

17 Aug 1989

Mr. Windell A. Curole
General Manager
South Lafourche Levee District
Post Office Box 426
Galliano, Louisiana 70354

ADVANCE COPY
SUBJECT TO CORRECTION

Dear Mr. Curole,

Please reference your letter of August 16, 1989, requesting information on the wetlands in Section "E" South of the Larose to Golden Meadow (LRGM), Louisiana, Hurricane Protection Project and how they relate to project-related mitigation. Project impacts on enclosed wetlands, including marshes, were evaluated in a March 1, 1985 Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), and mitigation for these impacts were assessed in an April 30, 1987 Mitigation Report (MR).

The SEIS evaluated 4,598 wetland acres of which 794 acres were impacted for levee right-of-way, 660 for borrow pits, and 3,144 enclosed. The areas within each was further categorized by six wetland habitat categories: fresh/intermediate marsh, brackish marsh, open water, wooded swamp, and bottomland hardwoods. The locations of the larger tracts of these wetlands are shown on the attached Figure 1 from page 111 of the SEIS.

Concerning to Section "E" South, a total of 1,743 acres of wetland would be affected by project implementation. Of this, 1,525 acres would be indirectly lost due to interior drainage of the protected area. The indirect losses, by habitat type, are 602 acres of fresh marsh, 365 acres of open water, 122 acres of wooded swamp, and 436 acres of bottomland hardwoods.

To compensate for adverse fish and wildlife impacts resulting from both direct and indirect construction impacts (including the "E" South interior wetlands), a mitigation plan was developed. The plan provides for the improvement of about 4,600 acres of marshland within the Pointe-au-Chien Wildlife Management Area by retarding the movement of saltwater into the area and allowing for the management of water levels. The plan fully mitigates for project induced damages as determined by the Habitat Evaluation Procedures. Additionally, private land north of the management area would also receive residual benefits.

In summary, the LRGM mitigation plan compensates for habitat losses to fish and wildlife resources due to both direct and indirect construction impacts. Direct construction impacts would be attributable to the removal of material from borrow pits and placement of this material on levee rights-of-way. Indirect impacts would be the result of the enhanced drainage provided within the levee system and future conversion of these areas to agricultural, residential, or commercial development.

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You may address any questions regarding the SEIS or MR to Mr. E. Scott Clark, telephone (504)-862-2521.

Sincerely,
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R. H. Schroeder, Jr.
Chief, Planning Division

Enclosures

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