DOCUMENTATION OF

PUBLIC MEETING

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA

AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

MEETING HELD

ON

APRIL 12, 1984

IN

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

AT THE

JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

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I. NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

US Army Corps
of Engineers
New Orleans District

Announcement of Public Meeting

March 9, 1984

What for...

To discuss the Tentatively Selected Plan for the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection project.

When and Where...

Thursday, April 12, 1984 7p.m.
John F. Kennedy High School
Wisner Boulevard
New Orleans, Louisiana

Who...

All interested individuals, groups, and agencies are invited to attend or to be represented at this meeting.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 60267
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

Planning Division
Plan Formulation Branch

March 9, 1984

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC MEETING
TO DISCUSS
THE TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN
FOR HURRICANE PROTECTION TO
THE NEW ORLEANS METROPOLITAN AREA

To Everyone Interested in the Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity Area:

You are invited to attend a public meeting to discuss the tentatively selected plan for the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project. The purpose of the plan is to provide hurricane protection to the Metropolitan New Orleans area including St. Charles, Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Bernard parishes. We urge you to attend the meeting to comment on the plan, make suggestions, and state your views. Information about the tentatively selected plan and the reevaulation study is included with this announcement. The draft report and draft supplement to the environmental impact statement are available at parish and university libraries throughout the study area.

The tentatively selected plan was previously presented to the public at a meeting on November 21, 1981 at the John F. Kennedy High School in New Orleans. At that time, the plan did not include any protection for St. Charles Parish. An economically feasible plan of protection for St. Charles has been developed and incorporated into the plan. This meeting is being held to apprise the public of the changes in the plan.

Any questions or concerns regarding the disposal of dredged material may also be addressed at this time. A separate notice has been sent to persons known to be interested in dredged material disposal.

After we have had an opportunity to consider the information we receive at the public meeting, we will prepare our final report and EIS and submit them to the Division Engineer of the Lower Mississippi Valley Division in Vicksburg, Mississippi. The report will then be processed through Corps channels to the Office of the Chief of Engineers for action.

At the public meeting, I ask that presentations be limited to no more than five minutes in order to give everyone a chance to speak. You may also submit a written statement at this meeting or mail a statement to me at the address above before the meeting or by May 12, 1984. We will give both oral and written statements equal consideration in making a final decision. After May 12, 1984, the record of the meeting will be closed.

We have scheduled the meeting at a place and time we hope will make it convenient for you to participate. I urge you to attend and give us your ideas and suggestions.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Lee
Colonel, Corps of Engineers
District Engineer

TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Authorized Plan

In 1965 Congress authorized the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers to begin construction of a plan of improvements designed to provide hurricane protection to the area surrounding Lake Pontchartrain. Construction has been underway since 1966. In addition to levees and floodwalls, the plan included three barrier structures. The structures were to be located at The Rigolets, Chef Menteur Pass, and the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal. The Barrier Plan is shown on Figure 1.

A hurricane approaching from the south drives water into Lake Pontchartrain causing the lake level to rise. As the storm passes, the lake tilts to the south resulting in increased flood stages along the south shore. The barrier structures would be closed as the hurricane approached preventing the filling process. This would result in a reduction of peak stages in the lake by about 3 feet; levee heights along the south shore could be reduced thus reducing the construction cost of the levees.

Litigation

In response to the National Environmental Policy Act, the New Orleans District filed an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in 1975 with the Council on Environmental Quality. Local environmental interests challenged the adequacy of the EIS in court. In 1977 the Federal District Court found that the EIS was inadequate in its treatment of the impacts of the barrier structures at The Rigolets and Chef Menteur Pass. Although the Corps was originally enjoined from any further construction on the project, the injunction was modified to include only the two barrier structures. Construction on the remainder of the project was allowed to continue. The Corps was directed to prepare a legally adequate EIS addressing the barrier structures and to further investigate alternative plans of protection.

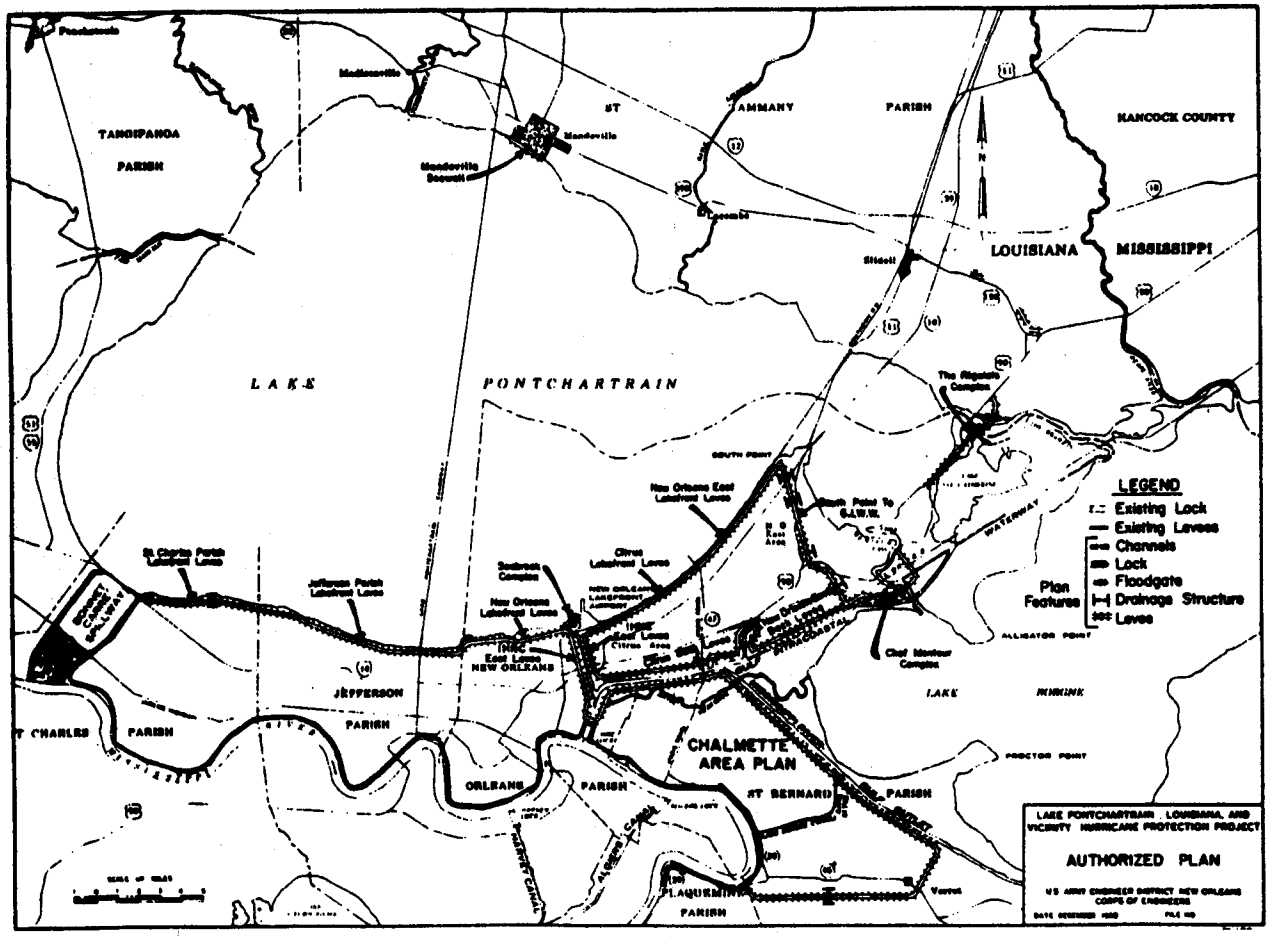

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN
TANGIPAHOA PARISH
ST TAMMANY PARISH
HANCOCK COUNTY
LOUISIANA
MISSISSIPPI
Mandeville
Slidell
ST CHARLES PARISH
JEFFERSON PARISH
ORLEANS PARISH
ST BERNARD PARISH
PLAQUEMINES PARISH
NEW ORLEANS
CHALMETTE AREA PLAN
Chef Menteur Complex
LAKE BORGNE
LEGEND
Existing Lock
Existing Levees
Channels
Lock
Floodgate
Drainage Structure
Levee
Plan Features
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT
AUTHORIZED PLAN

FIGURE 1

ALTERNATIVE PLANS STUDY

The Draft Reevaluation Report and the Draft Supplement to the Environmental Impact Statement are the result of the court-ordered alternative plans study. Study findings indicated that the only alternative to a barrier plan was a high level plan. The High Level Plan would provide for building the levees fronting on Lake Pontchartrain high enough to contain the lake without the use of barrier structures. The two plans were compared to determine which plan was superior in terms of economic feasibility, social impacts, and environmental impacts.

Alignments

Part of our reevaluation study included investigating the possibility of changing the levee alignments for the Barrier and the High Level plans from the authorized alignment. Changing the alignments may result in reductions in cost and environmental impacts. There are only two areas where it is possible to vary alignments--St. Charles Parish and New Orleans East.

Three levee alignments were analyzed for St. Charles Parish. The locations of these alignments are shown on Figure 2. The authorized lakefront alignment would be the most expensive to construct and would enclose the most wetland area. It would also impact Bayou LaBranche and Bayou Trepagnier, which have been designated as Natural and Scenic Streams by the State of Louisiana.

The north of Airline Highway alignment is the least expensive alternative, costing only one-fifth as much as the lakefront alignment. This alignment would leave 26,000 acres of wetlands, which would have been enclosed by the lakefront levee, open to natural tidal interchange. About 3,000 acres of wetlands south of Airline Highway would be enclosed, however. These wetlands are not subject to normal tidal exchange except through culverts under Airline Highway. Drainage structures would be provided in the hurricane protection levee to maintain the existing drainage patterns.

The south of Airline Highway alignment is 2.5 miles longer than the north alignment and approximately 20 to 25 percent more costly. Although this alternative excludes the wetland area, the environmental impacts are essentially the same as those of the

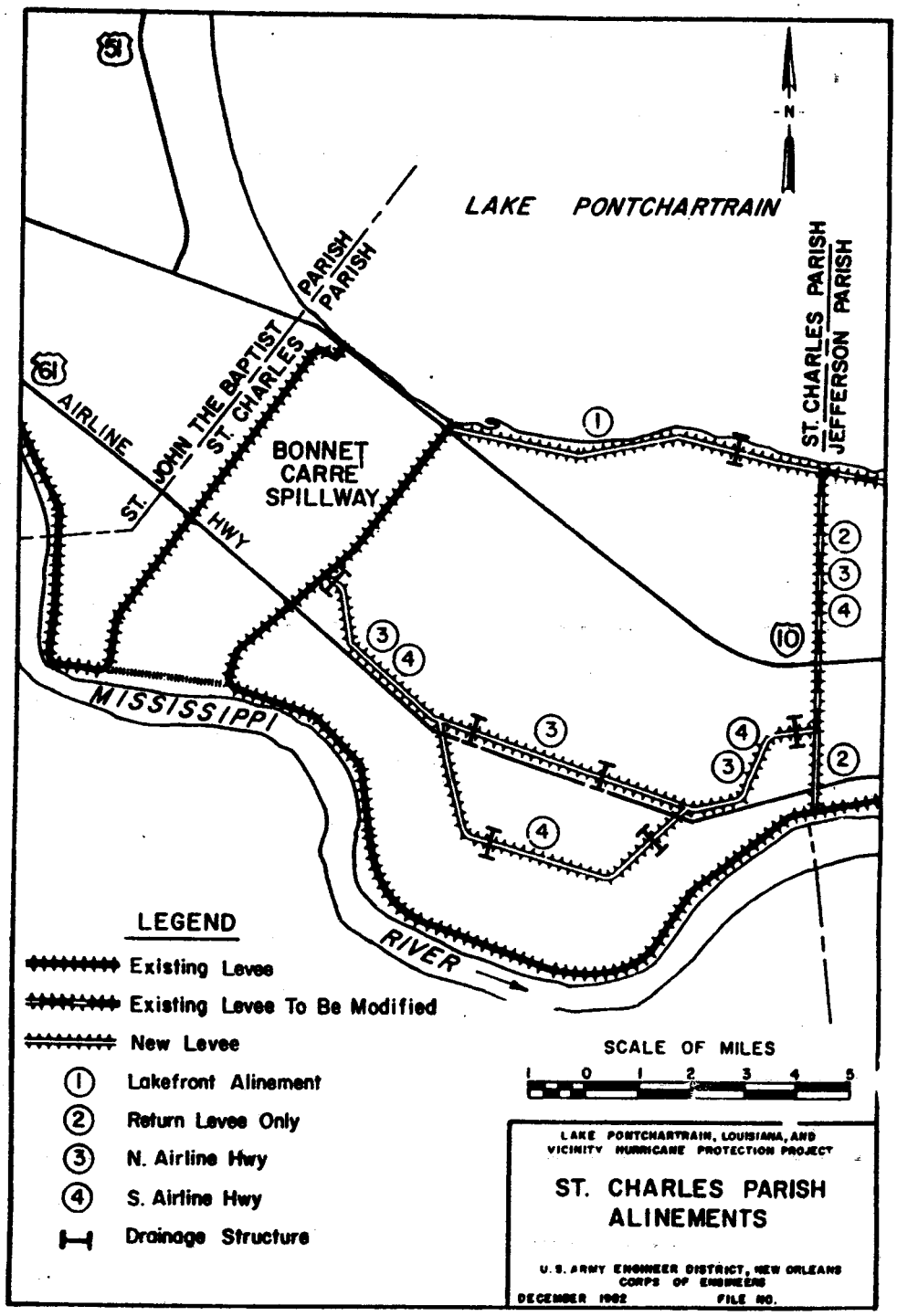

51
N
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN
PARISH
PARISH
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
ST. CHARLES
ST. CHARLES PARISH
JEFFERSON PARISH
61
AIRLINE
HWY
ST.
BONNET
CARRE
SPILLWAY
10
MISSISSIPPI
RIVER
LEGEND
Existing Levee
Existing Levee To Be Modified
New Levee
1 Lakefront Alinement
2 Return Levee Only
3 N. Airline Hwy
4 S. Airline Hwy
Drainage Structure
SCALE OF MILES
1 0 1 2 3 4 5
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND
VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT
ST. CHARLES PARISH
ALINEMENTS
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, NEW ORLEANS
CORPS OF ENGINEERS
DECEMBER 1962
FILE NO.

FIGURE 2

north alignment, which maintains the area's hydrology. The north of Airline Highway alignment was selected as the best alternative for both the Barrier and the High Level Plans.

Two alternatives were considered in New Orleans East--the authorized alignment and the Maxent Canal alignment shown on Figure 3. Using the authorized alignment would require upgrading an existing levee. Drainage structures will maintain the existing hydrology of the 13,000 acres of wetlands inside the levee. The Maxent Canal alignment would leave those wetlands outside the levee system. Although this alignment is shorter than the authorized alignment, it would be more expensive because it would require construction of a new levee rather than upgrading an existing levee. Because the two plans have similar construction-related environmental impacts and the authorized alignment would maintain existing drainage patterns, the authorized alignment was selected as the most economical alignment for both the Barrier and High Level Plans.

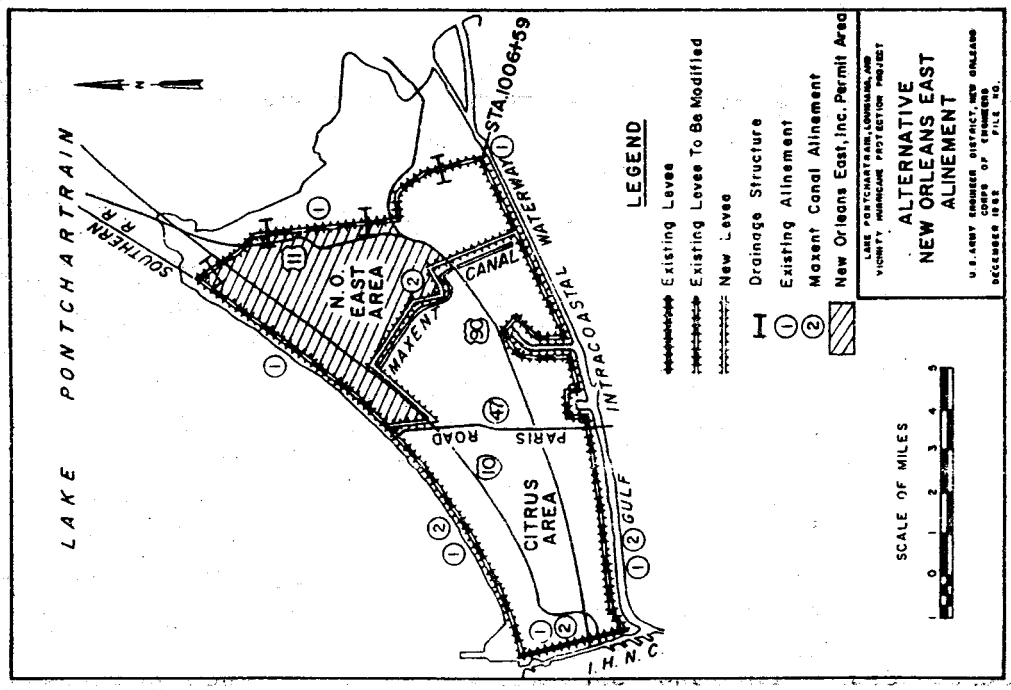


FIGURE 3

Plan Comparison

After determining the best alignments and the best method of construction, the Barrier and High Level Plans were then compared in three categories--economics, social impacts, and environmental impacts. The High Level Plan was determined to be superior to the Barrier Plan in all categories. The cost of the High Level Plan is approximately $125 million less than that of the Barrier Plan. The long term environmental and social impacts of the High Level Plan would be less severe than the impacts of the Barrier Plan. Therefore, we plan to recommend the authorized Barrier plan of protection be revised to the High Level plan.

THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN

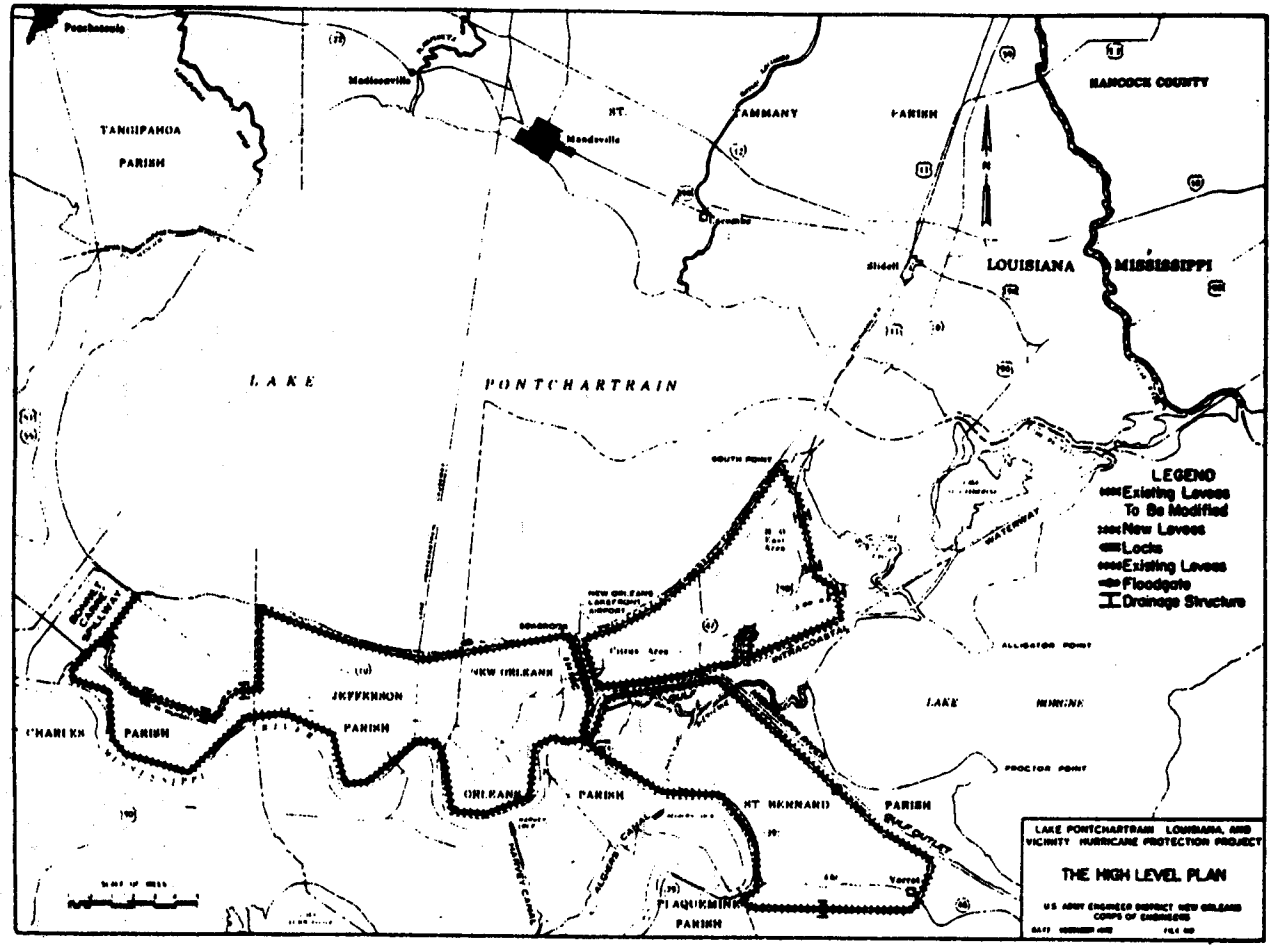
Features of the High Level Plan

The High Level Plan would provide for improving the existing hurricane protection levee systems in Orleans Parish and the east bank of Jefferson Parish, improving existing levees and constructing new ones in St. Bernard Parish, repairing and rehabilitating the Mandeville Seawall in St. Tammany Parish, building a new hurricane protection levee north of Airline Highway in St. Charles Parish, and raising and strengthening the existing levee along the Jefferson-St. Charles Parish boundary. The levee alignments would be generally as shown in Figure 4. The area enclosed by the levee system would be provided protection against tidal surge flooding from the Standard Project Hurricane (SPH). The SPH is defined as the most severe hurricane which can be reasonably expected to occur in the area.

Environmental and Social Impacts of the Plan

The High Level Plan will have short term adverse social impacts. During construction on the Jefferson and Orleans parishes lakefronts, there will be a temporary disruption of recreation activities and aesthetic values. There will not be any permanent adverse social impacts. Short term environmental impacts will occur primarily in Jefferson Parish. There will be an increase in turbidity levels in the lake along the Jefferson Parish lakefront during levee construction.

Direct loss of an estimated 54 acres of brackish-saline marsh, 411 acres of lake bottoms, 88 acres of scrub-shrub, and 105 acres of cypress-tupelo forest would occur as a result of levee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PARISH
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TAMMANY
PARISH
HANCOCK COUNTY
Slidell
LOUISIANA
MISSISSIPPI
LAKE
PONTCHARTRAIN
SOUTH POINT
NEW ORLEANS
JEFFERSON
PARISH
CHARLES
PARISH
ORLEANS
PARISH
ST BERNARD
PARISH
PLAQUEMINES
PARISH
LAKE
BORGNE
ALLIGATOR POINT
PROCTOR POINT
LEGEND
Existing Levees
To Be Modified
New Levees
Locks
Existing Levees
Floodgate
Drainage Structure
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN LOUISIANA AND
VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT
THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT NEW ORLEANS
CORPS OF ENGINEERS

FIGURE 4

construction. An additional 573 acres of lake bottoms offshore of Jefferson Parish would be used for borrow material and deepened approximately 60 feet. Physical and chemical stratification of the water in these deep holes would probably occur. These areas may become unfavorable to aquatic life.

