Wayne and Cheryl Backes
[redacted]

Army Corp of Engineers-New Orleans District
Attn: Ms. Amy Dixon
CEMVN-PMR-C
7400 Leake Ave New Orleans, LA 70118
Sttammanyfs@usace.army.mil

Subject: St.Tammany Parish, Louisiana Feasibility Study

Dear Ms. Dixon:

The purpose of this letter is to express our opposition to the proposed St. Tammany Levee Project, and we would like our objections on the public record. We have lived in St. Tammany parish for 27 years at our current address in French Branch Estates on Rue Juneau. Our home has never flooded, however many of our neighbors have experienced significant property damage due to flood waters from rain and hurricanes. We are concerned that the current TSP will lead to flooding for us and worse flooding for our neighbors who are at lower elevations.

There are a number of reasons for our concern.

- Increased risk of flooding from the Pearl River
    - With a levee wall in place next to our property, we would be located in an area that would retain greater amounts of water should such a flood occur as it has in the recent past.
    - Your modeling does not appear to have taken into account potential flooding from the Pearl River and its impact on those of us outside the proposed protection plan. (Appendix E, Page 80 appears to only acknowledge potential impact inside the levee)
- Climate related increases in flooding potential
    - Sea levels are rising, and Louisiana land levels are dropping. Additionally, there is a loss of wetlands, which have previously served as protection from flood events. These alone increase the threat of flooding to many residences in Louisiana; however, this threat is exacerbated by the construction of a levee that will restrict the flow of water, and confine it to a smaller area.

- Section 5 of the St. Tammany Levee Project states that there would not be significant changes to storm surge levels in the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity system in the Greater New Orleans Hurricane & Storm Damage Risk Reduction System nor would there be an impact to the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain system.
    - The stated regions do not address Northshore areas east or west, and outside of the proposed levee and the potential impact to them during storm surge.
    - Additionally, section 5 states that there are possible increases of 1-3 feet in the 1% AEP water level on the flood side of the levee/wall. Although the claim is for a 1% increase, this is for the entire area. This risk is not equal, but will be much greater for large areas, particularly those in the vicinity of the levee/wall.
- Effects on economy and the community have not been considered.
    - Schools, hospitals and other medical services, local businesses outside of the proposed levee which would be forced to decide if remaining here is viable.
- Loss of home value, increase in flood insurance outside of the levee in the TSP.

Where is the protection for those in our area, many of whom have already previously flooded? As designed, the TSP does not meet the needs of large portions of the St. Tammany Parish community. Our concerns related to increased potential flooding adjacent to and outside of the proposed levee have not been addressed. It seems that there is strong probability that residents located outside of the levee will be significantly harmed by the plan. We will request that the federal government not approve funding for this proposal without significant modifications to protect all of St. Tammany Parish.

Respectfully,

Cheryl R Backes
Wayne L Backes

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