



Some more data on the Katrina Damage

Posted by [Heading Out](#) on September 12, 2005 - 7:57pm

Topic: [Supply/Production](#)

Reading the post that ProfG just cited, and while much of it is new and of interest, there were a couple of things that I would draw your attention to with referenced information.

I am doing this "up front" because part of this article strikes me as being more than necessarily alarmist. And while the situation in the intermediate term is grim, we need to be cautious in not overstating the immediate impact. There were a number of refineries that were put out of action, for example. We posted the location of those, and if you return to [that map](#) you will find that only about four remain in serious trouble.

Further there are some controversial statements here that may be making more of the situation than exists.

While Venice is flooded, for example, it was a ringed levee town, and the levee failed, which explains part of why the area is still underwater. However there is some suggestion that the river may have changed its bed and may now be flowing partly through the town rather than around it. There are some photos [here](#) and from the [the USGS](#) which describes Venice thus

Venice is the southernmost permanently inhabited area on the Louisiana coast and is situated within a ring levee on the Mississippi. The levee was ineffective during Hurricane Katrina. The entire town was flooded, oil field vessels and barges were strewn haphazardly, and huge deposits of wrack were left on both sides of the ring levee on the west side of town. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services headquarters for Delta National Wildlife Refuge appeared to be structurally sound, although the first floor was damaged. A newly constructed tool shed was crushed by a massive barge-crane, which apparently floated on top of the building.

The pictures that go along with that quote do show that some of the islands are not there any longer, as that article notes.

The comment that the oil industry made the rock porous is not true. Firstly the rock that the oil comes from is deeper, and secondly if there had been a connection to the surface, through which the water could go down and erode that rock, then the oil would have come up it several millennia ago and would not still be there to be exploited. What the companies have done, on occasion is to drive passages for the rigs into the bayous, and, while I know just enough about this to be dangerous, it is my impression that this led to some of the increased erosion.

Since the sheriff of St Bernard Parish mentioned first meeting FEMA officials who drove down there by car (in a post I currently can't find) I also assume that the roads are returning to somewhat better shape, although there are boats and other debris that are still blocking the

Oh, and I posted the other day about FEMA buying Winnebago's. Well it was not quite that way - here is the story from the Times Picayune

In an unprecedented undertaking, the federal government is preparing to provide temporary housing for as many as 200,000 people displaced by Hurricane Katrina for the next three to five years, the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Housing Area Coordinator, Brad Gair, said Monday.

Work on the first of what will be dozens of mobile home communities around Louisiana will begin this week in the Baton Rouge area, he said.

"It may not be quite on the scale of building the pyramids, but it's close," Gair said. "This is big. We've never done anything like this."

He would not say where the new communities would be sited, but said most would be in Louisiana.

I believe, as do the folk who write to us from the Gulf, that the situation is not as good in the medium term as the Agencies are currently suggesting that it will be. There remains serious damage to a significant amount of the infrastructure, and experience from Ivan shows that it will take a significant amount of time and resource to recover. But, on the other hand, people are working very hard to bring things back into shape, and their efforts should be recognized as they succeed.



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