Mitigation Plan

Plans are currently being developed to mitigate for construction-related environmental impacts for project features already completed under the Barrier Plan and for the proposed completion under the High Level Plan. Mitigation plans are being coordinated with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and local agencies. The basic concepts presently being evaluated include marsh management and marsh restoration.

Mitigation by avoidance was incorporated into the design of the High Level Plan. Selection of the High Level Plan will eliminate the environmental damage associated with construction of the barriers in the tidal passes. Abandonment of the lakefront alignment in St. Charles Parish in favor of the north of Airline Highway alignment excludes 26,000 acres of marsh.

One mitigation feature has been constructed and is in operation. A borrow pit used in the construction of hurricane protection levees in St. Bernard Parish was modified for use as a freshwater impoundment. The freshwater will be released according to a management scenario beneficial to fish and wildlife productivity in the adjoining marshes.

Marsh restoration work has been completed at the Chef Menteur barrier structure site. Construction of the bypass channel had begun prior to the court order. Diked areas were opened and closures were built in floatation channels and borrow pits to restore natural drainage and tidal flow. The amount of environmental damage at this site requiring mitigation is being reevaluated in light of this restoration work.

The mitigation process will be closely coordinated with state, Federal, and local agencies as well as interested citizens groups. A scoping meeting will be held in June 1984. Public review of the draft mitigation report and environmental impact statement, including a public meeting, is scheduled for summer 1985. The mitigation plan could be completed by spring 1986.

Cost of the Plan

A great deal of construction work on this project has been accomplished since work began in 1966. A total of $181 million has been expended through September 1983. We estimated only the cost to complete the project under the High Level Plan.

- Cost to complete — $684,000,000
- Annual cost — $ 24,800,000
  (Includes interest, amortization over 100 years, operation and maintenance and replacement costs.)
- Average annual benefits — $104,000,000
- Benefit-cost ratio — 4.2 to 1

Implementing the High Level Plan

Authorization for this project requires non-Federal interests to provide 30 percent of the first cost. The non-Federal share consists of lands, easements, and rights-of-way and a cash contribution. Mitigation costs will be shared on the same basis as project costs. Assurances for the Barrier plan were obtained from a number of local sponsors including the State of Louisiana, Orleans Levee District, Lake Borgne Basin Levee District, Pontchartrain Levee District, St. Bernard Parish Police Jury, and the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury. Where necessary, amended assurances for the High Level Plan will be requested from these sponsors and also from the Jefferson Levee District.

Changing to the High Level Plan results in an overall decrease in the local sponsors' financial requirements except for the agency responsible for Jefferson Parish, where the cost will increase.

NOTES

NOTES

US Army Corps
of Engineers
New Orleans District

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P.O. BOX 60267
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE, $300

In reply refer to: LMNPD-F

II. MAILING LIST

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NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70160

MAILING LIST
FOR
LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY
HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

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United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Chairman
Com. on Public Works and Trans.
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

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- -

# Indicates number of lists furnished with notice.
* Indicates number of notices furnished.

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US Army Engineer Division #3
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Chief, Sanitary Engineer Office
USPHS/DHHS
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Bureau of Tropical Disease
Center for Disease Control
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Environmental Protection Agency
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Washington, D. C. 20460

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Dallas, Texas 75270

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Environmental Protection Agency
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Washington, D. C. 20460

Mr. Sheppard N. Moore
Chief, EIS Review Section
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Washington, D. C. 20461

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III. AGENDA FOR PUBLIC MEETING

AGENDA

REMARKS	
OPENING REMARKS	Gaspar Chifici, Esquire District Engineer Office of Public Works New Orleans District Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS	Colonel Robert C. Lee District Engineer U. S. Army Engineer District New Orleans
STUDY FINDINGS	Lynn Devaul, Civil Engineer U. S. Army Engineer District New Orleans
PUBLIC STATEMENTS	Interested Individuals
CLOSING REMARKS	Colonel Robert C. Lee

IV. RECORD OF PUBLIC MEETING

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA

AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

RECORD OF

PUBLIC MEETING

HELD ON

APRIL 12, 1984 AT 7:00 P.M.

JOHN F. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL

WISNER BOULEVARD

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

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LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA AND
VICINITY, HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

A. Introduction

A public meeting for the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana and Vicinity, Hurricane Protection Project was held at the John F. Kennedy High School in New Orleans, Louisiana, on April 12, 1984 at 7:00 P.M. The purpose of this meeting was to inform the public of the most recent findings in the study and to allow them to express their views on the tentatively selected plan.

Following a presentation by the study manager of the important recent developments in the study, comments were accepted from state and local agencies, organizations, and private citizens.

B. List of Attendees

Representing the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

Colonel Robert C. Lee	District Engineer New Orleans District
Cletis R. Wagahoff	Chief, Planning Division
Hugh E. Wright	Chief, Plan Formulation Branch Planning Division
Lynn Devaul	Plan Formulation Branch Planning Division
E. K. Johnson	Chief, Economics and Social Analysis Br Planning Division
Edgar S. Clark	Environmental Quality Section Planning Division
Adrian J. Combe III	Chief, Coastal Engineering Section Engineering Division
Nicholas G. Constan	Economics and Social Analysis Branch Planning Division
Carl R. Guggenheimer	Design Branch Engineering Division
Robert J. Guizerix	Chief, General Engineering Section Engineering Division

Larry Hartzog	Environmental Analysis Branch Planning Division
Suzanne R. Hawes	Chief, Environmental Quality Section Planning Division
arnold Robbins	Policy and Long Range Planning Branch Lower Mississippi Valley Division
Bruce A. Sossaman	Chief, Public Affairs Office
David V. Stutts	Design Branch Engineering Division
Burnell Thibodeaux	Hydraulics Branch Engineering Division
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D. Transcript of Public Meeting

(BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE 1)

MR. CEFECI:

My name is Gasper Cefeci and I'm the District Engineer for the Office of Public Works of the New Orleans District of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

With me -- with me from my staff tonight is Geneva Grill. She's the Assistant District Engineer for Public Works.

Public Works is the state agency which is designated to represent our state in the review and coordination of water resources studies and projects in Louisiana.

Our purpose here this evening is to give you an opportunity to present your views on the tentatively selected plan for completing the ongoing Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and vicinity hurricane protection project.

The Corps' present studies were begun as a result of lawsuits filed in 1975 against the project and a resultant 1977

1 court injunction against portions of the
2 project. The goal of these studies is to
3 determine the best plan of action to
4 complete the hurricane protection project
5 and legally document the plan by
6 supplementing the existing environmental
7 impact statement.
8 Please keep in mind that public
9 meetings such as this one are held to
10 obtain the views and opinions of those who
11 may be affected by implementing this
12 proposed plan.
13 At this time, I would like to
14 introduce to you Colonel Robert Lee,
15 District Engineer of the New Orleans
16 District of the Corps of Engineers who will
17 conduct the business portion of today's
18 meeting.
19 Colonel Lee.
20 COLONEL LEE:
21 Thank you, Gasper. Ladies and
22 gentlemen, as Gasper said, we are here this
23 evening to present the details of our
24 tentatively selected plan for providing
25 hurricane protection at the earliest

1 possible time for the people residing in
2 the Greater New Orleans metropolitan area.
3 This is the so-called high level or levees
4 only plan.
5 As the project manager will
6 explain shortly, we decided on a high level
7 plan based on two major considerations.
8 First, this plan will provide hurricane
9 protection to the citizens of the Greater
10 New Orleans area at the lowest cost. And,
11 secondly, it will be less environmentally
12 damaging than the previously proposed
13 barrier plan.
14 We expect to provide significant
15 protection to the majority of the area
16 residents by 1990 with this plan.
17 This plan was presented to the
18 public once before in November of 1981 in
19 this auditorium. Since that time, the plan
20 has been modified to include protection for
21 the East Bank of St. Charles Parish. A
22 draft environmental impact statement was
23 prepared and was made available to the
24 public in December of 1983 for review and
25 comment.

We will consider written comments received on the environmental impact statement and statements made at this meeting in preparing the final environmental impact statement. When finalized, the environmental impact statement will be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency as a supplement to the existing environmental impact statement.

I'd like to briefly explain how we plan to proceed this evening. First, we will give you a presentation on our study findings. Following our presentation, we will receive comments by individuals beginning with elected and appointed officials and then working randomly through other people in the audience who would like to make a presentation.

I'd like to just mention that there are several members of my staff here covering all areas of technical expertise required, and if any of you want to talk with them afterwards, they're sitting over on the right, or you can see Mr. Wagerhoff,

1 the Chief of Planning in the New Orleans
2 District.
3 At this time, I'd like our study
4 manager, Lynn Deveau, to present our study
5 findings. Lynn.
6 MS. DEVEAU:
7 The Lake Pontchartrain,
8 Louisiana, and vicinity hurricane
9 protection project as originally authorized
10 consisted of levees and flood walls along
11 Lake Pontchartrain and encircling the
12 Chalmette area, as well as barrier
13 complexes of the lake's main tidal passes
14 at the Rigolets, Chef Menteur Pass and
15 Seabrook.
16 The barriers would provide
17 protection from hurricanes along certain
18 paths which tend to drive water into the
19 lake. As the storm passes, the winds push
20 the water against the south shore and into
21 the city.
22 These barrier complexes, which
23 would normally remain open, would be closed
24 only when hurricanes approach Lake
25 Pontchartrain in order to reduce the

1 build up of water levels in the lake.

2 Construction of the barrier

3 complexes would, therefore, reduce the

4 height and cost of levee and flood wall

5 construction along the south shore of Lake

6 Pontchartrain.

7 The next three slides show an

8 artist's drawing of these three barrier

9 complexes. This was the Rigolets complex,

10 the Chef Menteur complex, and the complex

11 at Seabrook.

12 The remainer of the authorized

13 plan's features consists of levees and

14 flood walls.

15 Construction on this project was

16 initiated in 1966. To date, the project is

17 fifty-one percent complete. Excluding the

18 barriers, the project is seventy-five

19 percent complete. A total of one hundred

20 and eighty-five million dollars has been

21 spent on construction work so far.

22 There are only two portions of

23 the project which have not been started;

24 the St. Charles Parish levee, which was

25 deferred for environmental reasons, and

1 the Mandeville sea walls.

2 In 1975, the New Orleans District
3 completed an environmental impact statement
4 on the project. Local environmental groups
5 challenged the adequacy of the E.I.S. in
6 court. And in 1977, the court found that
7 the E.I.S. was inadequate in its assessment
8 of the impact of two of the barrier
9 structures. The court enjoined us from
10 further work on the entire project until an
11 adequate E.I.S. could be prepared.

12 After presentation of additional
13 evidence by the Corps, the court modified
14 the injunction in 1978 to include only the
15 Rigolets and Chef Menteur barrier
16 structures. We have been able to continue
17 work on the levee and flood wall portions
18 of the project.

19 In addition to preparing a
20 supplement to the E.I.S., the court also
21 directed us to investigate alternative
22 plans of hurricane protection.

23 There are only two basic methods
24 of providing protection to the city. One
25 is to use barriers combined with levees

1 and flood walls, as we did in the
2 authorized barrier plan.
3 The other is to construct only
4 levees and flood walls. This plan came to
5 be known as the high level plans.
6 Under the high level plan, the
7 levees along Lake Pontchartrain would be
8 constructed high enough to contain the
9 swollen lake without the use of barrier
10 structures. The levees along the Gulf
11 outlet, the inter-harbor navigation canal,
12 and in Chalmette would be the same height
13 under either plan.
14 Within each plan, we looked at
15 different levee alignments and various
16 construction methods to develop the best
17 barrier plan and the best high level plan
18 from both an economic and environmental
19 standpoint.
20 Because of the extent of urban
21 development and the degree of levee work
22 already completed, it was only possible to
23 vary alignments in two areas; New Orleans
24 East and St. Charles Parish.
25 We studied two alignments in

1 New Orleans East. The authorized levee
2 alignment, which is shown in green here,
3 would raise and strengthen the existing
4 levees surrounding New Orleans East.
5 The existing drainage structures
6 would be modified so that the drainage
7 patterns in the enclosed area would remain
8 unchanged.
9 In the New Orleans East area,
10 concern has been expressed over the
11 enclosure of thirteen thousand acres of
12 wetlands by the authorized levee.
13 Therefore, we studied an alternative levee
14 alignment roughly paralleling Maxant Canal
15 for both the barrier and the high level
16 plan.
17 The Maxant Canal alignment, which
18 is shown in pink, would exclude about
19 thirteen thousand acres of wetlands from
20 the protected area. Although this
21 alignment is much shorter in length than
22 the authorized alignment, it would require
23 construction of a new levee rather than
24 merely improving the existing levees.
25 For this reason, the Maxant

1 Canal alignment would cost approximately
2 seventy million dollars more than the
3 authorized levee alignment for either the
4 barrier or the high level plan.
5 The cost differential between
6 these two alignments is actually greater
7 than the seventy million dollars that we
8 calculated for the report.
9 Construction work has continued
10 on the authorized alignments since the time
11 the cost estimates were prepared, so the
12 cost to complete the authorized alignment
13 is even less now.
14 The wetland area between the two
15 levee alignments has been enclosed by
16 locally built levees and railroad
17 embankments since 1958. Control structures
18 in the existing levee provide for one way
19 drainage out of the area.
20 Since this area had been cut from
21 normal tidal exchange prior to the Federal
22 Hurricane Protection Project, selecting the
23 authorized alignment would not change the
24 existing drainage conditions. No new
25 wetland areas are going to be enclosed

1 by the authorized alignment.

2 Based on our assessment of

3 environmental impacts, the selection of a

4 Maxant Canal alignment for an additional

5 seventy million dollars or more solely to

6 exclude the wetlands already enclosed is

7 not economically justified.

8 Concern has been expressed also

9 that the wetlands inside the authorized

10 alignment would be subject to drainage and

11 development. The development of these

12 wetlands would continue to be regulated

13 under the authority of Section 404 of the

14 Clean Water Act, which requires a permit

15 from the Corps of Engineers to deposit

16 dredge or fill material in wetlands.

17 These permit decisions are made

18 based on the overall public interest. If a

19 permit were issued for development in this

20 area, the developer would be required to

21 provide mitigation.

22 In addition, we did not claim any

23 benefits for future development of these

24 wetlands. Justification for the hurricane

25 protection project does not depend on

1 future development occurring in the New
2 Orleans East wetlands.
3 We, therefore, chose the
4 authorized levee alignment in this area for
5 both the barrier and the high level plans
6 because it is the most economical
7 alternative and will not change the
8 existing drainage patterns.
9 We then went on to look at levee
10 alignments in St. Charles Parish. When we
11 originally presented the hurricane
12 protection plan at a public meeting in
13 1981, the plan did not include any
14 hurricane protection for the east bank of
15 St. Charles Parish, because at that time
16 none was found to be economically
17 justified.
18 Field investigations made since
19 that time, however, have determined that
20 hurricane damages in St. Charles Parish
21 would be greater than originally calculated
22 and would be sufficient to justify
23 providing protection.
24 In the St. Charles Parish area,
25 we looked at three levee alignments;

1 the authorized lakefront alignment,
2 alignment north of Airline Highway, and a
3 third alignment which jogs south of Airline
4 Highway for a short portion.
5 The lakefront alignment, which is
6 shown here with the big red bar, would be
7 the most expensive of the three
8 alternatives to construct. It would cost
9 approximately two and one-half times as
10 much as the cheapest alternative, or over
11 eighty million dollars more.
12 This alignment would also have
13 the most severe environmental impacts. It
14 would restrict tidal exchange to a very
15 valuable and productive wetland area. The
16 levee would also impact Bayou LeBranch and
17 Bayou Trapanier, which the State has
18 designated as natural and scenic streams;
19 therefore, we eliminated this alignment for
20 both economic and environmental reasons.
21 The north of Airline Highway
22 alignment, which is shown in green with the
23 crosshatching over it, is the least
24 expensive alternative. Culverts would be
25 provided in the levee to maintain the

existing drainage patterns in the wetlands which are south of Airline Highway. These wetlands currently receive flow through culverts underneath the Airline Highway road embankment.

This alignment would leave twenty-six thousand acres of valuable wetlands between the lake and the levee open to tidal interchange.

We also studied an alignment south of Airline Highway. This alignment follows the north alignment for a ways, and then dips behind and follows the path shown in pink.

This alignment swings behind a three thousand two hundred acre wetland area, however, since the drainage patterns for the north and south alignments would be identical through the use of culverts, the environmental impacts of the north and south alignments would be limited to those directly related to construction activities, and these impacts would be similar.

The south alignment is over two

1 miles longer than the north alignment and
2 would cost twenty to twenty-five percent
3 more, therefore, we selected the north
4 alignment for both the barrier and high
5 level plan on the basis of economic and
6 environmental factors.
7 As in New Orleans East,
8 uncontrolled development would not take
9 place in the wetlands enclosed by the levee
10 system. Development in this area would
11 also remain subject to permitting by the
12 Corps under Section 404 of the Clean Water
13 Act.
14 In addition to analyzing levee
15 alignments, we also looked at the best way
16 to construct individual levee reaches.
17 I'll summarize the analysis of construction
18 methods for one reach only, the Jefferson
19 Parish Lakefront area.
20 There are two general designs
21 that could be used in this area, an all
22 earthen levee or a levee with an eye wall
23 on top.
24 The eye wall design could also
25 include a wide barge berm on the lake

side to prevent runaway barges from hitting and possibly damaging the eye wall.

Without the barge berm, though, the eye wall design would not have the same degree of integrity as the all earth levee.

This slide shows seven alternatives which we developed and their respective costs.

The selection was narrowed to the three alternatives with the first cost under two hundred million dollars. These alternatives include one all earthen levee constructed of hydraulic fill for a hundred and twenty-three million dollars, one eye wall on levee with barge berm alternative constructed of hydraulic fill for a hundred and fifty-six million dollars, and one eye wall on levee without the barge berm for a hundred and sixty-seven million dollars.

On the basis of cost and design integrity, we selected the all earth levee constructed on hydraulic fill.

We also considered the environmental impacts of this alternative.

1 The levee will be constructed from material
2 obtained from borrow pits with a total area
3 of five hundred and seventy-three acres in
4 Lake Pontchartrain offshore of Jefferson
5 Parish.
6 The borrow pits will be up to
7 sixty feet deep. Shallower borrow pits
8 could not be economically used. The first
9 forty feet of material is composed
10 primarily of soft clay and muck and is not
11 very suitable for levee building because of
12 its high water content. If only this
13 material were used, twice as much material
14 would be needed and, subsequently, the
15 surface area of the borrow pits would have
16 to be much larger.
17 Also, because more material would
18 be needed, the costs would also increase by
19 about sixty percent.
20 The adverse environmental impacts
21 of the borrow pits fall into two
22 categories. The first would be the
23 destruction of the benthic community in the
24 area of the borrow pits.
25 Benthos are animals which live

on or in the bottom of the lake such as worms, clams and shrimp.

The proposed borrow pits would destroy the benthos in the construction area and they would not be able to re-establish because of the depth of the hole; however, the area impacted represents only one-tenth of one percent of the total benthic habitat in the lake.

The second adverse impact associated with the borrow pits is the effect on water quality. More saline water could collect in the holes. Dissolved oxygen at the bottom of the holes could become too low to support aquatic life in a few months of the year; however, there would not be any significant mixing between the water at the bottom of the borrow pits and the surrounding water so that the water quality impacts would be confined to the area of the borrow pits themselves.

The adverse environmental impacts associated with the borrow pits in Lake Pontchartrain could be eliminated all together by using material hauled in

from another source, such as the Bonnet Carre Spillway.

The cheapest hauled material alternative is over one hundred million dollars more than the alternative selected. We do not believe that the environmental impacts to the lake are severe enough to warrant spending over one hundred million dollars to avoid them. We are continuing, however, to investigate ways to minimize the impacts of the holes at a reasonable cost.

Based on the results of our studies of alignments and construction methods, we formulated a best barrier plan and a best high level plan.

These plans use the same levee alignments. They differ only in the heights of the levees in the two plans and the presence or absence of the barrier structures.

We then went on to compare these two best plans to each other. The three categories of comparison which we used were economics, environmental impacts, and

1 social impacts.

2 A comparison of the costs shows

3 that the high level plan would cost

4 approximately one hundred and fifteen

5 million dollars less to complete than the

6 barrier plan.

7 The net benefits, the difference

8 between the annual cost and the annual

9 benefits, are greater for the high level

10 plan; seventy-three million dollars versus

11 sixty-one million dollars.

12 The authorization for this

13 project requires that non-federal interest

14 contribute thirty percent of the cost of

15 the project. The non-federal share

16 consists of lands, relocations and cash or

17 equivalent work.

18 The local sponsors for this

19 project will include the State of

20 Louisiana, several levee districts, and a

21 parish police jury.

22 Selection of the high level plan

23 would result in an overall decrease in the

24 local sponsor's share except in Jefferson

25 Parish where the cost would increase and

in St. Bernard Parish where their share of the costs would not change.

The numbers shown on this slide are based on our estimates of construction costs and are used for comparison only. The final local share is based on the actual cost of construction.

The high level plan would have more severe short term social impacts than the barrier plan.

During construction of the levees, there would be a reduction of the aesthetic and recreation values along the Jefferson and Orleans Parish's lakefronts.

On a long term basis, however, there would be little or no adverse social impacts associated with the high level plan.

The barrier plan, on the other hand, would have long term adverse social impacts since the barriers could have an adverse effect on navigation through the Rigolets and Chef Menteur Pass.

The short term environmental impacts would be similar for the two

1 plans. In both cases, there would be an
2 increase in turbidity levels at the
3 construction sites.
4 For the barrier plan, turbidity
5 would increase at the barrier locations;
6 and for the high level plan, turbidity
7 would increase primarily along the
8 Jefferson Parish lakefront.
9 Long term environmental impacts
10 were measured in terms of lost habitat
11 units. On this basis, the impacts of the
12 barrier plan are more severe.
13 In addition to the lost habitat,
14 the barriers would have an additional
15 unquantified effect on the nursery and
16 biological values of Lake Pontchartrain
17 because of the restrictions of the tidal
18 passes.
19 We feel either plan is
20 overwhelmingly justified. Both plans would
21 make use of most of the construction work
22 already done. Since only levee work has
23 been done since the court injunction, this
24 work has counted towards either the barrier
25 or the high level plan.

1 The high level plan would provide
2 protection to the city a few years earlier.
3 Most of the metropolitan area would be
4 provided hurricane protection by 1990.
5 Our data indicates that of the
6 two plans, the high level plan is superior,
7 both economically and environmentally.
8 Therefore, we plan to recommend
9 that the authorized plan of hurricane
10 protection be modified from a barrier plan
11 to the high level plan.
12 We have prepared a re-evaluation
13 report and draft environmental impact
14 statement on the high level plan.
15 Your written statements and
16 comments made at this meeting will be
17 considered in the preparation of our final
18 report.
19 Since this project has already
20 been authorized, we do not need to submit
21 the report to Congress for authorization.
22 Instead, the re-evaluation report
23 documenting the reasons for design changes
24 to an authorized project can be approved by
25 General Bratton, the Chief of Engineers

in Washington.

If approved by the end of September, we will be able to begin construction of elements of the high level plan next year. Because of the court injunction, we would soon experience a slow down in construction work and a corresponding delay in providing hurricane protection to the area without a change in plan.

We have also been working on a plan to mitigate for construction related damages. Since no mitigation was proposed for the authorized plan, we will have to submit a request for a post-authorization change to add mitigation to the project.

