



**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
New Orleans District

News Release

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Corps increases diversion of Mississippi River water into Atchafalaya Basin to aid La. crawfish industry

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has increased the diversion of Mississippi River water into the Atchafalaya Basin through the Old River Control structures to help Louisiana’s crawfish industry.

The decision was made by Brig. Gen. Edwin J. Arnold, division engineer of the Corps’ Mississippi Valley Division in Vicksburg, Miss., at the request of Louisiana Gov. Mike Foster.

“Although the diversion aids the crawfish industry, only more rain and more water coming downriver can provide all the water needed to maximize the crawfish harvest,” Arnold said.

“This is the most water we can divert at this time and still maintain a stable relationship between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers,” Arnold said.

Old Rivers Control’s gates were adjusted Saturday to increase the “latitude flow” directed down the Atchafalaya to 32 percent and decrease the Mississippi’s share to 68 percent. This will be continued for two weeks.

Latitude flow is the combined flow of the Mississippi and Red rivers at the latitude of Old River. By law, the Mississippi must maintain 70 percent and the Atchafalaya 30 percent over a year’s time.

Old River Control is a complex of gated dams and channels, 80 river miles above Baton Rouge, that keep the Mississippi River on course by controlling the diversion into the Atchafalaya River. <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/pao/oldriver/oldriver.htm>