



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
New Orleans District

# News Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 11, 2003

### **Atchafalaya Basin getting larger share of water**

*Flow increased at request of La. governor to aid water quality*

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has increased the diversion of Mississippi River flows into the Atchafalaya Basin in response to Louisiana Gov. Mike Foster’s request to improve water quality.

Brig. Gen. Don T. Riley, division engineer of the Corps’ Mississippi Valley Division, based in Vicksburg, Miss, approved the flow increase. Foster requested 2 percent more water “through the Old River Control complex in order to improve the water quality and aquatic resources in the Atchafalaya Basin.”

The gates at Old River Control, 80 river miles above Baton Rouge, are being adjusted to increase the Atchafalaya River’s share of the “latitude flow” to 32 percent by Wednesday, March 12, and reduce the Mississippi’s share to 68 percent.

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

The 32 percent flow will continue for seven days, increasing the Atchafalaya’s share by about 65,000 cubic feet per second. The river stage at Butte La Rose will increase by one-half of one foot.

Larry Banks, the chief of water management of the Mississippi Valley Division, said, “The increased flow is in agreement with the general desirable water management guidelines specified in the Governor’s Water in the Basin Committee Report. The additional water flow should help keep water moving in the basin which should help improve the quality of the water for fisheries and other aquatic habitat.”

The 2 percent increase continues last year’s strategy of acting during high water, in order to maximize the spread of the water into the Atchafalaya Basin. The Corps informed basin interests, such as landowners and farmers, who said they would not be harmed. The Mississippi crested Monday and today at 13.4 feet at New Orleans.