The mitigation plan will address not only the damages from the work required to complete the high level plan, but also for work already done under the authorized barrier plan.

An open, informal scoping meeting will be held this June to get public input on what form the mitigation should take. Workshops may also be scheduled at a

later date with interested parties to work out the details of a mitigation plan.

We anticipate finalizing the mitigation plan and the environmental impact statement on that plan in two years.

I'd like to stress again that identifying your views and receiving your input is the reason for holding this meeting.

And now I'll turn the meeting back over to Colonel Lee.

COLONEL LEE:

Thank you, Lynn.

Do we have any Federal or State elected officials in the audience who would like to make a presentation or comments at this time? I have none on my cards.

(NO RESPONSE)

COLONEL LEE:

If not, then we will proceed with the Federal agencies, the State and the local agencies, and the organizations and private citizens.

And I would ask that in general

1 you limit your presentations to five
2 minutes.
3 I also point out that if you have
4 a written presentation, if you'd leave a
5 copy of that --
6 (INAUDIBLE)
7 COLONEL LEE:
8 Okay. If you would -- if you
9 would leave a written copy of your
10 presentation in the front -- at the front
11 desk here, then we'll ensure that it gets
12 correctly inserted.
13 Also, if after several
14 presentations have been made and you find
15 out that your presentation is very similar
16 and you'd like to just submit it in
17 writing, it will be made a part of the
18 report, will follow the report through its
19 course to Washington just as if you make an
20 oral presentation.
21 With that, the first name I have
22 is Mr. Donald Moore, representing the
23 National Marine Fisheries Service.
24 (INAUDIBLE)
25 MR. MOORE:

1 Colonel Lee, ladies and
2 gentlemen, I'm Donald Moore, area
3 supervisor and environmental assessment,
4 National Marine Fisheries Service out of
5 Galveston, Texas, and I'm going to read a
6 statement from our southeast region of the
7 National Marine Fisheries Service.
8 On February 24th, '84, we
9 responded to your December 16th request for
10 our views and comments on the December
11 draft main report.
12 This statement is to reiterate
13 the views we submitted on February 28th on
14 the plans presented in the draft main
15 report as well as discuss some items of
16 which we have recently become aware.
17 Two hurricane protection plans
18 are presented in the draft main report; the
19 barrier plan and the high level plan.
20 The tentatively selected high
21 level plan determined by the Corps as the
22 most feasible one would involve topping of
23 existing levees and construction of a
24 portion of a new levee in the St. Charles
25 Parish area.

1 Under this plan, that new levee
2 in St. Charles Parish would also be
3 realigned to just north of Airline Highway
4 instead along the lakefront as originally
5 authorized.
6 The barrier plan, which we
7 commented on previously, is considered by
8 the National Marine Fisheries Service as
9 being much more detrimental to marine
10 fishery resources and their habitats than
11 the high level plan.
12 The barrier plan would have
13 destroyed twenty-eight acres of bay bottom,
14 twenty-three sixty-three acres of marsh,
15 and caused extensive adverse impact to the
16 estuarine dependent living marine resources
17 that utilize Lake Pontchartrain.
18 In addition, the barrier plan,
19 St. Charles Parish lakefront levee
20 alignment, by providing hurricane flood
21 protection to about forty square miles of
22 undeveloped wetlands north of Airline
23 Highway would have increased the
24 probability of future drainage and/or land
25 fill for subsequent development within

1 those wetlands.

2 While the high level plan would
3 be less damaging than the barrier plan, it
4 would still adversely impact about
5 fifty-four acres of saline brackish marsh
6 and nine hundred and eighty-four acres of
7 lake bottom.

8 Filling some of the open water in
9 Lake Pontchartrain and the adjacent marsh
10 would eliminate some nursery habitat and
11 contributions of detrituscent nutrient to
12 the marine food web.

13 Also, degradation through
14 deepening of several hundred acres of lake
15 bottom with the tentatively selected plan
16 is of great concern to us since that plan
17 calls for extensive deep dredging for
18 borrow material along the lakefront.

19 The predicted resulting anoxic
20 conditions of more than three hundred acres
21 of deep borrow area in the lake along with
22 subsequent accumulation of industrial and
23 residential effluent could further degrade
24 the previously shallow productive benthic
25 habitat.

1 Indicative of the Corps'
2 recognition of the value of this extensive
3 lake bottom, this existing lake bottom near
4 the shore is the fact that the Corps has
5 not permitted shell dredging within one
6 mile of the shore line.
7 Some of the above impacts from
8 the tentatively selected plan could be
9 further reduced by revising the proposed
10 construction.
11 For instance, the wetland loss
12 still anticipated in St. Charles Parish
13 could be further reduced by realigning the
14 levee now proposed to be parallel and
15 slightly north of Airline Highway to be
16 contiguous to that highway.
17 Also, alternative sources could
18 be used for needed fill material which
19 would reduce or eliminate a need for
20 dredging material from the lake. Some
21 suggested sources, levee material out of
22 the Bonnet Carre Spillway area, the fresh
23 water diversion canal adjacent to the north
24 side of Bonnet Carre Spillway proposed in
25 the tentatively selected plan for the

1 Mississippi and Louisiana estuarine areas
2 feasibility studies, the Mississippi River
3 bottom and upland flat land sites.
4 Obtaining the needed borrow
5 material without dredging the lake bottom
6 could greatly reduce adverse impact.
7 Reduction of the adverse impact would in
8 turn reduce the amount of offsetting
9 mitigation needed.
10 Mitigative projects such as St.
11 Bernard Parish marsh management plan for
12 the enhancement of those wetlands should be
13 implemented.
14 Another project to be considered
15 for mitigation to offset the adverse impact
16 to marine fishery resources would be
17 restoring to the greatest extent possible
18 marsh and water circulation where the
19 channel was dredged for the Gulf
20 Intracoastal Waterway to bypass the tidal
21 barrier that would have been constructed at
22 Chef Menteur Pass under the barrier plan.
23 Also, should the Corps finally
24 decide not to issue the permit requested
25 by New Orleans East, the Maxant Canal

alignment shown on plat six could be used instead of the proposed east levee and re-establishment of tidal exchange that undeveloped thirteen thousand acres of wetland habitat in the New Orleans East area could then be considered as mitigation to benefit estuarine fisheries in the high level plan.

Maxant Canal alignment was rejected by the Corps in favor of the present alignment due in part to existing levee and a request by New Orleans East to develop ninety-eight hundred acres of those wetlands.

Pending the final decision on the New Orleans permit request, Maxant Canal alignment should remain a viable alternative in the high level plan.

In addition, since we've recently been advised of accelerating marsh loss from shore line erosion and salt water intrusion in the St. Charles wetlands north of Interstate Highway 10, we also recommend consideration of mitigation measures to reduce these impacts.

1 Such measures could involve
2 stabilizing the Lake Pontchartrain shore
3 line between St. Rose Canal and Bayou
4 LeBranch and plugging the canals draining
5 into the drainage canal on the
6 Jefferson-St. Charles Parishes boundary.
7 The major source of salt water
8 intrusion appears to have been from the
9 Mississippi River Gulf outlet by way of the
10 inner-harbor navigation canal.
11 It is stated -- or, excuse me.
12 The National Marine Fisheries Service feels
13 the selection of the high level plan would
14 be environmentally acceptable with regard
15 to marine fishery resources provided the
16 St. Charles reach is aligned contiguous to
17 Airline Highway, the lakefront level built
18 out of haul fill so that there would be
19 little or no dredging in Lake
20 Pontchartrain, and sufficient offsetting
21 mitigation is implemented concurrently with
22 project construction.
23 In view of the above, we concur
24 with tentative selection of the high level
25 plan rather than the barrier plan as the

less damaging construction alternative; however, we recommend that detailed plans be developed to mitigate remaining adverse impacts that cannot be reduced through alternate borrow sources and/or levee alignments as suggested above.

The mitigative work should be done simultaneously with project construction of the high level plan. As mitigation is an integral part of the plan, the completed plans for the offsetting mitigations should be presented in the final main report which, I believe, you indicated you would.

The National Marine Fisheries Service would be pleased to coordinate with the Corps in development of the plans for mitigation.

Thank you for this opportunity to review and comment on this proposed project. Sincerely yours, and I signed for Richard J. Hogeland, chief of environmental assessment branch for southeast region, National Marine Fisheries Service. Thank you.

1 COLONEL LEE:

2 Thank you, Mr. Moore.

3 Next, I'd like to ask Robert
4 Strater from the U. S. Fish & Wildlife
5 Service to make his presentation.

6 MR. STRATER:

7 Colonel Lee, distinguished
8 guests, ladies and gentlemen, my name is
9 Robert Strater. I am presenting this
10 statement on behalf of James W. Pullium,
11 Jr., regional director, U. S. Fish &
12 Wildlife Service, Atlanta, Georgia.

13 My statement represents the views
14 of the Fish & Wildlife Service on the
15 tentatively selected plan to the Lake
16 Pontchartrain, Louisiana, vicinity
17 hurricane protection project.

18 Under the authority of the Fish &
19 Wildlife Coordination Act, the National
20 Environmental Policy Act, and other
21 legislation, the Fish & Wildlife Service
22 has been participating in the planning of
23 this project since the 1950's.

24 Lake Pontchartrain is part of a
25 highly productive estuarine (Inaudible) eco

1 system. It supports a wide range of fish
2 and wildlife species, some of which are
3 considered by the Fish & Wildlife Service
4 to be species of special emphasis on a
5 national and regional basis.
6 These include the bald eagle,
7 several species of migratory waterfowl,
8 American woodcock, mourning dove, American
9 alligator and numerous others.
10 The fishery resources of Lake
11 Pontchartrain are extremely important from
12 a commercial and recreational standpoint.
13 Estuarine dependent shrimp, crabs and fin
14 fishes utilize the low to moderate salinity
15 waters of Lake Pontchartrain as nursery
16 areas and move to more saline waters as
17 they mature.
18 In our February 22nd, 1975,
19 public hearing statement, the Fish &
20 Wildlife Service indicated its concerns
21 regarding the potential effects of the then
22 proposed tidal barriers at Chef Menteur and
23 Rigolets Passes on Lake Pontchartrain
24 salinities and the movement of fish and
25 shellfish through these passes.

1 Since that time, the impacts of
2 the high level plan and barrier plan have
3 been analyzed and compared. The results of
4 this analysis reported in our draft Fish &
5 Wildlife Coordination Act Report indicate
6 the completion of the high level plan would
7 be far less damaging to fish and wildlife
8 resources than the completion of the
9 barrier plan; therefore, the Fish &
10 Wildlife Service concurs with the Corps of
11 Engineers' selection of the high level plan
12 rather than the barrier plan as the
13 tentatively selected plan.
14 In our January 28th, 1983
15 preliminary draft Fish & Wildlife
16 Coordination Act Report, and in our October
17 13th, 1983 draft Fish & Wildlife
18 Coordination Act Report, the Service made
19 the following recommendations to reduce
20 impacts on fish and wildlife resources:
21 One, eliminate the St. Charles Parish
22 alignment, or if this levee segment is
23 built, operate the proposed water control
24 structures to assure water circulation and
25 estuarine organism movement through the

levee.

Two, purchase non-development and flowage easements over the nine thousand seven hundred acre wetland area in New Orleans East and modify the water control structures along the south point to Gulf Intracoastal Waterway levee segment to allow water and estuarine organism movement through the levee between the enclosed wetland area and the adjacent estuary.

Three, eliminate or reduce impacts associated with the proposed borrow holes in Lake Pontchartrain adjacent to the Jefferson Parish lakefront levee by either hauling levee material in from another area or developing a dredge method that will alleviate water quality or biological productivity problems caused by these holes.

Fourth, develop a mitigation plan that will fully compensate for all quantifiable project impacts to biological productivity resulting from past and future project work and that will be implemented simultaneously with construction of all

1 project features.

2 Incorporation of a mitigation

3 plan into the main report and supplement to

4 the environmental impact statement is

5 necessary if timely compensation of damages

6 to fish and wildlife resources is to become

7 an integral part of project funding and

8 construction. The addition of a mitigation

9 plan to these reports prior to their being

10 forwarded to Washington for approval and

11 funding will ensure full compliance with

12 the Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act and

13 the National Environmental Policy Act.

14 In the St. Charles Parish portion

15 of the project area, the Service considers

16 a levee with gated water control structures

17 that follows an alignment immediately

18 adjacent to Airline Highway rather than

19 five hundred to a thousand feet north of

20 the highway to be the least damaging viable

21 alternative.

22 We voiced our support for such an

23 alternative alignment during a recent

24 meeting attended by members of your staff.

25 The Services recognizes that

1 project modifications to date have
2 significantly reduced project impacts to
3 fish and wildlife resources. We stand
4 ready to assist the Corps' engineers in
5 refinement of measures to further mitigate
6 these impajcts. Thank you.
7 COLONEL LEE:
8 Thank you, sir.
9 Next, I'd like to ask Mr. William
10 Slayton, Orleans Levee Board, to make his
11 presentation or comments.
12 MR. SLAYTON:
13 Colonel Lee, ladies and
14 gentlemen, I have a very brief statement
15 that I would like to make.
16 The records will reflect that the
17 Orleans Levee Board and its agreement -- is
18 in agreement with the concept for the high
19 level protection in lieu of the barrier
20 concept.
21 We have also assured you that the
22 Orleans Levee Board will do everything in
23 its power to provide adequate supplements
24 to the current assurances as may be
25 required.

1 Because of the protracted delay
2 in construction which was occasioned by the
3 1977 environmental lawsuit, the Orleans
4 Levee Board embarked on an interim
5 protection plan in 1979 and has completed
6 the raising of all levees along the
7 lakefront to an interim grade of plus
8 sixteen feet mean sea level.
9 Realizing that there are several
10 gaps still remaining, the Orleans Levee
11 Board proposed and successfully extended an
12 existing flood protection millage for an
13 additional thirty years.
14 And, by the way, that passed
15 overwhelmingly, so I believe that shows
16 that the people in Orleans Parish are
17 serious about flood protection.
18 We have awarded consultant
19 engineering contracts for the design of
20 interim protection at these locations and
21 will coordinate these projects with your
22 District in an effort to incorporate as
23 much of the interim construction in the
24 final plan as possible. It is our hope at
25 this time to accomplish this work within

1 three to four years.

2 The delay of final construction

3 since 1977 has been most unfortunate. We

4 have been very lucky that no major

5 hurricane has hit the metropolitan area

6 during that time. The process in which you

7 were required to file it to satisfy the

8 court's requirements has been very time

9 consuming and frustrating to this Board.

10 You are, therefore, urged to take

11 all necessary steps to expedite the

12 implementation of the high level plan.

13 Please be assured that we will do

14 everything in our power to provide you with

15 the necessary additional assurances. Thank

16 you very much.

17 COLONEL LEE:

18 Thank you, sir.

19 Next, I'd like to call on Mr.

20 Gerald Dyson from the Pontchartrain Levee

21 District.

22 MR. DYSON:

23 Thank you. Mr. Cefeci, Colonel

24 Lee and staff, it is certainly a pleasure

25 for me to be here. I'm Gerald R. Dyson

1 representing the Pontchartrain Levee
2 District Board of Commissioners where I
3 serve that levee district as the executive
4 assisant.
5 I have with me one of the
6 attorneys with the levee district tonight,
7 Mr. Donald Seaseth. He's back here in the
8 audience. I'm delighted to have him.
9 The commissioners express their
10 regret on not being able to be here
11 tonight.
12 This statement that I've just
13 handed to you is directed to the area that
14 is currently under the jurisdiction of the
15 Pontchartrain Levee District and does not
16 include Jefferson Parish. When these
17 original project assurances were granted by
18 the Levee District, it did include
19 Jefferson. So, tonight we are excluding
20 Jefferson Parish. That will be addressed
21 by the Jefferson Levee District.
22 I wish to summarize the statement
23 and bring out only a couple of points,
24 recognizing that there is probably a large
25 number of people that wish to speak

1 tonight. I will be very brief and request
2 full consideration of every item contained
3 in the written statement.
4 The board of commissioners for
5 the Pontchartrain Levee District wishes to
6 go on record in support of the most
7 effective hurricane protection project
8 available and recommends construction
9 completion as soon as possible.
10 At the same time, there are deep
11 abiding concerns that the recommended high
12 level plan does not go far enough. The
13 unprotected part of St. Charles and
14 St. John Parishes, which is in the levee
15 district, and part those -- part of those
16 areas, the parts of those parishes adjacent
17 to Lake Pontchartrain and to some lesser
18 degree the immediate tributary areas
19 thereto, all of this will be adversely
20 affected by higher hurricane peak lake
21 stages of longer durations, probably,
22 resulting from protection works around the
23 lake causing concentrated overflows in the
24 Pontchartrain -- in the unprotected areas.
25 Nevertheless, the Pontchartrain

1 Levee District wishes to move forward
2 because we realize that the lakefront
3 former location will probably never be
4 built; therefore, project revisions become
5 imperative if hurricane protection is to be
6 a reality in the New Orleans
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8
9 End Tape 1, Side 1
(Transcript continues on next page)
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3 (BEGIN TAPE 2, SIDE 1)
4 -- area and in the Pontchartrain Levee
5 District.
6 And, Colonel Lee, this statement
7 is built around the overriding
8 recommendation that the board of
9 commissioners for the Pontchartrain Levee
10 District recommends that the Lake
11 Pontchartrain hurricane protection project
12 be revised from the barrier plan to the
13 high level plan with the north of Airline
14 Highway alignment in St. Charles Parish.
15 We will be glad to cooperate with
16 you and your office and your district to
17 the fullest extent.
18 Any questions?
19 COLONEL LEE:
20 Thank you.
21 MR. DYSON:
22 Do you have any questions?
23 COLONEL LEE:
24 I'd just like to add for the
25 general public information that we do

have funding for a study for hurricane protection for the western areas of Lake Pontchartrain, those areas that are not protected by this plan, and work is commencing on that at this time.

Next, I'd like to call on Mr. Allen Ensminger, and if I pronounce it wrong, please excuse me, from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries.

MR. ENSMINGER:

Thank you. Colonel Lee, you did a good job on Ensminger.

COLONEL LEE:

Thank you.

MR. ENSMINGER:

You can tell that you're not from Louisiana. These French people have a very hard time with that name.

I am here tonight representing the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. I am chief of the fur and refuge division of our department. And, the statement that I am presenting tonight will be followed by an official much more expanded statement with regard to the

1 entire area.

2 Our statement tonight is

3 basically addressed to that portion of the

4 plan that encompasses the wetlands in

5 St. Charles Parish.

6 In our statement on this matter

7 delivered at a public hearing on February

8 the 22nd, 1975, we discussed the levee

9 alignment in St. Charles Parish and advised

10 the U. S. Corps of Engineers that we were

11 in agreement with the U. S. Highway 61

12 alignment.

13 This advocacy was based upon

14 several considerations that we thought

15 paramount at that time. Those

16 considerations have basically remained the

17 same, however, conditions have changed in

18 that area that now make us consider

19 additional situations that have occurred.

20 Our approach to the impact

21 analysis at that time was from an

22 aquatic-eco system perspective; that is,

23 the effect of the lake and its

24 productivity.

25 The problems which have since

1 come to light affecting the terrestrial
2 system in the area such as salt water
3 intrusion and subsidence was either
4 overlooked at that time or was not
5 completely understood and the significance
6 of it was not manifested to the extent it
7 is today.
8 We now find ourselves in a
9 position of necessarily assessing potential
10 impacts from both the aquatic and
11 terrestrial perspective.
12 This degradation in these marshes
13 in there are particularly noticeable with
14 regard to the degradation of winter habitat
15 for migratory water fowl.
16 The introduction of the alligator
17 flea beetle into the United States by the
18 Corps of Engineers has also had a very
19 drastic impact on these marshes.
20 The removal of the alligator
21 grass in this area has permitted a much
22 more rapid interchange of water between the
23 marshes and the swamp areas of this area
24 and we feel has increased the significance
25 of salt water intrusion.

1 The Illinois Gulf Central
2 Railroad embankment has played a key role
3 in the retarding of the degradation of
4 these marshes out there and this is clearly
5 manifested by the increase in the salt
6 water tolerant plant communities that have
7 established themselves on the Airline
8 Highway side of the railroad. This has
9 certainly been a clear manifestation of
10 salt water intrusion in the area.
11 The alarming edaphic changes that
12 has occurred in the Cypress Swamp area, to
13 the eastern part of this area, is also of
14 deep concern to our department. This is
15 the area where the southern bald eagle nest
16 is located. And, each spring, we are
17 seeing a fewer and fewer number of those
18 cypress trees that fail to sprout out and
19 leaf out in the springtime.
20 The encroachment of the lake into
21 the St. Charles Parish wetlands must be
22 retarded or at least held in a status quo
23 position. Now, that means that aquatic
24 organisms must be permitted to move in and
25 out of the area and to continue its

1 importance as a part of the Lake
2 Pontchartrain estuarine system; however, we
3 feel that shore line errosion cannot be
4 tolerated and the degradation of those
5 marshes out there should be abated at
6 whatever method possible.
7 The only balance that -- that we
8 feel can be accomplished here is through
9 the construction and restoration of the
10 shore line of Lake Pontchartrain from the
11 Bonnet Carre Spillway to the Jefferson
12 Parish boundary line.
13 It is essential that some work be
14 accomplished along this part of the lake,
15 we feel, in conjunction with the
16 construction of the levee system in
17 St. Charles Parish.
18 St. Charles Parish has a plan, a
19 portion of which has already been
20 implemented, which should be of benefit to
21 this wetland project.
22 We ask that the Corps, as part of
23 the mitigation package for this project,
24 assist the Parish of St. Charles and the
25 State of Louisiana in implementing that

1 project. These are projects that will be,
2 hopefully, funded out of some of the
3 coastal impact funds available to wetland
4 restoration in Louisiana.
5 Unless some action is taken to
6 maintain these wetlands and their
7 ecological significance to Lake
8 Pontchartrain, St. Charles, Jefferson and
9 Orleans Parish, the Department of Wildlife
10 & Fisheries cannot fully support the U. S.
11 Highway 61 alignment despite the stand that
12 we took several years ago.
13 And, as I've mentioned before,
14 our department will submit a complete
15 statement with Mr. Angiel's signature for
16 the record. Thank you.
17 COLONEL LEE:
18 Thank you, sir.
19 And I do think that the
20 protection of the St. Charles marshes is an
21 excellent opportunity for mitigation in
22 this project.
23 Next, I'd like to call on Oliver
24 Haulk.
25 MR. HAULK:

1 Thank you. Colonel, ladies and
2 gentlemen, as you know, the first cut at
3 this project by the Corps of Engineers did
4 not receive a very high grade. And the
5 question tonight is how much better a job
6 have you done.
7 It's a terribly important
8 question for New Orleans, because we're
9 dealing with a project of enormous local
10 and regional significance.
11 This is the project that makes a
12 castle of New Orleans, that sets up the
13 rings in the outer perimeter. And what you
14 wall in and what you wall out will
15 determine where New Orleans grows, and will
16 also determine what's out there to live in
17 and live with; the quality of the life of
18 this area, its natural life including the
19 most important natural water body in the
20 American south, Lake Pontchartrain.
21 The beauty part of this, as they
22 say in Louisiana, as I'm learning, is that
23 this is a Corps project. That means that
24 you're not dictated and held to the whims
25 of a private applicant, what he owns,

1 what he wants to do. This is your project.
2 And that gives you the latitude to do the
3 best possible job you can, not only for
4 hurricane protection for New Orleans but
5 for the life quality of this part of the
6 country.
7 And with that in mind, what is
8 the purpose of this project? Well, the
9 purpose is to provide flood protection for
10 the City of New Orleans; not the
11 undeveloped wetlands of New Orleans East,
12 not the undeveloped wetlands of St. Charles
13 Parish.
14 The Corps game at one time
15 traditionally was to levee it off and open
16 it up for development, but that game has
17 changed by law, by regulations, by
18 executive orders and by your own recent
19 practice. And in that light, this project
20 is something of a throw back.
21 And in light of what you can do
22 with this project, it's something of a
23 disappointment.
24 Item "A", the New Orleans East
25 alignment. To take the position, as

1 you did in your presentation, that this
2 project does not induce development in the
3 wetlands, I doubt there are two people in
4 this audience who believe that. I doubt
5 there's one developer who believes it. And
6 I'm sure there's no one in the Federal
7 Emergency Management Agency, F.E.M.A, which
8 manages the flood insurance administra-
9 tion's program, that would believe it or
10 that would issue a policy out there now.
11 But they will issue policies out there once
12 the levee is in place. That's the
13 inducement.
14 To claim that this project will
15 not bring people out there, or to blame it
16 on the people who come, is a little like
17 blaming the effects of MISSRIGUL, the
18 Mississippi River Gulf outlets, on the Gulf
19 of Mexico for coming in. Once you've done
20 it, they're coming. It's your
21 responsibility.
22 To take the position that these
23 wetlands are already cut off and isolated
24 and, therefore, not your responsibility for
25 cutting them off further is belied by

1 your own statement, because your statement
2 acknowledges that the existing levees out
3 there are going to erode. And when the big
4 storm that this project is designed to
5 prevent comes, that storm will take a big
6 chunk of those levees with them. And,
7 then, those wetlands will be free with
8 their interchange with the Lake
9 Pontchartrain as they always were.
10 To rely on Section 404 to prevent
11 development out there is to lie on a very
12 slender reed. And, in fact, a reed so
13 slender that in developing your Atchafalaya
14 project, the rationale for the project and
15 its acquisition was that 404 couldn't do
16 the job and keep development out.
17 How in the world is 404 going to
18 keep development out of New Orleans East?
19 There's no way.
20 To turn it around then and to
21 blame developers for coming into an area
22 that you protect it with a high level levee
23 is something like blaming junkies for using
24 narcotics that somebody's brought into the
25 country. You're bringing it in and it's

1 your responsibility.

