11, 2016.

The project will prevent backwater flooding from reaching Morgan City and other towns in south Louisiana due to high river levels. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Joshua Barnett)



160111-Z-AC723-228

Curtis Middleton, an engineering technician with CB&I, briefs Louisiana National Guard Lt. Col. Rich Hanes, executive officer, 256th Infantry Brigade, on work to seal the Intracoastal Waterway from rising river levels near Morgan City, La., Jan. 11, 2016. The project will prevent backwater flooding from reaching Morgan City and other towns in south Louisiana. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Joshua Barnett)