



*Senate
State of Louisiana*

P. O. Box 94183
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804
(225) 342-2040

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CONTACT: SENATE OFFICE OF
COMMUNICATION
PHONE: 225-342-9737**

**AGREEMENT SIGNED TO TACKLE BAYOU MANCHAC AREA
FLOOD CONTROL & ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION**

**COOPERATIVE, COMPREHENSIVE EFFORT TO AID
ALLIGATOR BAYOU & SPANISH LAKE AREAS**

It's official. Work should begin soon on the first phase of the Bayou Manchac Watershed Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. That word comes from District 18 State Senator Louis Lambert (D-Prairieville) who joined federal, state and local officials at the State Capitol to mark the signing of a \$100,000 feasibility cost sharing agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Pontchartrain Levee District which is working with Ascension, Iberville and East Baton Rouge parishes on the project.

The cooperative endeavor is the result of work begun by the Task Force on Bayou Manchac and Bayou Fountain Flooding created by the state legislature earlier this year. Lambert pushed for the creation of the task force after heavy, prolonged rainfall associated with tropical storm Allison caused severe flooding and environmental damage in the Alligator Bayou/Spanish Lake areas and the uppermost part of Bayou Manchac.

"I am very pleased to see our efforts moving forward," Senator Lambert said. "Flooding and ecosystem problems of a watershed don't stop at the parish line. This cooperative approach to the feasibility study will put the work on a fast track to determine what are our best options to address the problems."

The first phase of the feasibility study will evaluate any and all reasonable measures to provide for increased flood damage reduction and improved environmental conditions. The Corps will coordinate the work of a study team comprised of federal, state and local agencies as well as representatives of the interested public. Information gathered by the study team will be presented to the public for comment, with a "fist-cut" evaluation of the various options available in about six to nine months.

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“This project offers the perfect opportunity to develop a multi-purpose project that will have flood-damage reduction, environmental, educational, recreational and other public benefits,” Col. Thomas Julich, District Engineer, New Orleans District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said. “Our challenge will be to coordinate with all of the stakeholders to develop a recommended plan that is in the overall public interest. It is a challenge we gladly accept.”

Corps officials are pleased that there is such strong public interest in enhancing and preserving the wetland ecosystem and see the cooperative attitude and commitment of all of those involved in the project as a real plus. Ascension, Iberville and East Baton Rouge parishes have each pledged \$12,500 for the first phase of the feasibility study and the Pontchartrain Levee District, as the non-federal project sponsor, has committed a like amount. The parishes are also providing logistical support.

“I want to thank all of the parties for their cooperation. I am very pleased to have the support and participation of the Corps, the levee district, the Ascension Parish Council as well as others in all three parishes and all of the legislators from the Bayou Manchac area including Senators Jay Dardenne, Rob Marionneaux and Cleo Fields and Representatives Juba Diez and Roy Quezairé,” Senator Lambert said.

As the work of the feasibility study proceeds, citizens interested in the project can learn more about the project on the internet. The Corps has set up a special web page for the Bayou Manchac Watershed Flood Damage Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study. The address is www.mvn.usace.army.mil/prj/bayou-manchac-watershed.