2 Now, as for the reason for not

3 taking the Maxant Canal alignment which

4 would protect New Orleans East, the seventy

5 million dollar differential, we've heard

6 tonight to our astonishment that apparently

7 you are still building; you are now

8 building the high level plan around New

9 Orleans East. So, that differential is

10 increasing. Is that correct?

11 COLONEL LEE:

12 No --

13 MR. HAULK:

14 If it's not correct --

15 COLONEL LEE:

16 No.

17 MR. HAULK:

18 -- that's good news.

19 COLONEL LEE:

20 The barrier -- the barrier level

21 levees are being built around New Orleans

22 East at the present time.

23 MR. HAULK:

24 If that is the case, then are we

25 evaluating the desirability of doing

1 something that you are doing now?
2 COLONEL LEE:
3 No. There's a difference. The
4 barrier level levees are --
5 MR. HAULK:
6 Are to be --
7 COLONEL LEE:
8 -- authorized to be built --
9 MR. HAULK:
10 Great.
11 COLONEL LEE:
12 -- and are being built and are
13 nearly up to grade in the lakefront areas
14 of New Orleans East.
15 MR. HAULK:
16 If that is the --
17 COLONEL LEE:
18 The high level levees are just a
19 couple of feet higher.
20 MR. HAULK:
21 If that is the case, then the
22 responsibility for the existing cutoff
23 continues even more to be a Corps
24 responsibility, if in fact you're operating
25 on them now.

1 So much for New Orleans East.
2 As for Jefferson Parish, quickly,
3 the fact that you're getting dredge from
4 the lake as opposed to getting your fill
5 elsewhere from an upland area seems to me,
6 and it's got to seem to your lawyers, to be
7 a rather flat contradiction of the 404-B-1
8 guidelines of the E.P.A.
9 But, it's the St. Charles
10 wetlands that are the other major concern.
11 And in those wetlands, the Corps seems to
12 be taking the position that having brought
13 back its alignment to Airline Highway,
14 you've eliminated enough of the impacts so
15 that taking a few more wetlands on the
16 river side of the highway doesn't make any
17 difference.
18 There is enough wetlands acreage
19 in there to make a great difference, and I
20 suggest that you examine that opportunity
21 while it still remains available to you.
22 You're not building levees out
23 there now, as I understand, and that option
24 still remains open to you.
25 The fact that Airline Highway

1 reduces flow into that area by no means
2 means that people aren't going to move into
3 that area. And that's the effect that your
4 levee is going to have.
5 But, I must say that the surprise
6 of the night was to hear the Louisiana
7 Department of Wildlife & Fisheries speak to
8 the desirability of leveeing off the St.
9 Charles wetlands as the very plan that you
10 have abandoned because of its disastrous
11 environmental impacts.
12 I can't speak to the source of
13 that, so I don't know all the rationales
14 behind the proposal, of this department,
15 but I would call to your attention -- bring
16 to the attention of your record, and I will
17 introduce into the record, a letter from
18 one of the major landowners in the St.
19 Charles wetlands, Bill Monteleone, dated
20 March 1st to Mr. Allen Ensminger of the
21 Louisiana State Wildlife & Fisheries, which
22 concludes: With these facts before me and
23 the deteriorating duck hunting, I have made
24 a very unhappy decision. I personally feel
25 that if the levee is to be placed along

1 the Airline, it is incumbent upon me to
2 recommend to the other owners of land
3 syndicate that we should sell our land to
4 the State and allow it to become a State
5 refuge and, of course, make the marsh
6 available to the general public. This
7 resort is very distasteful to me because I,
8 as well as all of you, have enjoyed the
9 privacy of our marsh. Close quote.
10 Whether the department's position
11 is being taken because of the privacy of
12 its marsh or because of opposition to its
13 public values acknowledged by the author of
14 this letter, it's a question I hope the
15 department can address in its formal
16 comments to you.
17 In conclusion, I'd just like to
18 point out again that the overall stakes
19 here are terribly high. You have an
20 enormous water resource in the largest
21 metropolitan area of Louisiana, and you are
22 spending twenty-five million dollars to
23 reintroduce fresh water into this lake
24 north of here. You will spend almost an
25 equal amount in another proposed

1 reintroduction to the Lake
2 Maurepas-Pontchartrain system.
3 To pump iron up in that arm and
4 then to cut off New Orleans is a
5 schizophrenic way to approach the
6 restoration and long term maintenance of
7 this resource. I think you can do it
8 better. I think you can do it all and urge
9 you to do it. Thank you.
10 COLONEL LEE:
11 Thank you, Oliver.
12 Gasper, did you have a question?
13 MR. CEFECI:
14 Unless Mr. Ensminger wants to
15 address it himself.
16 COLONEL LEE:
17 Is Mr. Ensminger still here?
18 MR. ENSMINGER:
19 Yes.
20 COLONEL LEE:
21 Did Mr. Haulk have you properly
22 represented there?
23 MR. ENSMINGER:
24 No comment.
25 COLONEL LEE:

1 Okay. Thank you.

2 Next, I'd like to call on Moses

3 Atalya, and I'm sure I got that wrong, and

4 I apologize, sir.

5 MR. ATALYA:

6 I would like to withdraw any

7 statement. I've heard my position

8 discussed --

9 COLONEL LEE:

10 Okay.

11 MR. ATALYA:

12 -- and there's no need to repeat

13 it. Thank you very much.

14 COLONEL LEE:

15 Thank you, sir.

16 Albert Poche, Manchac Fishermen's

17 Association.

18 MR. PLAUCHE:

19 Colonel Lee, your staff. I'm

20 Albert Plauche, the president of the

21 Manchac Fishermen's Association.

22 Our organization geographically

23 is located in between lakes Maurepas and

24 Pontchartrain.

25 The Manchac Fishermen's

1 Association is a coalition of sport and
2 commercial fishermen with an interest and
3 concern in the maintenance and preservation
4 of clean and productive waters in the Lake
5 Maurepas, Pass Manchac and Lake
6 Pontchartrain area.
7 This is another example of the
8 Corps of Engineers' lack of investigation
9 into the full impact of a problem in our
10 state.
11 The reknown biologists,
12 Dr. Darnell of Texas A&M and Dr. Walter
13 Socura of L.S.U. Center for Wetland
14 Resources, have unequivocally stated that
15 Lake Pontchartrain is on the verge of
16 collapse and extinction as a viable eco
17 system.
18 Does the Corps of Engineers make
19 decisions on scientific study or political
20 pressure?
21 I am -- I am a layman, but even I
22 can understand that digging a hole in the
23 middle of Lake Pontchartrain is not the
24 answer to hurricane protection. Before
25 adding to the demise of our lake,

1 material should be taken from alternate
2 sources.
3 In Lake Pontchartrain, continuous
4 dredging over the past fifty years has
5 virtually eliminated large live clams from
6 the open waters of the lake. The living
7 clams are a major source of nutrition for
8 many of the aquatic inhabitants of the lake
9 such as the catfish, blue crab, croakers
10 and white shrimp.
11 We are not opposed to hurricane
12 protection, however, the members of the
13 Manchac Fishermen's Association
14 overwhelmingly agree that any further
15 destruction of the water bottoms in Lake
16 Pontchartrain will only exacerbate an
17 already critical situation and, therefore,
18 we're opposed to dredging in Lake
19 Pontchartrain in any form. Thank you.
20 COLONEL LEE:
21 Thank you, sir. Appreciate it.
22 David Atchinson from the Sierra
23 Club.
24 (INAUDIBLE)
25 COLONEL LEE:

1 Thank you.

2 Frances Saltzman.

3 MS. SALTZMAN:

4 I'm Frances Saltzman and I live

5 at 7212 Spring Lake, which is in the New

6 Orleans East area.

7 As a concerned housewife and

8 mother of two, I would like to express my

9 concerns regarding hurricane protection for

10 my family and that of -- and that of my

11 friends and neighbors.

12 We have waited since 1965 for our

13 congressional authorized protection. The

14 Corps of Engineers and the levee boards

15 have done a great deal of work and we are

16 much better protected than we were when

17 Betsy struck.

18 My family was one that left our

19 home in Don Villa to go to a relative's

20 home in the Ninth Ward and later had to be

21 evacuated because of rising water on Alva

22 Street. I returned to find my neighborhood

23 flooded. We waded back in. And, so, I

24 know of what I speak.

25 We appreciate the support of

1 our congressional representatives, the
2 dedicated workers of the Corps, the levee
3 board and the local government.
4 We did not appreciate the actions
5 of a few special interest groups who oppose
6 the early completion of our flood control.
7 They have used -- they have used the courts
8 to delay the protection of life and
9 property for their own selfish interest or
10 pet hobbies. These same people will
11 probably complain or oppose the proposed
12 high levee plan, again for their own
13 special selfish interest.
14 I sincerely hope the Corps of
15 Engineers will put lives and property
16 before the minor -- the minor environmental
17 damage that might, just might be done in
18 constructing higher levees. Let's get on
19 with the higher levees protection.
20 Most of the speakers have made
21 much of wetlands' losses, habitat losses
22 and other fishery losses, but hardly a word
23 on people losses or personal property
24 losses or the loss of a home. Such
25 compassion for human suffering is

1 unbelievable. Let's get on with people
2 protection. Thank you.
3 COLONEL LEE:
4 Thank you.
5 Harold Schaufler, Save Our Coast,
6 Sierra Club.
7 MR. SCHAUFLER:
8 Colonel Lee. As president of the
9 Save Our Coast and speaking for myself in
10 that capacity and for the board of
11 directors of that organization as well as
12 wetlands chairman of the Sierra Club for
13 the Delta Chapter, our group has a strong
14 interest in this hurricane protection
15 project and we generally favor the overall
16 high level plan as outlined in the December
17 1983 draft; however, we do have several
18 concerns. They are the following.
19 The plan includes the building of
20 a massive borrow pit in Lake Pontchartrain
21 nine miles long, fifty to sixty feet deep,
22 and five hundred feet wide. We are
23 completely opposed to this pit as it would
24 completely destroy close to six hundred
25 acres of the lake bottom. This is well

1 documented by your draft, page "C" six
2 twenty-five and the U. S. Fish & Wildlife
3 portion of the draft, pages thirty-five and
4 thirty-six.
5 We would recommend a high land
6 source of borrow material for this portion
7 of the project.
8 We are concerned with the
9 cumulative impacts of other activities such
10 as shell dredging, other dredge activities
11 on the lake, urban runoff, sewerage inflow
12 and all other adverse impacts. We would
13 like to see this point addressed especially
14 as it relates to the borrow pit in the
15 lake.
16 The water quality is of extreme
17 importance if Lake Pontchartrain is ever to
18 recover. The sink holes portion of the
19 plan would seriously impact in a negative
20 way water quality in the area surrounding
21 the construction activity for a period of
22 at least three years.
23 Worse case conditions have not
24 been considered and should be thoroughly
25 investigated before this plan is

1 implemented. Purchase of ten thousand
2 acres of wetlands on the New Orleans East
3 area should be considered as the loss of
4 this area to development is almost certain
5 once levee protection is provided.
6 We would recommend that the levee
7 have gated openings so that water
8 circulation and estuarine organism movement
9 in the wetlands area will be maintained
10 during non-hurricane periods.
11 A specific mitigation plan that
12 compensates for all past and future damages
13 to wetlands, fish, wildlife and water
14 quality should be a part of any plan sent
15 to Washington.
16 We trust that in the Corps
17 infinite wisdom a resolution of these
18 concerns can be -- can be brought about.
19 Thank you, sir.
20 COLONEL LEE:
21 Thank you, sir.
22 And I'll just add, just in the
23 last two weeks, because of our concern with
24 the dredging in the lake that we've done
25 additional surveys and are gathering

1 data, some we just received tonight. So,
2 we are trying to address that. Thank
3 you.
4 MR. SCHAUFLER:
5 Thank you very much.
6 COLONEL LEE:
7 Donald Pavy from Save Our Coast,
8 vice-president.
9 MR. PAVY:
10 Sir, my name is Dr. Donald Pavy.
11 I'm a physician in Iberia Parish. I'm
12 vice-president and a member of Save Our
13 Coast, which is an aggressive organization
14 to control coastal erosion.
15 We strongly favor a levee, as
16 president Harold Schaufler has said, but no
17 more dredging.
18 Save Our Coast is not, I repeat,
19 not a member of the Corps of Engineers fan
20 club. Save Our Coast is one of the groups
21 now suing the Corps of Engineers in the
22 Federal Court.
23 Does your commander in chief,
24 President Reagan, know the massive
25 destruction taken place in the Louisiana

1 coastal zone that has been permitted by the
2 U. S. Corps of Engineers through the
3 years?
4 Specifically, shell dredging in
5 Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Maurepas and the
6 central coast of Louisiana that is
7 destroying marine habitat and barrier reefs
8 for hurricane protection with great
9 economic loss to the State for years to
10 come; the New Orleans -- the New Orleans
11 ship channel that has caused massive loss
12 of wetlands and estuarine production; the
13 many engineering mistakes made in our
14 nearby Atchafalaya Basin. I say nearby
15 because we're from New Iberia and
16 Lafayete.
17 When the last shell is dredged
18 from Louisiana waters and the last drop of
19 oil is taken, our children will be forced
20 to look for their economic base to
21 forestry, agricultury -- agriculture and
22 our great fisheries. Will we be leaving
23 them an ace in the hole or will they be
24 dealt a joker?
25 Save Our Coast is a citizens

1 group, with no vested interest, concerned
2 about the erosion of our beautiful
3 Louisiana coastal zone. We are not
4 scientists, but interested enough to study
5 and learn what authoritative documents
6 teach us about that -- this problem.
7 Is it too much for America and
8 Louisiana to ask this of the U. S. Corps of
9 Engineers?
10 COLONEL LEE:
11 Thank you.
12 Francis Breaux.
13 (INAUDIBLE)
14 COLONEL LEE:
15 Thank you, sir.
16 I might add, at this time, in
17 case anybody is going to leave, that the
18 record closes on the 12th of May, so ensure
19 that your statements are in our hands
20 before the 12th, which is one month from
21 now.
22 Milton Duddenheffer, and I'm
23 sure I messed that up and I apologize,
24 Milton.
25 MR. DUDDENHEFFER:

1 My name is Milton Duddenheffer,
2 vice president, East Bank Commercial
3 Fishermen's.
4 I'd like to just say simply that
5 we've been opposed to the barrier plan when
6 it first started to be a project, maybe
7 five years ago, and the fact that any
8 structure crossing a body of water
9 between -- across the Rigolets and Chef
10 Pass would definitely obstruct the tidal
11 flow of the lake, and we kind of fear it's
12 a possibility of interferring with the life
13 of the lake. And, you know, we're kind of
14 looking at a bad problem for us.
15 Pollution in the lake is at a
16 pretty high level. And it's just the fact
17 that we have a problem of it could
18 eventually kill the lake if we try to fool
19 with the tidal flow at all.
20 As far as the -- as far as the --
21 the high level plan, it seems to where this
22 might not be such a bad plan. Seems there
23 really needs to be a hurricane protection
24 project.
25 And, as far as, like I said,

1 the level -- the level of the -- the
2 pollution in the lake, I just would like to
3 say that I really think possibly the high
4 level plan might be a better plan and we
5 definitely oppose the barrier plan. Thank
6 you.
7 COLONEL LEE:
8 We appreciate your speaking.
9 Thank you.
10 I'm going to step outside for
11 just a minute, but Mr. Cletus Wagerhoff, my
12 chief of planning, will carry on the
13 hearing.
14 MR. WAGERHOFF:
15 What's the first name? I'm
16 already in trouble. (Inaudible) Mr.
17 Ford.
18 Well, I'm already in trouble and
19 I haven't even said anything yet.
20 The last name is Ford. You'll
21 forgive me if I can't recognize the first
22 name on the card.
23 Miss Ford. Thank you. Please
24 come forward.
25 I'm sorry. Thank you. I

1 couldn't even quite make the words out.
2 MS. FORD:
3 My name is Moira Ford.
4 My major concern is the
5 development of the optimum mitigation plan
6 for the project.
7 The hearing announcement detailed
8 close coordination with the appropriate
9 agencies and citizen groups, but more
10 importantly it seems to indicate that a
11 plan will be developed in compliance with
12 the emerging common law doctrine under the
13 Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act.
14 Mitigation plans are required to
15 be developed, authorized and implemented
16 concurrently with other aspects of Federal
17 project plans. The hearing announcement
18 mentions that mitigation by avoidance is
19 incorporated into the high level plan by
20 its selection over the barrier plan.
21 I feel that the tentative
22 selection of the high level plan represents
23 a commendable decision on the part of the
24 Corps and this hearing is obviously being
25 held to air alternatives under the high

1 level plan's scope; however, the mitigation
2 that's required by law is for project
3 induced impacts to fish and wildlife, and
4 this must be assessed within the confines
5 of the high level plan.
6 The duty to mitigate is not
7 cancelled out or reduced by per se
8 rejection of the barrier plan.
9 As a general policy, the concept
10 of a mitigation by avoidance could be very
11 vulnerable to abuse. A sham project with
12 extreme environmental consequences could be
13 proposed and then mitigated through
14 avoidance down to what perhaps was the
15 initial agency objective in the beginning.
16 And this is obviously not the
17 case with the hurricane protection project,
18 but I'm just saying that as a general
19 policy, mitigation by avoidance and through
20 avoidance could be subject to abuse.
21 The major problem I have with the
22 project is its failure to demonstrate
23 compliance with the two executive orders;
24 the flood plain management and the wetlands
25 protection order.

1 These orders in strong language
2 direct Federal agencies to avoid inducing
3 development in flood plains and wetlands
4 either through -- either directly or
5 indirectly unless there's no practicable
6 alternative.
7 Section two, part two, of the
8 flood plain management executive order
9 states the only practicable alternative in
10 locating an action in a flood plain, under
11 these circumstances, all practical measures
12 to minimize harm, must be taken.
13 Throughout the draft main report,
14 the Maxant Canal alignment is referred to
15 as a reasonable alternative, and the fact
16 that it's more costly, I don't think is the
17 threshold inquiry.
18 The inquiry under the Corps
19 policy and under law is, does a practical
20 alternative exist. And the draft main
21 report answers this affirmatively.
22 The Corps' own policy statement
23 regarding these orders states that the key
24 requirement is determining whether a
25 practical alternative exists.

1 Page seventy-five of the draft
2 main report admits that there is potential
3 for development by enclosing these wetlands
4 at S.P.H. level of protection and it
5 rationalizes that the existing option is a
6 more flexible alternative in that it
7 protects but does not preclude development
8 of the wetlands.
9 And, this to me, just contravenes
10 the spirit of the Federal law, the policy
11 and the Louisiana coastal resource program
12 guidelines. Protection of wetlands means
13 preclusion of development.
14 The report states that we'd be
15 regulated under the permanent authority of
16 404, and that's -- the problems with that
17 type of rationale have already been
18 stated.
19 The public needs more information
20 on the actual cost that composes eighty
21 million dollar figure. Without this
22 information, no one can truly assess the
23 options in terms of the construction
24 methods.
25 And I also was wondering, why

1 is there no consideration of a Maxant Canal
2 levee that shoots straight to the north
3 instead of that sharp veer to the west and
4 then north? It seems that this would be
5 significantly shorter and thus less
6 costly.
7 The Maxant Canal alignment, in
8 summation, should be authorized in some
9 form in conjunction with the modification
10 of the existing water control structures
11 that have been mentioned. I just feel that
12 the public relies on the Corps under law to
13 provide leadership and to take action under
14 the statutory language to restore these
15 areas. The -- you know, it's a reliance on
16 the Corps to update a twenty year old
17 system.
18 They state that the fact that
19 these -- that these wetlands in the east
20 haven't been subject to normal tidal
21 exchange for two decades. I think that
22 that ignores the mandate under, you know,
23 current awareness of the value of these
24 areas to -- you know, to take this into
25 effect and move to restore them.

1 And, then I also support the
2 alternative to purchase non-development and
3 flowage easements in this area.
4 And then to avoid repetition, I
5 just feel that the St. Charles alignment
6 south of the road should be taken or that a
7 clearly -- clearly designated alignment
8 along the road should be taken, and that
9 the borrow pit needs significant analysis
10 in terms of the cost and the environmental
11 infect -- impacts in terms of -- in terms
12 of the total cummulative deterioration of
13 the lake right now. Thank you.
14 MR. WAGERHOFF:
15 Thank you.
16 Charlotte Fremeaux, League of
17 Women Voters of Louisiana.
18 MS. FREMEAUX:
19 The League of Women Voters of
20 Louisiana, the League of Women Voters of
21 New Orleans, and the League of Women Voters
22 of Jefferson appreciate the opportunity to
23 review at public hearing the Lake
24 Pontchartrain hurricane protection project,
25 also known as the high level plan.

1 The following statements
2 represent basic League positions on the
3 wetland protection, resource management and
4 safeguard of water quality as they
5 particularly relate to the proposed
6 project.
7 New Orleans East. We support the
8 exclusion of the thirteen thousand acre
9 wetland area from hurricane protection
10 system. Soil and subsidence conditions
11 favor opening these marshes to natural
12 estuarine status providing valuable habitat
13 in the basin and providing water recharge.
14 Soil and subsidence conditions do not
15 provide adequate stability for development
16 unless costly safeguards are required.
17 Frequently residents are faced
18 with poor streets, drainage, et cetera. It
19 is not clear if the cost of potential
20 urbanization in a flood prone area is
21 reflected in a benefit analysis.
22 Executive Order 11880, protection
23 of the wetlands, directs Federal agencies
24 to avoid by all practicable measures and
25 alternatives construction wetlands.

