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New Orleans District

News Release

Public Affairs Office, 7400 Leake Avenue
<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/>

Tel. 504-862-2201
Fax 504-862-1724

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Contact: John Hall or Jim Addison, 504-862-2201
December 11, 2003

Feasibility report completed for new Bayou Sorrel Lock *\$88.5 million project would replace lock linking Morgan City to Port Allen*

NEW ORLEANS – The New Orleans District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, has completed the feasibility report for the \$88.5 million replacement of the Bayou Sorrel Lock on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway alternate route, which links Morgan City and Port Allen (Baton Rouge).

A feasibility report is required to present a project to Congress for construction authorization. The next step for the Bayou Sorrel report is the Corps' Mississippi Valley Division in Vicksburg, Miss. The Division's advisory body, the Mississippi River Commission, will consider the report in February.

The 191-page report recommends a lock 75 feet wide and 1,200 feet long. The lock at present measures 56 by 797 feet. The greater dimensions would double the lock's surface area to 90,000 square feet and help to reduce delays for towboats and barges.

The report addresses erosion, a concern of the residents of Bayou Sorrel. Rock would be placed along 1.5 miles of the waterway north of the lock, on both sides, to improve erosion control. The Corps would also place 27 mooring buoys near the lock to prevent waiting vessels from damaging the bank.

Flood control would be a major feature in the replacement of the lock, which was built to allow vessels to pass through the East Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee. The levee has been raised to eight feet above the lock, and the new lock would close the gap.

The alternate route is a 64-mile shortcut that bypasses the 232-mile Mississippi River route through New Orleans that also connects Morgan City and Port Allen. The Bayou Sorrel Lock is 25 miles south of the Port Allen Lock. The main route of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway extends more than 1,300 miles from Brownsville, Texas, to Apalachicola, Fla.

More information: Darrel Broussard, project manager, 504-862-2591,
darrel.m.broussard@mvn02.usace.army.mil

Gulf Intracoastal Waterway brochure:

<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/pao/BRO/GIWW%20Brochure.pdf>