1 The Maxant Canal levee appears to be an
2 acceptable and less damaging alternative.
3 St. Charles Parish. We support
4 protection of the three thousand acres of
5 wetlands which the -- which the north of
6 the Airline Highway alignment would
7 enclose. This would require culverts to
8 maintain the existing hydrology. It would
9 open the area to the possibility of future
10 development which the south of Airline
11 Highway would have avoided.
12 The piecemeal destruction of
13 viable habitat by seemingly separate
14 parcels often prevents grasp of the event
15 before it is too late.
16 Jefferson Parish. We view with
17 concern the proposal to dredge material
18 from Lake Pontchartrain, a shallow
19 estuarine basin already impacted by a
20 variety of stresses from development, salt
21 water trusion (spelled phonetically), et
22 cetera.
23 The size and depth of the dredge
24 holes will result in significant
25 degradation. The alternative use of

levee material from nearby Bonnet Carre Spillway is urged, and further information as to this alternative will provide citizens with assurance that the long term protection of populations is coupled with an equally long term concern for the natural resources which support these populations.

Thank you for your consideration.

MR. WAGERHOFF:

Thank you, Miss Fremeaux. Thank you.

Sherwood Gagliano.

MR. GAGLIANO:

Mr. Chairman, I've decided to submit a written proposal.

MR. WAGERHOFF:

Thank you, sir. Thank you. We'll look forward to that.

Mr. Robert Hereford.

MR. HEREFORD:

My name is Bob Hereford. I'm with the Jefferson Rod & Gun Club.

As citizens of the New Orleans

area, we are concerned about flood protection. But as a sportsman's organization, we've very concerned about the loss of wetlands in Louisiana.

We feel the levee alignment in St. Charles Parish should be immediately adjacent to Airline Highway.

The dredging of the fill from Lake Pontchartrain bottom will probably make traps to catch pollutions and settle in these holes and may cause dead spots. We suggest that an alternative source of fill be used. And the use of medicated (sic) funds may be used to stop the salt water intrusion and the erosion of the St. Charles Parish marshes.

We feel the Corps has made the correct decision in selecting the high level plan. Thank you.

MR. WAGERHOFF:

Thank you, sir.

Mr. Charles Thiblier.

MR. THIBLIER:

My name is Charles Thiblier. I don't represent anybody and I'd just like

1 to say I'm completely opposed to the whole
2 thing.
3 As far as building a higher
4 levee, I'm all for it as long as they build
5 it in existing -- where the levee is right
6 now.
7 As far as building a levee out in
8 the swamps and building another levee out
9 in New Orleans East, I'm totally against
10 it.
11 And, as far as dredging the lake,
12 I'm against that. If they want to build a
13 higher levee, I think they ought to get the
14 material from somewhere else.
15 And, that's about it. Thank
16 you.
17 MR. WAGERHOFF:
18 Okay. Fine. Thank you, sir.
19 Mr. Alfred Hitter, Jr.,
20 representing Save Our Coast.
21 MR. HITTER:
22 Gentlemen. There was an
23 environmental impact study made on this
24 project but it did not fully address the
25 fact that this is not an isolated problem

1 for the lake, and in particular Lake
2 Pontchartrain, but it adds to existing
3 problems such as the shell dredging going
4 on in this lake.
5 Save Our Coast supports the
6 concept of hurricane protection, but if the
7 Corps is sincerely interested in hurricane
8 protection, we wonder why they dredged
9 thirty miles of barrier reefs that afforded
10 hurricane protection for central Louisiana
11 coast line.
12 Save Our Coast will strongly
13 suggest that the Corps of Engineers listen
14 to the people, and in particular to the
15 scientists as they present their evidence
16 here tonight, and do not do as they have in
17 the past when these public hearings
18 amounted to nothing.
19 Save Our Coast is already
20 involved in the suit against the Corps of
21 Engineers for shell dredging permits in
22 Lake Pontchartrain. It is the feeling that
23 this dredging of a hole nine miles long by
24 six hundred feet wide by over fifty feet
25 deep represents a reckless activity that

destroys marine habitat that would certainly warrant litigation if this is permitted by the Corps.

We would also hope that the Corps of Engineers makes an independent study of the environmental impacts discussed in the environmental assessments and the environmental impact studies instead of using other agencies as has been their practice in the past.

Scientific studies of this type of deep holes in a shallow lake such as Lake Pontchartrain results in a collection of toxic materials, high salinity levels, and low oxygen; the end result of which is another huge dead hole in the lake.

And, in closing, I would like to say that Save Our Coast is totally for hurricane protection, but we think that there is another way to build up these levees besides dredging this tremendous hole in the lake.

Thank you.

MR. WAGERHOFF:

Thank you, sir.

James Larkin, please.

End Tape 2, Side 1
(Transcript continues on next page)

MR. LARKIN:

I'd like to thank you all for having a public hearing on this. I think that is of primary importance that you get the input from the people in the area.

I'm a forty-one year old life long resident of the City of New Orleans except for a two year period in which I was up in east Tennessee. And the reason I mention this, I heard someone tonight saying that special interest groups don't want levees because of their hobbies; the inference being to the sportsmen, the fishermen, duck hunters, this type of people.

When I was in east Tennessee, I watched people belong to the local Ducks Unlimted chapter who were extremely affluent individuals who aren't lucky enough to have what we have down here. Their duck hunting was scattered here and there; so was their goose hunting. They didn't have the abundance of salt water fish. They didn't have the abundance of shrimp, crabs, et cetera, like we have.

These people would go out in a banding project in an attempt to find out what they could do to help get more ducks and geese in the impoundment areas and some of the flooded lands in east Tennessee.

1 And in this process, they'd have
2 to wear raincoats because of the fact that
3 when they cart geese when they banded them,
4 the geese would defecate all over them.
5 They really cared and they -- to a man --
6 there must have been twenty-five people in
7 that chapter. And to a man, when they
8 found out I was from south Louisiana, they
9 said, you really have something special
10 down there, you know. You can go out an
11 hour away from home and fish and hunt. You
12 can trawl and help feed your family. You
13 can crab and help feed your family. You
14 can fish and help feed your family.
15 And I really feel that if the
16 plans of the Corps and the developers and
17 the politicos are not changed, that this
18 mad rush we have for putting up levees
19 where they shouldn't be, to enclose
20 wetlands that are vital to our fisheries,
21 are vital to our wildlife, if something's
22 not done to stop this, that heritage is
23 going to be gone.
24 And, as someone earlier had
25 mentioned about the oil industry, once

1 that oil industry is gone, we are going to
2 have to have something to fall back on.
3 Educationally right now, we're
4 having problems getting industry in here.
5 The thing that most of the people down in
6 the low lying areas, the Cajuns down in the
7 south Louisiana marshes have fallen back on
8 when the oil field jobs have gone down has
9 been shrimping and outdoors. And because
10 of the different types of depredation, the
11 marshes are gone.
12 And I honestly feel that if we
13 enclose marsh land and swamp land and
14 hardwood bottom lands unnecessarily, that
15 we're going to make this a waste land.
16 If people feel that they have
17 to -- if they've moved down here and they
18 have bought a home and they should enjoy
19 this and they should enjoy that, if they've
20 chosen to come into our area and live, then
21 I think they should be willing to adapt to
22 our lifestyle; and our lifestyle in south
23 Louisiana is outdoors. That's what it's
24 always been.
25 I find that too often we see

1 projects that are done for political
2 reasons, and the Corps has a little Dutch
3 boy syndrome where they have to run around
4 and keep building levees, or they have to
5 keep dredging, or doing this or doing
6 that.
7 We appreciate the control
8 structures in the river to try to save New
9 Orleans, the Port of New Orleans. We don't
10 appreciate putting a levee around our
11 lakeshore and taking in our marshes and
12 putting slips for sailboats, because when
13 people have these big fancy slips for
14 sailboats and they go out into a lake
15 that's nothing but a cesspool, they're not
16 going to continue to use those slips. They
17 are going to get tired of it. They are
18 going to move some place else. Those are
19 the people that have the mobility to do
20 that.
21 The people here in Louisiana love
22 Louisiana. It's one of the big things. If
23 somebody marries somebody from Louisiana,
24 they have to look at -- ninety percent of
25 the time, they come home. They get some

1 place else and they get tired of it and
2 they end up coming home because it's just
3 not the same.
4 I wish to express my agreement
5 with the -- in St. Charles Parish with the
6 plan three, which would be directly
7 adjacent to the Airline Highway.
8 But in also saying, I think that
9 the water control structures, the culverts,
10 should be -- the control of those should be
11 left in the hands of water fowl biologists
12 or whoever may be qualified to keep those
13 wet and wild.
14 I am unalterably opposed to
15 dredging this trench in the lake. I've got
16 children from twenty years down to two and
17 a half, and I'd -- I'd like them to
18 possibly have what I had when I was a
19 child. And I think if you -- if you dig
20 that trench, you're literally digging a
21 grave for our Lake Pontchartrain.
22 I also would agree with the
23 Maxant Canal plan in New Orleans East. I
24 think that would be the optimum plan in
25 that area.

We have all -- all the people in here who are residents of New Orleans know what poor streets we have. And the primary reason why we have the poor streets is because of the land it was built on. It's just not suitable for development. Much of it is -- too much of it is not suitable to development.

The people in Chateau in Kenner are flooding. Their streets are going bad. Out in Lakeview, the streets are going bad. Any place in town, ninety percent of the streets in town are going bad because of soil subsidence.

And if the development in New Orleans East is allowed to continue, all that is going to happen out there is some fat cats from out of town are going to make a lot of money and the people that buy out there are going to suffer for it in the long run. Not only are they going to suffer because they bought a house and property that's a lemon, they're going to suffer for it because our culture is going to go down the tubes.

1 And this is what we're asking,
2 what most of the people here are asking, is
3 to save our culture, save it for our
4 children, save it for your children.
5 I've had people from Michigan
6 that came down. I used to work at NASA.
7 And they raved about the fact that they
8 could get in a boat at Hopedale and in a
9 half an hour be out duck hunting where when
10 they lived in Detroit, they had to go five
11 hours drive just to go duck hunting. And
12 you all have taken that away from us.
13 The levee system that you have
14 and the greed of the politicos and the big
15 money people has taken that away from us
16 out in New Orleans East.
17 We no longer have Canada geese in
18 the State of Louisiana that migrate in in
19 any manageable number. And it's -- it's
20 not -- it's primarily that, plus some other
21 things that the Federal Government has been
22 involved in with short stopping, but
23 that's -- that's a big thing. To me that's
24 a big thing, and to a lot of people in
25 here, it's a big thing.

They look up in the sky in the winter and they don't see those geese coming like they used to. They don't see the ducks flying over.

And, I think that the wisest move that you can make, the wisest action you can make; yes, give us the protection. The lands that you've already developed, the lands that we've fought the good fight for and haven't been able to save; go ahead, develop that if you want. Put your levees around that higher. But, please, for the sake of my children and your children and for all the children in this country that want to see something that's unique, don't extend your levees any further than they already are. Thank you.

COLONEL LEE:

Thank you. I think all of you who listened to Lynn's presentation probably know that in New Orleans East, there's no extension of the levees proposed. And in St. Charles, the levee proposal that's tentatively selected is the one just north of Airline Highway and

there's no difference in the water flows before or after.

Next, I'd like to call on Mr. James Larkin -- oh, I'm sorry, sir.

Vivian Newman from the Orleans Audubon Society.

MS. NEWMAN:

I'm representing the New Orleans Audubon Society which is to some people known as the bird people; however, it is made up of fifteen hundred members, most of whom are residents around the lake and St. Tammany Parish, Orleans, Jefferson, St. Charles, all the way around.

Only a few months ago it seems to me we were talking about a fresh water diversion project. And a lot of what we were talking about is the same thing we're talking about tonight that we've talked about many other nights, many other afternoons; degradation of the lake bottom by dredging, including shell dredging, degradation of the water quality of the lake by sewerage discharge, run offs, salt water intrusion, wetlands lost to

1 urbanization.

2 All of these things seemed, at
3 least the last time around, to be
4 ostensibly being addressed by the Corps in
5 a way that seemed a little more
6 productive.

7 I think our thinking is becoming
8 a little more simple minded the more we go
9 through these things, so I'm just going to
10 say about five things that we want and have
11 done with it.

12 We would like a halt to the
13 squandering of the lake's bounty of its
14 natural resources that are renewable.

15 We want a halt to the squandering
16 of the time and the effort that is being
17 put out on considering these projects one
18 at a time, especially when they are being
19 considered one at a time out of the total
20 context.

21 We want a halt in furthering away
22 your time and energy, our time and energy.
23 We want a halt to the tax burdens that all
24 these projects are proposing.

25 We're fed up to the back teeth

with so-called mitigation for things that can no longer be mitigated.

We simply can't have any more destruction of the lake's entire system and go in for some kind of mitigation that is addressing something somewhere else.

We want the lake system treated with particular care through a special management area program and nothing to be even contemplated until that is underway.

Not to put too fine a point on this, we consider all of these steps right now to be rather dumb, circular reasoning, chasing our own tails until we really come to terms with the lake and the whole system and deal with it as a system. Thank you.

COLONEL LEE:

Thank you.

Joan Phillips from the Sierra Club.

MS. PHILLIPS:

Colonel Lee, people -- all of you of the Corps, again thank you for this opportunity of public hearing, your granting our request. I think a number

1 of our members, two thousand strong across
2 the state, a thousand -- over fifteen
3 hundred probably in this area, have shown
4 their interest, as you know, a number of
5 times or almost at every hearing, every
6 issue on Lake Pontchartrain. We have been
7 here to speak of this particular area, this
8 area we hope will one day be an area of
9 special concern in our coastal zone area.
10 The area is one, of course,
11 that we're -- the whole question here, the
12 activity, the health of the lake, is
13 important to our group.
14 We have requested E.I.S.'s on
15 the -- written on the lake whenever a
16 project is significant, such as
17 hurricane -- this hurricane protection
18 levee project or shell dredging project.
19 We're anxious to hear, of course,
20 of the suggestions of coastal environments
21 who have been already hired by the State to
22 look at Lake Pontchartrain as an area of
23 special concern. And, we hope that we
24 will not continue a piecemealing of the
25 lake to its death, and that special

area status and a discussion of the area, the whole, will begin immediately.

Your request for comments on the hurricane protection does elicit before such an E.I.S. is completed some very pertinent remarks.

We do agree that the high level plan for hurricane protection is far less costly and less damaging to fish and wildlife than the barrier plan and will provide what we all want, and that is hurricane protection for this area.

Each of us live here and all of us realize that this is necessary, and I would hope that all people who listen to our remarks realize that is first and protection for people is what we're looking for.

I'd like to, as we talk about the beautification of this area, the beauty of this area, and the other parts of the area, certainly make everyone understand that hurricane protection is something that no one in the Sierra Club is saying we do not need.

1 We do realize, though, that the
2 water has to go somewhere when we put up
3 levees. And, as you all have run into the
4 problem over and over again on the
5 Mississippi, if you levee one area, the
6 water goes into another area.
7 And, in that respect, what we're
8 asking is that what is an area that we can
9 let our water go into. And one of the best
10 uses we, and the values of the wetlands
11 that we have is that the water can go into
12 these areas and not cause damage. And we
13 hope that some of the people who have
14 spoken in their hurry to look for hurricane
15 protection will realize that what we ask
16 for those marshes to be left for is a place
17 for the water to go, and it enhances that
18 area and it also keeps our other areas from
19 being flooded. If we will just have the
20 foresight to leave some areas for water and
21 for our wildlife and fisheries. I think we
22 will find ourselves in much better shape.
23 We ask that every -- of course,
24 every possibility for habitat be left for
25 the area. And one of the reasons is

1 because the health of the lake again is
2 important to those residents around the
3 lake.
4 I don't think any of us want to
5 build up a barrier, have ourselves
6 protected behind this lake and then have to
7 look at an area that -- that is -- that has
8 algae on it, that is not a living -- a
9 living body of water.
10 And, our piecemealing of this
11 body of water, our continual degradation --
12 if I can recall and ask you to remember
13 that we just had a recent conference on the
14 Gulf of Mexico where we talked about
15 shallow water eco systems and their effect
16 on our whole estuarine system in southern
17 Louisiana. Res Darnell's, Department of
18 Oceanography, Texas A&M, comments at our
19 conference suggests -- and he reminds us
20 the dead zones and environmental
21 degradation of such a shallow water eco
22 system like Lake Pontchartrain will -- they
23 are caused by these varied activities such
24 as leveeing and filling our marsh and
25 dredging and disturbing the water

1 circulation patterns.

2 We -- you have heard from Fish &

3 Wildlife Service, from U. S. Marine

4 Fisheries, from the gentlemen that just

5 spoke with such a loving care for our

6 marshes, and I won't repeat some of the

7 main considerations that we have for this

8 area; that is, to protect people but not

9 marsh. Leave our marshes to help protect

10 those that already have homes, placing

11 levees around the populated areas and

12 leaving our recreation of natural areas wet

13 and wild.

14 Our borrow pits, again we are

15 very concerned about making holes in our

16 lake that will -- will be dead holes that

17 will stop flows -- flow of water and

18 interrupt migrations across our lake.

19 Finally, the Sierra Club must

20 insist according to the law that the Corps

21 develop a specific mitigation for this

22 project. The Corps should develop and

23 incorporate a high level -- in the high

24 level plan a specific plan that compensates

25 for all past and future project damages

1 to fish and wildlife. Mitigation must
2 become a feature of any final hurricane
3 protection plan.
4 We suggest as part of that
5 mitigation plan a way that will help assure
6 areas around the lake will remain wet.
7 We again suggest the plan for
8 mitigation accepted by the Orleans Coastal
9 Advisory Committee be implemented in the
10 lake area as a whole.
11 This idea, which I propose to
12 you, would include that any unit of -- and,
13 again, we talk about water related
14 development, must be compensated, and this
15 was accepted by our advisory committee, by
16 two units for preservation, which we could
17 only revert to a developmental parcel if
18 the original developed parcel is returned
19 to its natural state.
20 Transfer of development rights is
21 one of the things we -- that has been used
22 in other areas and I would hope that
23 some -- some unit is established for the
24 development as a whole around the lake and
25 that we may con -- may condense some of

1 our activities in one area or the other,
2 but that we stick to that unit of
3 development.
4 Areas which we would like to see
5 preserved in this way would be the St.
6 Charles Parish marsh.
7 I trust that you and all public
8 officials, and I call on even our governor,
9 Governor Edwards, and our State officials
10 interested in coastal zone management will
11 take these recommendations to heart and
12 implement them to correct some of the
13 faults of the Corps' plan at present and
14 the lake's problem as a whole.
15 We also take this opportunity and
16 to implore the Corps of Engineers, the
17 governor -- and the governor to show strong
18 leadership which will force the already
19 established citizens advisory committee,
20 local and State government officials and
21 the C.Z.M. office to sit down together
22 tomorrow and save this special area of our
23 coastal zone.
24 We still feel that before any
25 plan is implemented that a complete

1 E.I.S. must be implemented for the lake
2 area which will assure a multi-purpose plan
3 for the area which includes enough
4 protection to save the health of the lake,
5 the renewable resource features of the
6 area, and the recreational nature of the
7 area.
8 Thank you very much.
9 COLONEL LEE:
10 Thank you.
11 Stewart Phillips.
12 (INAUDIBLE)
13 COLONEL LEE:
14 Thank you.
15 Glenn Mercadahl, and I'm sure
16 that's wrong, and I apologize, sir.
17 MR. MERCADAHL:
18 My name is Glenn Mercadahl and
19 I'm here representing the Khilo (spelled
20 phonetically) Sportsman's League of New
21 Orleans whose memberships come from
22 surrounding parishes as well as New
23 Orleans.
24 I would first like to thank
25 Colonel Lee and the Corps for holding

1 this public meeting at a time when
2 interested groups and individuals would be
3 able to attend.
4 As we have done in the past, we
5 would once again like to be put on record
6 as opposing the construction of any barrier
7 plan.
8 We would also like to be put on
9 record as not being opposed to hurricane
10 protection but being opposed to the
11 protection of undeveloped private property
12 at the expense of the public.
13 Too many times so-called
14 hurricane protection has caused either
15 directly or indirectly the development of
16 acres upon acres of vital wetland habitat.
17 In St. Charles Parish, we favor
18 levee alignment number three. This
19 alignment would provide the maximum
20 opportunity for hurricane protection with a
21 minimum amount of habitat loss. This levee
22 alignment, number three, should be
23 immediately adjacent to the Airline Highway
24 and only deviate to protect existing
25 developments north of the Airline Highway.

1 Such a levee should have several
2 gated structures, not drainage structures,
3 so that water circulation can be
4 maintained.
5 In Jefferson Parish, the idea of
6 dredging Lake Pontchartrain for levee
7 material is totally unacceptable.
8 The present trend seems to be
9 finally shifting in the preservation of the
10 lake, although suffering from shell
11 dredging, salt water intrusion, sewerage
12 and urban run off, steps such as limited
13 dredging, new treatment plants and fresh
14 water diversion structures are existing or
15 in the plans to solve many of these
16 problems.
17 A hole, as described for levee
18 construction, would do nothing but harm.
19 The Corps, themselves, even feel that
20 physical and chemical stratification would
21 occur and that such an area would become
22 unfavorable to aquatic life.
23 In lieu of dredging the lake, the
24 idea of hauling fill seems to me the most
25 environmental favorable.

In New Orleans East, the situation exists which should have never happened in the first place, and is definitely a prime example of how so-called hurricane protection has caused the development of wetlands.

Although we tend to favor the Maxant Canal alignment, number two, such a levee would be inside an already existing levee. Since the chance of removing the existing levee is remote, the Maxant Canal alignment would be wasteful. This also seems to remove any real alternative to the existing levee alignment.

We, therefore, can only favor the existing levee alignment with adequate water control structures. Such structures should be in both the eastermost alignment and the alignment north of I-10. Efforts should be made to see that the area bounded by Paris Road, Highway 90, the easternmost levee alignment, and Lake Pontchartrain be maintained in a wetland status and development limited.

We would also like to point out

at this time that unsuspecting homeowners have had ongoing serious sinking problems as a result of development in New Orleans East.

The St. Bernard levee alignment is virtually in the same situation as New Orleans East. Since levees already exist, we can only recommend that improvements be made and that an adequate number of water control structures be installed. Development should be closely monitored and limited.

Mitigation is a very important aspect of this project. Although mentioned, there is no real specific plan. The Corps should recommend a specific plan which should offer compensation for all past and future project damages to fish, wildlife and their habitat.

A possible mitigation for New Orleans East would be the purchase of non-development rights and flow easements over such property.

No matter what mitigation plan is chosen, a key issue we would like to

1 stress is that mitigation must, and we
2 repeat, must become a feature of any final
3 plan before it being sent to Washington for
4 funding.
5 In closing, we again thank
6 Colonel Lee and the Corps for the
7 opportunity to express our views and
8 request that they be considered. Thank
9 you.
10 COLONEL LEE:
11 Thank you, sir.
12 And I'll add, on a mitigation
13 plan with the cooperation of all the
14 agencies that are here and the groups, it's
15 our intent to have a mitigation plan in
16 Washington before we start any high level
17 construction.
18 Edgar Villion, Louisiana Wildlife
19 Federation.
20 MR. VILLION:
21 Colonel Lee, members of the
22 staff, ladies and gentlemen. My name is
23 Edgar Villion. My remarks this evening are
24 in my capacity as co-chairman of the
25 wetlands committee of the Louisiana

1 Wildlife Federation, Incorporated.

2 We would like to thank the Corps
3 for granting our request for a public
4 hearing on the draft main report and
5 supplement to the environmental impact
6 statement for the Lake Pontchartrain,
7 Louisiana, and vicinity, hurricane
8 protection project. We feel it was a wise
9 decision.

10 The Louisiana Wildlife
11 Federation, Incorporated is the largest
12 citizen conservation organization in the
13 State with approximately eighty affiliate
14 sportsman's clubs and seven thousand
15 members throughout Louisiana. Over three
16 thousand of these members and twenty-five
17 affiliates are domiciled within or
18 immediately adjacent to the project area.

19 The Federation has had a
20 longstanding interest in the fish and
21 wildlife resources of the Pontchartrain
22 Basin.

23 The proposed hurricane protection
24 project has the potential to cause
25 substantial degradation to the lake's

eco system if ample consideration is not given to resource protection in the project design and construction.

We believe the Corps has made the correct decision in opting for the high level plan over the barrier plan. The barrier plan was much too risky in our opinion in terms of engineering feasibility, safety and eco system preservation.

We feel that the high level plan, though also damaging to the environment, is more predictable in its effects and therefore measures to lessen the adverse impacts can be more precisely determined.

Our comments in response to the previous solicitation of public comment on this project by your agency in October of 1981 emphasized our concern over the potential for the project to mislead citizens into the belief that once constructed, the project will sufficiently protect them from any hurricane that would hit the area.

As we stressed then and we

1 reiterate now, the only way to be safe from
2 a hurricane is to get out of its way. We
3 urge the Corps to include and emphasize
4 development restrictions in high risk areas
5 and evacuation contingencies as an integral
6 part of this hurricane protection plan.
7 Anything less is irresponsible and an
8 invitation to disaster.
9 After thoroughly reviewing the
10 draft supplement to the environmental
11 impact statement for the T.S.P., we are
12 concerned primarily with three issues.
13 First of all, the levee proposed
14 for St. Charles Parish will encourage
15 development of several thousand acres of
16 wetlands. If the citizens of St. Charles
17 Parish wish that such a levee be
18 constructed, it is our recommendation that
19 the levee be aligned immediately adjacent
20 to Airline Highway and that culverts or
21 other kinds of water exchange devices be
22 built into the levee to ensure adequate
23 drainage and nutrient transport through the
24 levee.
25 The T.S.P. calls for pumping

1 fill from the bottom of Lake Pontchartrain
2 to build the Jefferson Parish levee.
3 Excuse me.
4 Implementation of this plan would
5 create several miles of deep trenches
6 offshore from Jefferson Parish.
7 Lake Pontchartrain, as you know,
8 is already beleaguered by pollution and
9 other degradations and abuses. These
10 trenches would further degrade the lake at
11 a time when efforts are finally beginning
12 to improve the lake.
13 We recommend that the Corps
14 select an alternative that will avoid the
15 creation of deep trenches in Lake
16 Pontchartrain. Perhaps levee design might
17 be streamlined to require less fill while
18 still providing adequate protection, and a
19 combination of hauled and pump fill could
20 be used so as to minimize disruption and
21 degradation of the lake bottom.
22 If no alternative to the proposed
23 trenches can be found, a thorough
24 evaluation of the impact that the holes
25 will have on fisheries habitat should

be made so that adequate mitigation can be proposed to offset the damages.

Finally, on page thirty-one of the E.I.S., mitigation is discussed; however, no specific mitigation plan is offered even though a cost figure for mitigation is given on page one hundred and twenty-four of the main report.

We object to the implementation of this project unless a fully defined and adequate mitigation plan is developed and simultaneously funded and implemented.

You may want to consider the re-establishment of tidal exchange in the wetlands of New Orleans East, and the preservation of the wetlands in that area is potential mitigation for this project.

That concludes the Federation's comments on the hurricane levee project proposal.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in development of the final report.

COLONEL LEE:

Thank you. I appreciate your

1 comments, sir.

2 Nancy Simoneaux.

3 MS. SIMONEAUX:

4 I represent the Lake Area Civil

5 Council.

6 We have been concerned for a long

7 time for the lack of -- thank you --

8 hurricane protection in what I call the

9 Elysian Fields corridor.

10 And, Mr. Slayton, I'm sorry, is

11 gone, but he publicly -- publicly admitted

12 on television that it was purely political

13 that it hadn't been built all these years,

14 exposing one-third of the city to

15 flooding.

16 Now, I understand the Corps does

17 have a plan to build a flood wall on what

18 would be the south side of the parking lot

19 of former Pontchartrain Beach. Is that

20 correct?

21 A VOICE:

22 Is that right, Bob?

23 MS. SIMONEAUX:

24 All right.

25 COLONEL LEE:

1 Yes, you're right.

2 MS. SIMONEAUX:

3 The Lake Area Civic Council has
4 publicly at the levee board meeting
5 protested this arrangement.

6 I have been corresponding with
7 several people in the Corps and our reasons
8 are many; particularly, the possible loss
9 of life.

10 Mr. Steven Caplo is proposing a
11 condominium development for six hundrd or
12 more, six hundred to nine hundred
13 families.

14 The present plans would be -- the
15 flood wall would be to the city side of
16 this development, and the development would
17 have absolutely no flood protection other
18 than the original little sea wall that has
19 been there for years.

20 In one of my letters to the
21 Corps, when I suggested why did not the
22 flood wall of preferably, of course, a mud
23 levee, be put in front of the development,
24 and the developer develop design with the
25 levee in place; after all, the whole

1 sea wall has a levee up to U.N.O., then we
2 have the break, and then we have again at
3 Franklin a nice high levee, and we have
4 this gap in between. It seemed to us the
5 logical, the most economical thing would be
6 for a mud levee to be there.
7 I realize politics has come into
8 this decision of letting the development do
9 what he wants, but we want to go on record
10 protesting this.
11 We feel flood waters would come
12 in if the tide rises, if the gates are
13 closed on the levee on the flood wall. You
14 might say people should evacuate. Many
15 will evacuate if they're told to.
16 But, Mr. Caplo has been bragging
17 his first floor is seventeen feet above sea
18 level; you're going to be safe. And some
19 people, particular people who are not
20 familiar with hurricanes, will stay. Our
21 concern is for them. They're going to be
22 there when the water rises. The only way
23 they can get out once the flood wall is
24 closed is to walk up towards the lake where
25 you have the tidal surge and all the waves

1 and evacuate that way. Now, I'm talking
2 about the water is up; it's waist high.
3 That's obviously the wrong thing to do, to
4 go towards the storm surge.
5 There is no way out for them in
6 the back. They have a seven foot or an
7 eight foot wall behind them.
8 When I suggested to the Corps
9 that at least there should be a permanent
10 ramp that the people could evacuate, I
11 really got no answer. Somebody said, well,
12 maybe they could climb a ladder to get over
13 the wall. Well, we don't consider that
14 sufficient.
15 It is illegal, as far as I know,
16 from the coastal management plan to build a
17 development there. Now, I don't know if
18 you have any control over that, but it
19 seems to me you do have the control of the
20 placement of a levee, and I would hope you
21 would really consider the safety for all
22 these people.
23 I have been in a hurricane over
24 on the coast where we were trapped by
25 fences behind us, and the five or six

1 of us would have drown except that the
2 fence was a little weak fence and we were
3 able to break it down. But, you're not
4 going to be able to break the flood wall.
5 Now, another concern we have --
6 when we said the flood wall should be
7 nearer the lake, should I say Mr. Chatry, I
8 don't know if he's here today, said that,
9 and I'm quoting --
10 COLONEL LEE:
11 He's not here.
12 MS. SIMONEAUX:
13 I'm quoting, because of its close
14 proximity to the lake, this flood wall
15 would have been twelve feet high rather
16 than eight feet high. Being closer to the
17 lake would make the flood wall more
18 susceptible to larger forces from wave
19 action, imposing greater loads on both the
20 wall and the foundations.
21 Well, now, if this is true about
22 your strong flood wall, what is the tidal
23 surge going to do to the development? And,
24 the development is going to have first
25 floor, restaurants, little gift shops,

1 there will be cars parked there.

2 I mean, when people go -- live

3 there, they're going to go away, the car's

4 going to be there and they're not going to

5 be able to move it.

6 What's going to happen with all

7 the tidal surge, with the debris, the cars,

8 when it comes against your flood wall

9 that's further back?

10 We are very concerned about all

11 these issues, and we really don't feel that

12 the Corps has addressed them enough, and we

13 would like a public hearing on it if you

14 continue to want to put it where you have.

15 Thank you.

16 COLONEL LEE:

17 Thank you, ma'am.

18 Mr. Guidrick or Mr. Vantoler, do

19 you want to discuss anything with her,

20 either publicly or maybe chat with her

21 separately?

22 (INAUDIBLE)

23 COLONEL LEE:

24 Ma'am, would you like to -- we

25 have engineering and regulatory people

here and maybe the three of you could get together and make sure we understand it here.

Okay. Thank you.

Julie Fotiediaz, and I'm sure I'm in bad shape on that one.

MS. FOTIEDIAZ:

Thank you. Colonel Lee, my family owns property on the Airline Highway in St. Charles Parish where the levee is supposed to be built, and we feel that the proposed levee is a little too close to Airline Highway. It's right on the Airline.

And, we went by the Corps of Engineers today to visit you, but you were out, and -- to check the huge maps that you all have, and we feel that we'd like for the levee to be a little further back, as far back as possible away from Airline Highway. And -- because it's commercial property and it's dry land.

There's not much of it; you know, there's very little dry land, and that' -- it's just a small strip and it's right on

1 Airline Highway, and it's commercial
2 property. And, so, we'd like to develop
3 it, so we'd like to put in that request.
4 COLONEL LEE:
5 Okay.
6 MS. FOTIEDIAZ:
7 Thank you.
8 COLONEL LEE:
9 Thank you.
10 And I think I can apologize for
11 you being last.
12 But, I'll make a call. If
13 there's anybody out there who filled out a
14 card and somehow we've lost it or it didn't
15 get to me.
16 A VOICE:
17 This gentleman here.
18 COLONEL LEE:
19 Yes, sir. Would you like to a
20 comments (sic)? Please come forward.
21 A VOICE:
22 Ask him to state his name.
23 COLONEL LEE:
24 Would you state your name and
25 address and if you represent anybody

1 because I don't have a card on you for the
2 recorder.
3 MR. McKARSKY:
4 Thank you, Colonel Lee. My name
5 is David McKarsky. I'm the the coastal
6 zone management administrator for St.
7 Charles Parish.
8 Colonel Lee, I would just like to
9 reiterate --
10 COLONEL LEE:
11 I recognize you now, Dave. I'm
12 sorry.
13 MR. McKARSKY:
14 Thank you.
15 Colonel Lee, I'd like to just
16 reiterate the parish's policy, St. Charles
17 Parish's policy on the tentatively selected
18 plan for hurricane protection.
19 On 2-20-84, St. Charles Parish
20 Council passed Resolution 2557 which
21 resolved the following, and I would just
22 read the resolves for the sake of time.
23 Now, therefore, be it resolved
24 that the St. Charles Parish Council hereby
25 give the support to the tentatively

1 selected plan as proposed.

2 Be it further resolved that the
3 Corps include a proposed mitigation plan as
4 part of the main report and consider
5 funding for implementation of management
6 recommendations for the LeBranch wetlands
7 north of the proposed levee alignment.

8 Colonel Lee, and ladies and
9 gentlemen, the St. Charles Parish Council,
10 local officials and its citizens advisory
11 committee has made considerable effort to
12 protect the area north of Airline Highway,
13 the LeBranch wetlands.

14 LeBranch wetlands are the
15 fourthmost productive estuarine area in the
16 entire state and the most protection -- the
17 most -- the productive estuarine area for
18 the Pontchartrain Basin.

19 We do feel that mitigation,
20 though, is required and should be made a
21 part of the full report. We do wish that
22 mitigation be spent in St. Charles Parish.
23 We feel that a separation of the report,
24 the mitigation report, from the main report
25 would limit the chance of that study to

be successfully implemented and funded.

St. Charles Parish just received a coastal energy impact grant from the -- which was supported by the State and the Federal Government, and within six to twelve months the parish will have -- cite specific mitigation recommendations for north of Airline Highway.

We wish that the Corps consider those recommendations when they are finalizing their mitigation report.

Thank you.

COLONEL LEE:

Thank you.

I'd only encourage you to do that as rapidly as we can so that we can address those, review them for you. Thank you.

Is there anyone else who has not filled out a card who would like to make comments at this time?

(NO RESPONSE)

COLONEL LEE:

I'd like to remind everybody that the record will stay open through the 11th of May, so if anybody has additional

1 comments, separate comments, they want to
2 make part of the report, then please get
3 them in to the New Orleans district, the
4 planning division, before the close of
5 business on the 11th of May, unless that's
6 a holiday and it may very well be.
7 When is the 12th of May? That's
8 when the fair opens, so we should know
9 that, I guess.
10 As I said earlier, much of the
11 staff which has worked on this report is
12 sitting over here, so if you have specific
13 questions in technical areas that you
14 didn't bring up in the public meeting but
15 you'd like to ask them, we'll remain here
16 for a few minutes.
17 Thank you --
18 A VOICE:
19 May 12th is a Saturday.
20 COLONEL LEE:
21 May 12th is a Saturday, so the
22 11th is a good day.
23 Thank you for coming. We
24 appreciate your comments and input.
25 End Tape 1, Side 2
(End of transcript)

V. WRITTEN STATEMENTS

(Exhibits)

List of Exhibits

A. Evelyn Fotiades Poulos
Joan Fotiades
Julie Fotiades

B. M. L. Cambre, St. Charles Environmental Council

C. Edgar F. Veillon, Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Inc.

D. Charles Torres

E. David Acheson III, Sierra Club, Delta Chapter
Joan Phillips

F. Oliver A. Houck
Bill Monteleone

G. (Similar Statements)
Mary C. McNamara
Michael Halle
Sherman Brown M.D.
E. Allen Bealer
G. S. Hemandy
A. Zighelbony
L. Upton
Danella Hero
Chuck Blovin
Lydia Guillot
Marie Anderson
A. Cutler
Christopher Hicks
Gloria Smith
J. P. Sevenair
R. Eddy III
A. Byerly
Catherine Graudin
E. Metz
Rosalie de Bessonet
W. King
Ann Duffy
Meredity Harnish
Mary C. McNamara
Mary Ellen Baker
Nancy S. Bonsfield
Janice G. Tramontana
Cornell J. Tramontana
A. Villais

H. William Slatten, Orleans Levee District

I. Aubrey J. LaPlace, Pontchartrain Levee District

J. Charlotte Fremaux, League of Women Voters

K. Richard J. Hoogland, National Marine Fisheries Service

L. Harold Schoeffler, Save Our Coast
Donald Parry
A. Hitter

M. Fish and Wildlife Service

N. Clio Sportsman's League

O. Sherwood M. Gagliano, Coastal Environments, Inc.

P. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

EXHIBIT A

MRS. HARRY FOTIADES
1631 VALMONT STREET
NEW ORLEANS, LA. 70115

May 12, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
Corps of Engineers
Post Office Box 60267
New Orleans, La. 70160

RE:Proposed Levee
St. Charles Parish

Dear Colonel Lee,

We would like the levee to be as far from Airline Highway, and as close to the lake as possible.

As property owners, we are requesting this in order to protect a larger area of our property.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Fotiades Poulos

Joan Fotiades

Julie Fotiades

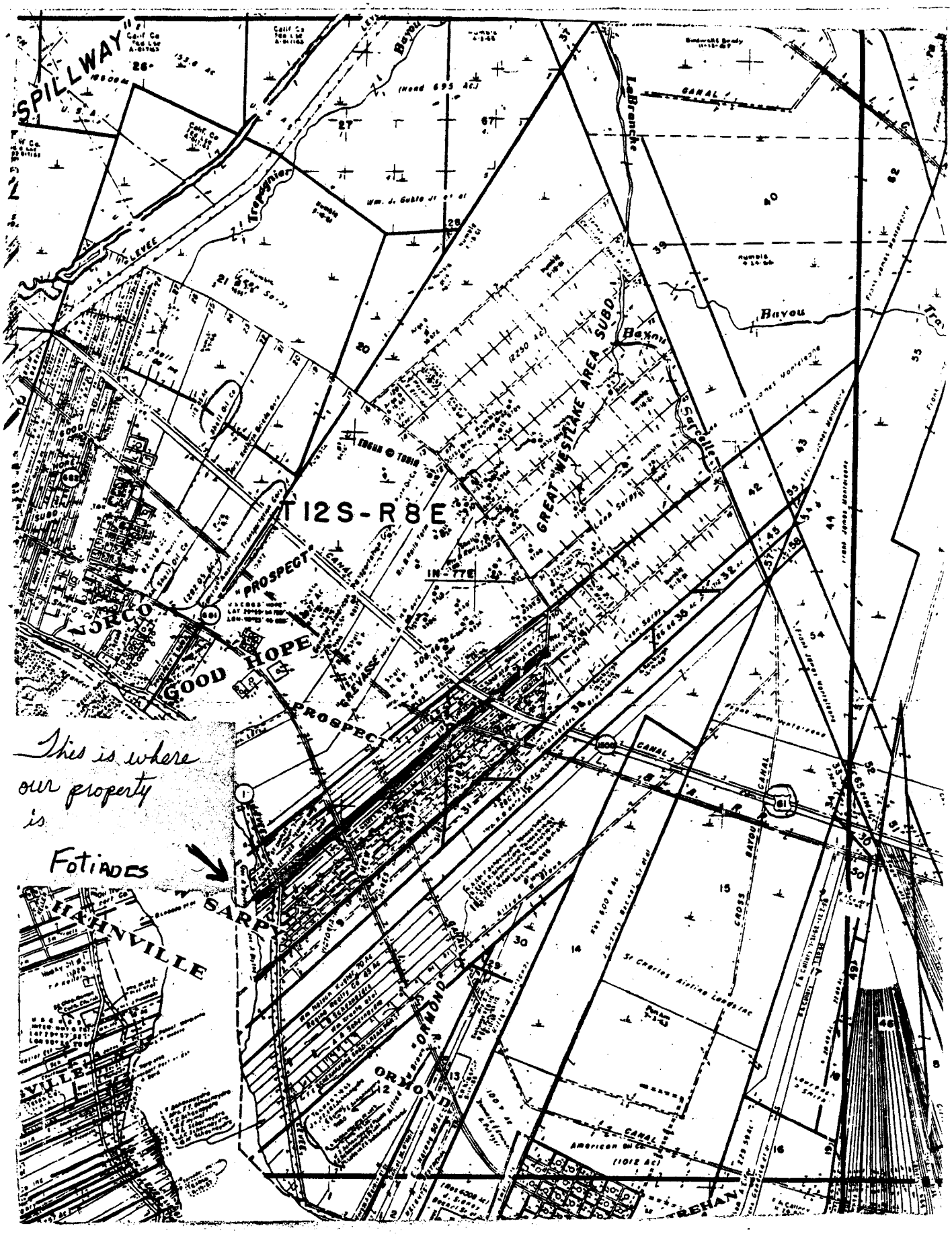
SPILLWAY
T12S-R8E
GREAT WESTLAKE AREA SUBD
PROSPECT
GOOD HOPE
NORCO
HAHNVILLE
SARPY
ORMOND
LaBranche
Bayou
Trepagnier
CANAL
LEVEE
St Charles Airline Lands Inc
American Oil Co
(1012 Ac)
This is where
our property
is
Fotiades

EXHIBIT B

ST. CHARLES ENVIROMENTAL COUNCIL
402 Marino Dr.
Norco, La.

May 9, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA. 70160

RE: Lake Pontchartrain & Vicinity
Hurricane Protection Project

Dear Colonel Lee:

We would like to make the following recommendations concerning the selection of the High Level Plan for the Lake Pontchartrain & Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project. We concur with the high level plan and offer the following comments:

That the Corps build the levee for the New Orleans East levee along the Maxent Canal. Since developmental easements have not been considered on this tract, raising existing levees to protect these flood prone areas will almost certainly lead to development in the future eliminating important wetlands and storm buffer zones.

That alternative plans be taken to eliminate the deep borrow pits in Lake Pontchartrain for construction of the Jefferson Parish Levee. These deep pits will most certainly have an adverse impact on the lake. The pumping of sand from the Mississippi River should be considered to fill these pits if no suitable clays can readily be found to construct the levee.

That the St. Charles levee be built adjacent to U.S. 61 and given a high priority for early construction and that mitigation measures should be directed to St. Charles Parish. The Parish has recently received a federal grant for a marsh management plan. The Parish CZM committee has recommended several closures along Lake Pontchartrain and that shoreline erosion is a problem that needs immediate attention. We would like to see the Corps move rapidly on this project so that long rang planning necessary for a comprehensive drainage plan for the area South of the proposed levee alignment is begun.

Yours truly,

M L Cambre

M. L. Cambre, President

EXHIBIT C

Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Inc.

P.O. BOX 16089 LSU
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70893
504/355-1871

April 12, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
New Orleans District
Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160

Re: Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Projec

Dear Colonel Lee:

My name is Edgar F. Veillon and my remarks this evening ar in my capacity as Co-Chairman of the Wetlands Committee of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Inc.. We would like to thank the Corps for granting our request for a public hearing on the Draft Main Report and Supplement to the Environmental Impact Statement for the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project. We feel it was a wise decision.

The Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Inc. is the largest citizen conservation organization in the state with approximately 80 affiliate sportsmens clubs and 7,000 members throughout Louisiana. Over 3,000 of these members and 25 affiliates are domiciled within or immediately adjacent to the project area. The Federation has had a long-standing interest in the fish and wildlife resources of the Pontchartrain Basin. The proposed hurricane protection project has the potential to cause substantial degradation to the Lake's ecosystem if ample consideration is not given to resource protection in the project design and construction.

We believe the Corps has made the correct decision in opting for the High Level Plan over the barrier plan. The Barrier Plan was much to risky, in our opinion, in terms of engineering feasibility, safety and ecosystem preservation. We feel that the High Level Plan, though also damaging to the environment, is more predictable in its effects and therefore, measures to lessen the adverse impacts can be more precisely determined.

Our comments in response to the previous solicitation of public comment on this project by your agency in October of 1981 emphasized our concern over the potential for the project to mislead citizens into the belief that, once constructed, the project will sufficiently protect them from any hurricane that would hit the area.

Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Inc.

P.O. BOX 16089 LSU
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70893
504/355-1871

As we stressed then, and reiterate now, the only way to be safe from a hurricane is to get out of its way. We urge the Corps to include and emphasize developement restrictions in high risk areas and evacuation contingencies as an integral part of this hurricane protection plan. Anything less is irresponsible and an invitation to disaster.

After thoroughly reviewing the Draft Supplement to the EIS for the TSP, we are concerned primarily with 3 issues. First of all, the levee proposed for St. Charles Parish will encourage developement of several thousand acres of wetlands. If the citizens of St. Charles Parish wish that such a levee be constructed, it is our recommendation that the levee be aligned immediately adjacent to Airline Highway (U.S. 61) and that culverts or other kinds of water exchange devices be built into the levee to insure adequate drainage and nutrient transport through the levee.

The TSP calls for pumping fill from the bottom of Lake Pontchartrain to build the Jefferson Parish levee. Implementation of this plan would create several miles of deep trenches offshore from Jefferson Parish. Lake Pontchartrain, as you know, is already beleaguered by pollution and other degradations and abuses. These trenches would further degrade the Lake at a time when efforts are finally beginning to improve the Lake. We recommend that the Corps select an alternative that will avoid the creation of deep trenches in Lake Pontchartrain. Perhaps levee design might be streamlined to require less fill while still providing adequate protection, and a combination of hauled and pumped fill could be used so as to minimize disruption and degradation of the lake bottom. If no alternatives to the proposed trenches can be found, a thorough evaluation of the impact that the holes will have on fisheries habitat should be made so that adequate mitigation can be proposed to offset the damages.

On page 31 of the EIS mitigation is discussed, however no specific mitigation plan is offered even though a cost figure for mitigation is given on page 124 of the Main Report. We object to the implementation of this project unless a fully defined and adequate mitigation plan is developed and simultaneously funded and implemented. You may want to consider the reestablishment of tidal exchange to the wetlands of New Orleans East and the preservation of the wetlands in that area as potential mitigation for this project.

That concludes the Federation's comments on the hurricane levee project proposal. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the development of the final report.

Sincerely,

Edgar F. Veillon

Edgar F. Veillon
Co-Chairman
Wetlands Committee
LWF, Inc.

Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Inc.

P.O. BOX 16089 LSU
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70893
504/355-1871

May 9, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
New Orleans District
Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160

Dear Colonel Lee:

On behalf of the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, I would again like to express my appreciation for your granting our request for a public hearing for the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection project. At the public hearing, virtually every speaker made at least one of the following four recommendations:

1. That the St. Charles Parish alignment be either south of Airline Highway (U.S. Highway 61) or immediately adjacent to the north side of the Airline Highway right-of-way and have gated openings that will be operated so that water circulation and movement of estuarine organisms in this area will be maintained during non-hurricane periods.

2. That the Jefferson Parish lakefront levee be made narrower and constructed with hauled clay fill.

3. That modifications to the existing gated water control structures in New Orleans East be made to re-establish usage of the 13,000-acre New Orleans East wetland area by estuarine organisms, and/or construct the Maxent Canal levee alignment rather than the authorized alignment.

4. That a specific mitigation plan be developed and implemented that will compensate for all past and future damages associated with this project and that mitigation be made a project feature of a final plan forwarded to Washington.

These recommendations appear to be the reasonable desires of several state and federal agencies, numerous organizations, and a number of individuals who were present at the public hearing. The Louisiana Wildlife Federation is interested in knowing how the Corps of Engineers plans to consider and/or implement the aforementioned recommendations. We are also interested in knowing the schedule for completion of the final main report and supplement to the environmental

impact statement, i.e., the anticipated date of completion of these reports prior to their being forwarded for higher-level review, the date the change from the barrier to high-level plan is authorized, the target date for onset of construction, and an estimate of the date of completion. What is the anticipated schedule for developing and implementing a mitigation plan that will compensate for project-related losses to fish and wildlife? Finally, how does this mitigation schedule comply with the schedule set forth in the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and National Environmental Policy Act which require that mitigation be planned, funded, and constructed concurrent with other project features?

A response to these questions at your earliest convenience will be appreciated.

Sincerely,

Edgar F. Veillon

Edgar F. Veillon
Co-Chairman
Wetlands Committee

EFV:sp
cc: Senator Russell Long
Senator J. Bennett Johnston
Representative Lindy Boggs
Representative W.J. "Billy" Tauzin
Representative Bob Livingston
James T. B. Tripp, Environmental Defense Fund
Oliver Houck

EXHIBIT D

May 10, 1984

Col. Robert Lee
New Orleans District Corps of Eng.
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, La. 70160

Dear Col. Lee,

I would like to register my support of the levee alignment, in St. Charles Parish, immediately North of Airline Highway. The lakeshore alignment will only foster a taxpayer funded land development project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Charles Torres

Charles Torres
327 Marino Dr.
Norco, La. 70079

EXHIBIT E

SIERRA CLUB, DELTA CHAPTER

May 4, 1984

1335 Gardena Dr.
N.O., La. 70122

Department of the Army
New Orleans District Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160
attn: Planning Division-Plan Formation Branch

Dear Gentleman:

On behalf of the New Orleans Group Executive Committee of the Sierra Club, Delta Chapter, we wish to make a statement regarding the US Army Corps of Engineers Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana and Vicinity Hurricane Flood Protection Project (the Project).

We are very pleased that the Corps held another public hearing to review the latest design changes for the Project. In all fairness, the significance of the changes warranted it.

In general, the new plans for the Project are favored by the club. We specifically favor 1) the scheduled public hearing to review the detailed mitigation plan being developed and the new Environmental Impact Statement, and 2) the decision to preserve the St. Charles Parish wetlands between Airline Highway and the lakefront by building the levee along the north side of the highway.

Not favored are the plans for the New Orleans East wetlands. We believe that these 13,000 acres of wetlands should not be enclosed by the Project. This exclusion will better preserve the

natural habitat of the wetlands, discourage drainage and development of the area, and most importantly retain vital drainage areas so important in reducing the flooding from heavy rains. As more development occurs in the greater NO area this problem worsens. For these reasons, we recommend the Corps cease construction of the boundary levees and begin construction of the Maxent Canal Alignment alternative.

In conclusion, we wish to thank you for considering our interests and again for holding the public hearing. We look forward to reviewing the mitigation plan in 1985.

Respectfully,

David Acheson III

David Acheson III
Secretary-Executive Comm
New Orleans Group of the

SIERRA CLUB, DELTA CHAPTER

SHALLOW WATER ECOSYSTEMS

Rezneat M. Darnell
Department of Oceanography, Texas A & M University
College Station, Tx. 77843

Nowhere else in the world are the shallow water coastal ecosystems so extensive and so varied as those along the U.S. coast of the Gulf of Mexico. These ecosystems are made up of a series of interactive subsystems which include the following habitat types: fresh, brackish and saltwater marshes; mud and sand flats; tidal creeks; open water bays, estuaries, and lagoons; and barrier beaches. The food and energy which fuel the aquatic systems is derived from decomposition of marsh grass, open water phytoplankton, and microscopic algae which grow upon the mud and sand flats exposed at low tide. Of these three nutrient sources, the coastal marshes have been shown to be far and away the most important in determining the production of fishes, shrimp, crabs, and mollusks which make up the commercial harvest. Most of the scientific research which has demonstrated these facts has been carried out in coastal Louisiana, and especially in Lake Pontchartrain where the linkage of marsh-derived organic detritus and fishery production was first clearly demonstrated.

With the encroachment of civilization the shallow water ecosystems have been subjected to various forms of environmental deterioration. Among the most significant environmentally destructive agents are the following:

-Modification of natural water flow regimes. Upstream damming of rivers and water diversions have deprived coastal wetlands of normal water inputs, and they have modified the natural seasonal patterns of water flow.

-Leveeing and filling of marshlands. Much acreage of natural coastal marshland has been lost by direct levee and fill for industrial and residential developments.

-Leveeing of streams. Creation of extensive streambank levees has deprived many coastal wetlands of natural siltation from annual flooding. In a subsiding landscape the lack of annual silt nourishment has resulted in much wetland loss and has led to widespread saltwater intrusion.

-Canalization of marshlands. Natural drainage creeks through coastal marshlands follow tortuous dendritic patterns. Canals are deeper and follow straight line paths. They are often bounded by spoil banks which block sheet flow runoff through the marshes. Canal banks undergo slumping which leads to canal widening and more wetland loss. The encroaching saltwater brings into the marsh much sulfate which , in the organic-rich environment of the marsh, becomes chemically reduced to sulfide, and particularly to hydrogen sulfide. This extremely toxic gas is soluble in water and creates vast dead zones in the once habitable marshlands.

-Dredging activities. Although not all dredging is detrimental, in the worst cases it can result in channels and spoil banks in the water which interrupt natural circulation patterns, and spoil fill areas on the marshland which destroy valuable marsh habitat.

-Beach and dune destruction. Heavy human traffic and waterfront construction can destroy beaches and dunes. In addition, waterfront structures are highly vulnerable to damage from the force of storms and hurricanes.

-Construction of blind boat slips. Blind waterways show very poor water circulation, and this leads to anoxic conditions which become devoid of higher marine life.

-Chemical pollution. A vast array of chemical species is being dumped into the nation's

waterways, and these are all eventually transported downstream into the coastal wetlands. Among the worst offenders is domestic sewage derived from irresponsible coastal communities. In addition to contamination by coliform bacteria, heavy loads of nitrogen and phosphorus cause over-fertilization or eutrophication of the coastal waters. This leads to changes in the phytoplankton: from beneficial diatoms to bluegreen algae and finally to noxious dinoflagellates. Under severe domestic pollution the bays and estuaries develop anoxic dead zones, as has already occurred in Tampa Bay and Lake Pontchartrain.

All of the above problems are now occurring in coastal Louisiana, and many are affecting the wetlands around the New Orleans area. Under pressure from increased population and industrial activity, such problems can be expected to become much worse very fast. To circumvent these problems before they become intolerable and much more expensive to remedy, the following immediate steps are recommended.

1. There must be an emergence of informed, vocal, and visible leadership in local environmental matters. Such organizations as the Sierra Club, Ecology Center, Nature Center and higher educational institutions must take the lead in public education, formulation of issues, and development of strong public support for environmental protection measures.

2. Immediate attention should focus upon the following specific issues:

a. Protection of the remaining wetlands associated with Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borg: All efforts to destroy marshlands (by levees, real estate and industrial development, canals, and related projects) must be vigorously opposed. This is especially true for marshland east of New Orleans proper, marshes north of the Lake, and the marshes of St. Bernard Parish south of Lake Borgne, all of which are extremely important in supporting the marine life of the area.

b. Creation of locks at the north end of the Industrial Canal to prevent the saltwater and extremely toxic industrial chemicals from entering Lake Pontchartrain. Once in the Lake, such pollutants are trapped, and throughout time they will continue to build up if remedial action is not taken.

c. Diversion of Jefferson Parish sewage from Lake Pontchartrain to the Mississippi River. The Lake simply cannot become a cesspool and local health hazard.

d. Diversion of New Orleans storm drain water from Lake Pontchartrain into the Industrial Canal (after locks are in place) or directly into the Mississippi River. A vast array of chemical pollutants derives from storm sewers including lead and oils from vehicular traffic, pesticides, and industrial chemicals. Although the City of New Orleans has traditionally pumped its storm drain waters into the Lake, this will become a progressively less viable option as the population and pollution levels increase. Delay will simply force the inevitable changeover to occur at a later time when the project will be far more costly to the community.

The formula for a healthy environment, here as elsewhere, involves the effective union of scientific knowledge, environmental leadership, a sympathetic press, and an informed and active citizenry. This combination has been slow in coming in the New Orleans area, and the price has been a great and irretrievable loss of the local natural resource base. Are we now ready to get to act together?

SIERRA CLUB

SIERRA CLUB, DELTA CHAPTER

922 Octavia Street
New Orleans, LA 70115

April 12, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

RE: Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project

Dear Colonel Lee,

Lake Pontchartrain is an area of special interest for the Sierra Club. Any activity effecting the health of the Lake is important to our group. We have requested an EIS be written on the Lake whenever there is a project which would have significant effects on the Lake, such as this hurricane protection levee or shell dredging. We are anxious to also [illegible] of the suggestions by Coastal Environmentalists for Lake Pontchartrain as an Area of Special Concern. We must not continue to piecemeal the Lake to death so we ask, Special Area status and discussion for this area as a whole.

Your request for comments on the hurricane protection does illicit, even before such an ongoing EIS is complete, some very pertinent remarks. We agree that the High Level Plan, for hurricane protection is far less costly and less damaging to fish and wildlife than the Barrier Plan. Therefore, we can at this time, recommend that the High Level Plan be implemented over the Barrier Plan. It's also significant that your own data indicates that the health of the Lake is effected by this project. Why worry about the health of the Lake? Who will want to live behind these levees we are building if we have a smelly, algae filled body of water to look out at?

We ask that every possible alternative to loss of habitat be implemented. This is the only way we'll save the health of this Lake. Please remember and take heed of Dr. Rezneat M. Darnell's, Department of Oceanography, Texas A & M University comments at at Tulane University during the Sierra Club's Conference of the Gulf of Mexico, Which I submit as part of this record. He reminds us that dead zones and environmental degradation occur in Shallow Water Ecosystems, such as Lake Pontchartrain, by varied activities, including levying and filling of marsh and dredging which disturbs water circulation patterns.

SIERRA CLUB

SIERRA CLUB, DELTA CHAPTER

922 Octavia Street
New Orleans, LA 70115

April 12, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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Suggestions for this project to save the wetlands in and around this Lake and avoiding water circulation disturbance.

1. We recommend the use of the alternative Maxent Canal Alignment in the New Orleans East area. This alignment would only protect existing development and keep wetland areas wet which are needed to preserve the health of the Lake.

2. In the St Charles Parish area, the levee should again only protect the existing development north of Airline Highway. The valued recreational and natural wildlife areas should be maintained. Water circulation must be continued during non-hurricane periods by having gated openings which can remain open.

3. The Jefferson Parish lakefront levee should be made narrower than proposed in this plan and its construction should be with hauled clay fill, not making dead holed barrow pits which will stop water flow.

Finally, the Sierra Club must insist, according to the law, that the Corps develop a specific mitigation for this project. The Corps should develop and incorporate in the High Level Plan, a specific plan that compensates for all past and future project damages to fish and wildlife. Mitigation must become a feature of any final hurricane protection plan. We suggest as part of that mitigation plan a way that will help assure areas around the Lake will remain wet. We again suggest the plan for mitigation accepted by the Orleans Coastal Zone Advisory Committee be implemented in the Lake area as a whole. This idea suggests that a unit of water related development must be compensated by two (2) units for preservation which can only revert to a developed parcel, if the original developed parcel is returned to it's natural state. Areas which we would like to see preserved include, the St Charles Parish Marsh.

I trust that you and all public officials, including Governor Edwards and state officials interested in Coastal Zone Management will take these recommendations to heart and implement them to correct: 1. some of the faults of the Corps plan for hurricane protection and 2. the Lake's problems as a whole. We also take this opportunity to implore the Corps and Governor Edwards to show strong leadership which will force the already established Citizens' Advisory Committee, local and state government offices and the CZM office to sit down together tomorrow and save this special area of the Coastal Zone.We still feel that before any plan is implemented that a complete EIS must be implemented for the Lake area which will assure a multi-purpose plan for the area which includes, enough protection to save the health of the area, the renewable resource features of the area and the recreational nature of the area.

Sincerely,

Joan Phillips

Joan Phillips
N O Sierra Club
Wetlands Chair

SIERRA CLUB

EXHIBIT F

Tulane

Tulane Law School
Joseph Merrick Jones Hall
Tulane University
New Orleans, Louisiana 70118

Faculty

April 16, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

Re: Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane Protection Project: supplement to oral remarks at public hearing, April 13, 1984

Dear Colonel Lee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony at the above-referenced hearing. At the hearing, following remarks by a representative of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries concerning the proposed location of the protection levee in St. Charles Parish, I read into the record a portion of a letter from a St. Charles landowner to the Department concerning the same levee alignment. I also indicated that I would supply the letter in full for your record. Please find that letter enclosed.

Sincerely,

Oliver A. Houck
Professor of Law

OAH/rsr

cc: enclosure

m A. Monteleone, President & Managing Director

William A. Monteleone, Jr., Vice-President

rom the office of:
illiam A. Monteleone,
resident and
anaging Director

The Monteleone

Area Code 504
Tel. 523-3341
Zip Code 70140

214 Rue Royale • New Orleans, U. S. A.

March 1, 1984

Mr. Allan Ensminger
Louisiana State Wild Life & Fisheries
Post Office Box 15570
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70895

Dear Allan:

As of late, I have been attempting to bring myself up to date on the subject of the St. Charles Parish East Bank hurricane protection levee. To the best of my understanding, it appears that the location of this levee is proposed to run some minimal distance north of the Airline Highway, and parallel to same. With this information, some of the other landowners and myself, representing a majority of ownership of the St. Charles Land Syndicate, are hoping that you and some of the members of the Marsh Duck Club, might agree with us that the relocation of this proposed levee will be more advantageous for all duck hunters, and to the parish in general.

Our feeling is that the locating of the levee just north of the Airline will basically condemn our marsh to severe salt water intrusion for many, many years to come. I think we will all agree that this rapid movement of Lake Pontchartrain water back and forth into the marsh is destroying vegetation, and consequently each year our duck hunting seems to get poorer and poorer.

Now, it is my personal feeling that if the levee were located immediately on the lakeshore as it was once planned, and to replace the old Hammond Highway canal levee, as it was some 20 years ago, that we could contain a fine fresh water marsh as it was in the good old days. I feel that as suggested sometime ago, a flood gate system would be necessary. This of course, would mean keeping the brackish water out, and attempting to maintain a fresh water level within the whole marsh. We feel also that this approach is fully in accord with our State Constitution.

We hope that most of you will agree with this approach, and that together we, hopefully will be able to save our marsh.

Now, if the levee is to be constructed just north of the Airline Highway, and the marsh is to become a fish hatchery, which has been noted by environmentalist, then the landowners must re-evaluate their position. The hunting leases, as you well know, produce very minimal income, and the trapping lease produces nothing, except that our friend, Mac Plaisance, attempts to catch as many nutria as possible, in an effort to keep them from destroying what little vegetation is left.

With these facts before me, and the deteriorating duck hunting, I have made a very unhappy decision. I personally feel again that if the levee is to be placed along the Airline, it is incumbent upon me to recommend to the other owners of Land Syndicate that we should sell our land to the State, and allow it to become a State refuge, and of course, make the marsh available to the general public. This resort is very distasteful to me because I, as well as all of you, have enjoyed the privacy of our marsh. Unfortunately, as times and conditions change, so must we.

Again, working together with the Parish, Corp of Engineers, etc., maybe we can salvage something.

Yours truly,

Bill

BILL MONTELEONE

WAM/mtb

COPY:
Edwin Edwards
Clyde A. Gisclair
Charles C. Wilson
Kevin Frielou
Emile St. Pierre
A. H. Lewis
Ralph Schexnayder
Ira R. Landry
Allan B. Carmouche
Ed Lowrey

EXHIBIT G

Addresses:

Michael Halle
520 Esplanade
N. O. LA 70116

Sherman Brown, M. D.
5524 Prytania St.
N. O. LA 70115

E. Allen Bealer
2827 Aubry St.
N. O. LA 70119

G. S. Hemandy
5607 Prytania St.
N. O. LA 70115

A. Zighelbony
1000 Adams
N. O. LA 70118

L. Upton
1817 Soniat St.
N. O. LA 70115

Danella Hero
4631 Prytania Apt. C
N. O. LA 70115

Chuch Blouin
520 A Esplanade
N. O. LA 70116

J. G. Tramontana
1439 Louisiana Ave. Apt. C
N. O. LA 70115

Lydia Guillot
310 Highway Drive
Jefferson, LA 70121

Marie Anderson
4132 Laire B
Kenner, LA 70065

A. Cutler
709 W. Esplanade
Metairie, LA 70005

Christopher Hicks
5911 Airline Hwy.
Metairie, LA 70003

Gloria Smith
118 Circle West Drive
Westwego, LA 70094

J. P. Sevenair
261 Jules #38
Jefferson, LA 70121

R. Eddy III
3201 St. Charles Ave.
N. O. LA 70115

A. Byerly
3550 Coliseum St. #21
N. O. LA 70115

Cathering Gaudin
7004 Marshall Foch
N. O. LA 70124

Janice Framontana
Cornell Framontana
1439 Louisiana Ave.
Apt. C
N. O. LA 70115

E. Metz
6648 Sheffield Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Rosalie de Bessonet
100 Rhodes Ave.
N. O. LA 70114

W. King
2118 Audubon St.
N. O. LA 70118

Ann Duffy
4732 Baccich St.
N. O. LA 70122

Meredith Harnish
2731 Clover St.
N. O. LA 70122

Mary C. McNamara
214 Central Ave.
Jefferson, LA 70121

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

RE: LMNPD-F

I wish to make a statement regarding the U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana and Vicinity Hurricane Flood Protection Project (the Project).

I am very pleased that the Corps held another public hearing to review the latest design changes for the Project. In all fairness, the significance of the changes warranted it.

In general, I favor the new plans for the Project: specifically 1) the scheduled public hearing to review the detailed mitigation plan being developed and the new Environmental Impact Statement, and 2) the decision to preserve the St. Charles wetlands between Airline Highway and the lakefront by building the levee along the north side of the highway.

Not favored are the plans for the New Orleans East wetlands. I believe that these 13,000 acres of wetlands should <u>not</u> be enclosed by the Project. This exclusion will better preserve the natural habitat, discourage development of the area, and most importantly retain vital drainage areas so important in reducing the flooding from heavy rains. As more development occurs in the greater N.O. area this problem worsens. For these reasons, we recommend the Corps cease construction of the boundary levees and begin construction of the Maxent Canal Alignment alternative.

In conclusion, I wish to thank you for considering my interest and again for holding the public hearing. I look forward to reviewing the mitigation plan in 1985.

Respectfully,

Marie Anderson

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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In conclusion, I wish to thank you for considering my interest and again for holding the public hearing. I look forward to reviewing the mitigation plan in 1985.

Respectfully,

Mary Ellen Baker

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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Respectfully,

E. Allen Beaber

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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Respectfully,

Nancy S. Bousfield

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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In conclusion, I wish to thank you for considering my interest and again for holding the public hearing. I look forward to reviewing the mitigation plan in 1985.

Respectfully,

Sherman Brown

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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Respectfully,

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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Leslie O. deBessonet

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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R. L. Eddy III

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New Orleans, LA 70160

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Lydia Guillot

May 6, 1984

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New Orleans, LA 70160

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Meredith Harwick

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U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
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New Orleans, LA 70160

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Michael Fable

520 Esplanade
N.O. 70116

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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Donnella L. Steco
4631 Pritania, Apt C
New Orleans LA
70115

May 6, 1984

U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

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Audrey Cullen

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Anne Duffy

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Catherine Hayden

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John P Severain

1439 Louisiana Ave #
New Orleans, La. 70113

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Janice G. Vitamontana

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L.A. Villars

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UNO ST# 169868

May 6, 1984

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Linda Upton
1817 Soniat St.
N.O. La. 70115

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EXHIBIT H

246-4000

The Board of Levee Commissioners

OF THE

Orleans Levee District

SUITE 202 — ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
NEW ORLEANS LAKEFRONT AIRPORT

New Orleans, La.

70126

PROTECTING YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY

STATEMENT
PRESENTED AT
PUBLIC MEETING APRIL 12, 1984

HURRICANE PROTECTION TO NEW ORLEANS METROPOLITAN AREA

This statement is presented in response to the public notice dated March 9, 1984, issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District.

The records will reflect that the Orleans Levee Board is in agreement with the concept of the high level protection in lieu of the barrier concept. We have also assured you that the Orleans Levee Board will do everything in its power to provide adequate supplements to the current assurances as may be required.

Because of the protracted delay in construction which was occasioned by the 1977 environmental law suit the Orleans Levee Board embarked on an interim protection plan in 1979 and has completed the raising of all levees along the lakefront to an interim grade of plus sixteen feet mean sea level. Realizing that there are several gaps still remaining the Levee Board proposed and successfully extended an existing flood protection millage for thirty additional years.

We have awarded consultant engineering contracts for the design of interim protection at these locations and will coordinate these projects with your district in an effort to incorporate as much of the interim construction into the final plan as possible. It is our hope at this time to accomplish this work within three to four years.

The delay of final construction since 1977 has been most unfortunate. We have been very lucky that no major hurricane has hit the metropolitan area during that time. The process in which you were required to follow to satisfy the courts' requirements has been very time consuming and frustrating to this Board. You are therefore urged to take all necessary steps to expedite the implementation of the high level plan.

Please be assured that we will do everything in our power to provide you with the necessary additional assurance.

246-4000

The Board of Levee Commissioners

OF THE

Orleans Levee District

SUITE 202 — ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
NEW ORLEANS LAKEFRONT AIRPORT

New Orleans, La.

70126

PROTECTING YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY

April 24, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
Department of the Army
New Orleans District
Corps of Engineers
Post Office Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160

Re: Lake Pontchartrain & Vicinity
Hurricane Protection Project

Dear Colonel Lee:

In addition to the written statement presented to you on April 12, 1984, we herewith present the following to be added to the official record.

1. We agree that the mitigation plan be developed concurrently with the construction of hurricane protection and are unalterably opposed to completion of a mitigation plan before any construction work is commenced.

2. We agree with the New Orleans East authorized levee alignment and not the Maxent Canal levee alignment. The Orleans Levee Board many years ago constructed the initial levee from South Point to G.I.W.W. and along the G.I.W.W. utilizing local funds. To abandon this alignment in lieu of the Maxent Canal alignment would not be in the best interest of this Board and the area to be protected.

3. Delays in establishing a levee alignment in St. Charles Parish and determining acceptable construction methods along the Jefferson Lakefront should not delay the approval of the Orleans portion of the plan.

EXHIBIT I

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY
HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

STATEMENT PRESENTED TO
COL. ROBERT C. LEE, DISTRICT ENGINEER
NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BY

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PONTCHARTRAIN LEVEE DISTRICT
LUTCHER, LOUISIANA

APRIL 12, 1984

AUBREY J. LAPLACE, PRESIDENT

JESSE BARTLEY, VICE PRESIDENT

The Board of Levee Commissioners
OF THE
Pontchartrain Levee District

148 ST. ALBERT STREET

Lutcher, La.
70071

PROTECTING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

(504) 869-3562
(504) 869-3903

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JOSEPH GAUTREAU
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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
CHESTER DIEZ
OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR
DONALD CICET
R. RYLAND PERRY III
SPECIAL COUNSEL
E. J. VERON
SECRETARY

April 12, 1984

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY
HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT

The Levee District Area

The Pontchartrain Levee District currently extends from a point about three-tenths of a mile downstream of the Interstate Highway 10 Bridge at Baton Rouge to Jefferson Parish, and includes those portions of East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Ascension, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Charles Parishes east of the Mississippi River extending generally to the Amite River and along Lake Maurepas, Pass Manchac, and Lake Pontchartrain to the Jefferson-St. Charles Parish line. Previously, when local assurances were granted by the Levee District for the Barrier Protection Plan, Jefferson Parish east of the Mississippi River was included in the Pontchartrain Levee District. At this time, that same area, Jefferson Parish east of the Mississippi River, officially comprises the Jefferson Levee District. Therefore, this statement is directed to the area currently under administration of the Board of Commissioners, Pontchartrain Levee District.

Project Involvement

Prior to this time, Project activities in the Pontchartrain Levee District have been confined to Jefferson Parish (no longer a part of the Pontchartrain Levee District) and St. Charles Parish. Facts and recommendations pertaining to Jefferson Parish will be addressed by others, and cooperation will be extended as appropriate regarding previous Project involvement by the Pontchartrain Levee District.

In St. Charles Parish, the authorized Hurricane Protection Levee was designated to follow the lakefront, as in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes. At the request of, and as specified by, the New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers, the Pontchartrain Levee District purchased lakefront properties for construction of levee and drainage improvements at a land acquisition cost of $799,580.00. No project construction has been initiated in these rights-of-way extending from the Bonnet Carre Floodway to the St. Charles-Jefferson Parish line since purchase in March, 1971.

Discussion

The Board of Commissioners, Pontchartrain Levee District, wishes to go on record in support of the most effective hurricane protection project available and recommends construction completion as soon as possible. At the same time there are deep, abiding concerns that the recommended revised High Level Plan does not go far enough. The unprotected part of St. Charles and St. John Parishes adjacent to Lake Pontchartrain, and to some lesser degree the immediate tributary areas thereto, will be adversely affected by higher hurricane peak lake stages of longer durations resulting from protection works around the lake causing concentrated overflows in unprotected areas.

The local or non-federal cost in St. Charles Parish is reported to be about 23 million dollars for the barrier lakefront levee plan and approximately 17 million dollars for the north of Airline Highway location. This level of project financing can hopefully be a reality through mutual understanding and cooperation between the State, Levee District and local government.

The Board of Commissioners favors the lakefront levee alignment over the north of Airline Highway location in St. Charles Parish since protection would be provided to a larger area, it provides opportunities for water management and environmental improvements, and the Levee Board has agreed to local assurance requirements, in cooperation with the State of Louisiana, for the existing project. However, it is recognized that due to limitations and circumstances, the lakefront location would probably never be built. Therefore, project revisions become imperative if hurricane protection is to be a reality in the Pontchartrain Levee District.

Recommendations

The Board of Commissioners, Pontchartrain Levee District, recommends:

1. That the Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane Protection Project be revised from the Barrier Plan to the High Level Plan with the north of Airline Highway alignment in St. Charles Parish.

2. That the Pontchartrain Levee District be credited with contributions to the revised project equivalent to the cost of previously acquired project rights-of-way in St. Charles Parish plus legal and title fees,

3. That regarding a revised project, the Pontchartrain Levee District be given adequate opportunity to coordinate with state and local government authorities for full consideration of new, specific local assurance requirements, and

4. That every effort be made by the Corps of Engineers to achieve equitable improvements for the entire Lake Pontchartrain area, and not to improve one area at the expense of another.

Respectfully submitted,

Aubrey J. LaPlace

Aubrey J. LaPlace, President
Board of Commissioners
Pontchartrain Levee District

AUBREY J. LAPLACE, PRESIDENT

JESSE BARTLEY, VICE PRESIDENT

The Board of Levee Commissioners
OF THE
Pontchartrain Levee District

148 ST. ALBERT STREET

Lutcher, La.
70071

PROTECTING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
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OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR
DONALD CICET
R. RYLAND PERRY III
SPECIAL COUNSEL
E. J. VERON
SECRETARY

April 16, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee, District
New Orleans District
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160

Re: Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity
Hurricane Protection Project.

Dear Colonel Lee:

This letter is submitted as an extension of the statement presented and filed by the Pontchartrain Levee District at the Public Meeting, April 12, 1984.

Recommendation Number 2, as submitted, requests " that the Pontchartrain Levee District be credited with contributions to the revised project equivalent to the cost of previously acquired project rights-of-way in St. Charles Parish plus legal and title fees". Actually it was intended that this recommendation include the condition for the credit to be issued in terms of current dollar values, and this important part was inadvertently omitted during last minute preparation of the statement.

Therefore it is requested that recommendation Number 2 be revised to read as follows:

> 2. That the Pontchartrain Levee District be credited with contributions to the revised project for the cost of previously acquired project rights-of-way in St. Charles Parish plus legal and title fees, in terms of dollar values compared to the date of the project revision.

Respectfully submitted,

Aubrey J. LaPlace,
President

AJL/mrd
cc: A.R. Theis, Chief Engineer,
Gasper Chifici, District Engineer,
La. OPW

EXHIBIT J

League of Women Voters of Louisiana

850 North 5th Street • Apt. 103 • Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802 • (504) 344-3326

April 12, 1984

To: Colonel Robert C. Lee, U.S. Corps of Engineers
District Engineer
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

From: League of Women Voters of Louisiana
Bette Bornside, President Charlotte Fremaux, Natural Resources

League of Women Voters of New Orleans
League of Women Voters of Jefferson Parish

Re: Public Hearing: Draft Main Report and Draft Supplement to the Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the Lake Pontchartrain, LA, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project, Reevaluation Study.

Dear Colonel Lee:

The League of Women Voters of Louisiana, the League of Women Voters of New Orleans and the League of Women Voters of Jefferson Parish appreciate the opportunity to review at public hearing the Lake Pontchartrain Hurricane Protection Project also known as the High Level Plan.

The following statements represent basic League positions on wetland protection, resource management and safeguard of water quality as they particularly relate to the Proposed Project.

- New Orleans East: We support the exclusion of the 13,000 acre wetland area from the hurricane protection system. Soil and subsidence conditions favor opening these marshes to natural estaurine status providing valuable habitat in the basin and water recharge. Soil and subsidence conditions do not provide adequate stability for development unless costly safeguards are required. Frequently residents are faced with poor streets, drainage, etc. It is not clear if the cost of potential urbanization in a flood-prone area is reflected in the benefit analysis.

  Executive Order 11880, Protection of the Wetlands, directs federal agencies to avoid by all practicable measures and alternatives construction in wetlands. The Maxent Canal Levee appears to be an acceptable and less damaging alternative.

- St. Charles Parish: We support protection of the 3,000 acres of wetlands which the north of Airline Highway alignment would enclose. This would require culverts to maintain the existing hydrology ~~and~~ It would open the area to the possibility of future development which the south of the Airline Highway would have avoided. The piecemeal destruction of viable habitat by seemingly separate parcels often prevents grasp of the event before it is too late.

- Jefferson Parish: We view with concern the proposal to dredge material from Lake Pontchartrain, a shallow estaurine basin already impacted by a variety of stresses from development, salt water intrusion, etc. The size and depth of the dredge holes will result in significant degredation. The alternate use of levee material from the nearby Bonnet Carre Spillway is urged and further information as to this alternative will provide citizens with assurance that the long term protection of populations is coupled with an equally long term concern for the natural resources which support these populations.

Thank you for your consideration. Charlotte Fremaux

EXHIBIT K

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southeast Region
9450 Koger Boulevard
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

April 11, 1984 F/SER112/DM:gog
409/766-3699

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer, New Orleans District
Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers
P. O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

Dear Colonel Lee:

On February 24, 1984 we responded to your December 16, 1983 request for our views and comments on the December 1983 Draft Main Report (DMR) and Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) Lake Ponchartrain, Louisiana, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) comments on the DSEIS were forwarded for inclusion in the Department of Commerce's comments submitted to the Corps of Engineers (Corps) under provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. This statement is to reiterate the views we submitted on February 24, 1984 on the plans presented in the DMR, as well as discuss some items of which we have recently became aware. You have indicated that the purpose of the proposed and partly completed project is to provide hurricane flood protection to the metropolitan New Orleans area, including St. Charles, Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Bernard parishes.

Two hurricane protection plans are presented in the DMR (Syllabus page 1), (a) the use of barrier structures across tidal openings (Barrier Plan) and (b) raising the height of existing levees (High Level Plan). The Tentatively Selected (TS) High Level Plan, determined by the Corps as the most feasible one, would involve topping of existing levees and construction of a portion of new levee in the St. Charles Parish area. Under this TS plan, that new levee in St. Charles Parish would also be realigned to just north of Airline Highway instead of along the lakefront as originally authorized. The Barrier Plan, which we commented on previously (March 21, 1975, May 18, 1978, and June 27, 1978), is considered by the NMFS as being much more detrimental to marine fishery resources and their habitats than the TS High Level Plan. The Barrier Plan would have destroyed 28 acres of lake bottom, 2,363 acres of marsh and caused extensive adverse impacts to the estuarine-dependent living marine resources that utilize Lake Ponchartrain. In addition, the Barrier Plan's St. Charles Parish Lakefront Levee alignment by providing hurricane flood protection to about 40 square miles of undeveloped wetlands north of Airline Highway would have increased the probability of future drainage and/or landfill for subsequent development within those wetlands.

While the TS High Level Plan would be less damaging than the Barrier Plan, it would still adversely impact an estimated 54 acres of saline/brackish marsh and 984 acres of lake bottom. Filling some of the open water in Lake Ponchartrain and the adjacent marsh would eliminate some nursery habitat and contributions of detritus and nutrients to the marine food web. Also, the degrada-

tion through deepening of several hundred acres of the lake bottom with the TS plan is of great concern to us since that plan calls for extensive deep dredging for borrow material along the lakefront. The predicted resulting anoxic conditions of the more than 300 acres of deep borrow area in the lake along with subsequent accumulation of industrial and residential effluents could further degrade the previously shallow productive benthic habitat. Indicative of the Corps' recognition of the value of this existing lake bottom near the shore is the fact that the Corps has not permitted shell dredging within one mile of the shoreline.

Some of the above impacts from the TS plan could be further reduced by revising the proposed construction. For instance, the wetlands loss still anticipated in St. Charles Parish could be further reduced by realigning the levee, now proposed to be parallel and slightly north of Airline Highway, to be contiguous to that highway. Also, alternative sources could be used for needed fill material which would reduce or eliminate any need for dredging material from the lake. Some suggested sources for levee material are the Bonnet Carre' Spillway area, the freshwater diversion channel adjacent to the north side of the Bonnet Carre' Spillway proposed in the TS plan for the Mississippi and Louisiana Estuarine Areas feasibility study, the Mississippi River bottom and upland/fastland sites. Obtaining the needed borrow material without dredging the lake bottom could greatly reduce adverse impacts. Reduction of adverse impacts would, in turn, reduce the amount of offsetting mitigation needed.

Mitigative projects, such as the St. Bernard Parish Marsh Management Plan for enhancement of those wetlands, should be implemented. Another project to be considered for mitigation to offset the adverse impacts to marine fishery resouces would be restoring, to the greatest extent possible, marsh and water circulation where the channel was dredged for the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to by-pass the tidal barrier that would have been constructed at Chef Menteur Pass under the Barrier Plan. Also, should the Corps finally decide not to issue the permit requested by New Orleans East, Inc. (NOE), the Maxent Canal alignment shown on Plat 6 could be used instead of the proposed east levee and reestablishment of tidal exchange to that undeveloped 13,000 acres of wetland habitat in the NOE area could then be considered as mitigation to benefit estuarine fisheries in the High Level Plan. The Maxent Canal alignment was rejected by the Corps in favor of the present levee alignment due in part to the existing levee and a request by NOE to develop 9,800 acres of those wetlands. Pending the final decision on the NOE permit request, the Maxent Canal alignment should remain a viable alternative in the High Level Plan.

In addition, since we have recently been advised of accelerating marsh loss from shoreline erosion and salt water intrusion in the St. Charles wetlands north of Interstate Highway #10, we also recommend consideration of mitigation measures to reduce these impacts. Such measures could involve stabilizing the Lake Ponchartrain shoreline between St. Rose Canal and Bayou Labranche and plugging the canals draining into the drainage canal on the Jefferson - St. Charles Parishes' boundary. The major source of salt water intrusion appears to have been from the Mississippi River - Gulf Outlet by way of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal.

It is stated in the DMR (page 52) that "As far as practical, plans should be formulated to maximize the beneficial effects and minimize the adverse effects of the considered improvements." The DMR also states the plan should be environmentally acceptable. The NMFS feels that selection of the High Level Plan would be environmentally acceptable with regard to marine fishery resouces provided (1) the St. Charles reach is aligned contiguous to Airline Highway, (2) the lakefront levee is built out of hauled fill so that there would be little or no dredging in Lake Ponchartrain and (3) sufficient offsetting mitigation

is implemented concurrently with the project construction.

In view of the above, we concur with tentative selection of the High Level Plan, rather than the Barrier Plan as the less damaging construction alternative. However, we recommend that detailed plans be developed to mitigate remaining adverse impacts that cannot be reduced through alternate borrow sources and/or levee alignments as suggested above. The mitigative work should be done simultaneously with project construction of the High Level Plan. As mitigation is an integral part of the plan and the DMR (page 52) states that "Federal participation in developments also should ensure that any plan is complete within itself, . . .", the completed plans for the offsetting mitigation should be presented in the Final Main Report.

The NMFS would be pleased to coordinate with the Corps in development of plans for mitigation. Thank you for this opportunity to review and comment on this proposed project.

Sincerely yours,

for Richard J. Hoogland
Chief, Environmental Assessment
Branch

EXHIBIT L

SAVE OUR COAST
P. O. BOX 518
NEW IBERIA, LOUISIANA 70560

"IN CONSERVATION IS THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD"
A. P. HENRY

April 12, 1984

Col. Robert Lee, District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160

Dear Sir,

As president of Save Our Coast I am speaking for myself in that capacity and for the board of directors of that organization.

Our group has a strong interest in this hurricane protection project and we generally favor the overall plan as outlined in the December 1983 draft. However we do have several concerns. They are the following:

1. The plan includes the building of a massive barrow pit in Lake Pontchatrain 9 miles long 50-60 feet deep and 500 feet wide. We are completely opposed to this pit as it would completely destroy close to 600 acres of the lake bottom. This is well documented by your draft, page C VI 25 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife portion of the draft pages 35 and 36. We would recommend a highland source of barrow material for this portion of the project.

2. We are concerned with the cummulative impacts of other actives such as shell dredging, other dredge activities on the lake, urban runoff, sewerage in flow and all other adverse impacts. We would like to see this point addressed especially as it relates to the barrow pit in the lake.

3. Water quality is of extremes importance if Lake Pontchatrain is to ever recover. The sink holds portion of the plan would seriously impact in a negative way water quality in the area surrounding the construction activity for a period of at least three years.

4. Worst case conditions have not been considered and should be thoroughly investigated before this plan is implemented.

5. Purchase of ten thousand acres of wetlands on the New Orleans East Area should be considered as the loss of this area is almost certain once levee protection is provided.

6. We would recommend that the levee have gated openings so that water circulation and esturine organism movement in the wetlands area will be maintained during non-hurricane periods.

7. A specific mitigation plan that compensates for all past and future damages to wetlands, fish, wildlife, and water quality should be a part of any final plan sent to Washington.

We trust in the corps infinite wisdom to resolve these concerns.

Sincerely,

Harold J. Schoeffler

Harold J. Schoeffler
President
Save Our Coast

(1) This is another typical example of the Corps of Engineers's lack of investigation into the full impact of a problem in our state.

(2) There was an Environment Impact Study made on this project but it did not fully address the fact that this is not an isolated problem in this state — such as all the shell dredging going on in this ~~state~~ coastal zone

(3) The reknown biologist Dr Ray Darnell of Texas A&M and Dr Walter Sikora of LSU Center for Wetlands Resource have unequivocally stated that Lake Pontchartrain is on the verge of extinction as a viable eco system.

(4) Does the Corp of Engineers make decisions on scientific study or from political pressure?

(5) I am a layman, but even I can understand that digging a hole in the middle of Lake Ponchartrain is obviously wrong. Before adding to the demise of the Lake, material could be taken from alternate sources, such as the Bonne Carre Spillway.

(6) Save Our Coast supports the concept of hurricane protection but if the Corps is sincerely interested in hurricane protection, then why has their stupidity allowed the dredging of 30 miles of barrier reefs that afforded hurricane protection for central Louisiana coastline?

(7) What good are these public hearings when the Corps of Engineers do as they damn please! They do not listen to the people or scientific evidence — as exhibited by the shell dredging hearings held here in New Orleans and New Iberia in 1982.

(8) Save Our Coast is already involved in a suit against the Corps of Engineers for shell dredging permits in Lake Pontchartrain — it is our feeling that this dredging of a hole 9 miles long by 600 ft wide by 50 ft deep represents a reckless activity that destroys marine habitat that would certainly warrant litigation if permitted by the Corps.

(9) Will Col. Lee and the Corps of Engineers make an independent study of the Environment impacts discussed in the Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Studies, or will they rely on other agencies as has been their practice in the past

(10) Fishing is getting worse in Lake Pontchartrain every year — what kind of impact will this foolish dredging of such a giant hole have on the fishing, crabbing, and shrimping in Lake Pontchartrain.

(11) Scientific studies of this type of deep hole in a shallow lake as Lake Ponchatrain results in a collection of toxic materials, high salinity levels, and low oxygen — the end result of which is another huge dead hole in our lake.

(12) At present, shell dredging has created great water quality problems, and this project will greatly add to this water quality. If this project goes on for three years as planned, complete water quality is gone for much longer than that.

Harold J Schaeffler
Pres. Save Our Coast

Donald A. Parry M.D.
Vice Pres Save Our Coa

Alfred Setter Jr DIRECTOR

SAVE OUR COAST
P. O. BOX 518
NEW IBERIA, LOUISIANA 70560

"IN CONSERVATION IS THE PRESERVATION OF THE WORLD"
A. P. HENRY

NEWS RELEASE # 2

NOT FOR RELEASE UNTIL AFTER 10:00 P.M.
THURSDAY APRIL 12, 1984
SEARCH WIRE SERVICES

The entire leadership of Save Our Coast (S.O.C.) is to appear before the Corps of Engineers (C.O.E.) on Thursday April 12, 1984 at 7:00 P.M. at John F. Kennedy High School in New Orleans. This C.O.E. public hearing concerns the further destruction of Lake Ponchatrain by removal of an area of water bottom 9 miles long, 600 feet wide and 50 feet deep. This is to build a Hurricane levee for the New Orleans area.

S.O.C. supports a Hurricane levee, but strongly opposes the concept of further dredging in the lake. Alternatives such as material from the Bonnet Carre' Spillway could be better and even cheaper.

The following points emphasize the unscientific decisions, void of in depth study, that is becoming characteristic of the C.O.E..

1) Both LSU amd Texas A & M scientists agree Lake Ponchatrain is almost a dead lake. Why does the C.O.E. permit any dredging?

2) Almost 40 miles of barrier reefs that represent our central coast has been dredged to oblivion under the very nose of the C.O.E..

3) Water quality problems have already caused a halt in shell dredging in Lake Maurepas. Why add more gas to the fire?

4) The authoritative study "Biological Implications of Dredge Holes" by Ralph C. Pisapia of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service clearly teaches of the damage done by dredging deep holes. Lack of flushing causes accumulation of toxic substances, decaying organic matter, anoxia, and other adverse effects.

Save Our Coast is a citizens group, with no vested interest, concerned about the erosion of our beautiful Louisiana Coastal Zone. We are not scientists but interested enough to study and learn what authoritative documents teach about this problem. Is it too much for America to ask this of the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

Sincerely,

Harold J Schaffler

President, Save Our Coast

EXHIBIT M

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

POST OFFICE BOX 4305
103 EAST CYPRESS STREET
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA 70502

PUBLIC HEARING STATEMENT OF U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE ON THE LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT PRESENTED APRIL 12, 1984

Colonel Lee, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, my name is Robert Strader. I am presenting this statement on behalf of Mr. James W. Pulliam, Jr., Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Atlanta, Georgia. My statement represents the views of the Fish and Wildlife Service on the tentatively selected plan for the Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection project.

Under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and other legislation, the Fish and Wildlife Service has been participating in the planning of this project since the 1950's. Lake Pontchartrain is part of a highly productive estuarine ecosystem; it supports a wide range of fish and wildlife species, some of which are considered by the Fish and Wildlife Service to be Species of Special Emphasis on a national or regional basis. These include the bald eagle, several species of migratory waterfowl, American woodcock, mourning dove, American alligator, and numerous others. The fishery resources of Lake Pontchartrain are extremely important from a commercial and recreational standpoint. Estuarine-dependent shrimp, crabs, and finfishes utilize the low-to-moderate salinity waters of Lake Pontchartrain as nursery areas and move to more saline waters as they mature.

In our February 22, 1975, public hearing statement, the Fish and Wildlife Service indicated its concerns regarding the potential effects of the then-proposed tidal barriers at Chef Menteur and the Rigolets Passes on Lake Pontchartrain salinities and the movement of fish and shellfish through those passes. Since that time, the impacts of the High-level Plan and Barrier Plan have been analyzed and compared. The results of this analysis, reported in our draft Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act report, indicate that completion of the High-level Plan would be far less damaging to fish and wildlife resources than completion of the Barrier Plan. Therefore, the Fish and Wildlife Service concurs with the Corps of Engineers' selection of the High-level Plan, rather than the Barrier Plan, as the tentatively selected plan.

In our January 28, 1983, preliminary draft Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report and in our October 13, 1983, draft Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report, the Service made the following recommendations to reduce impacts on fish and wildlife resources:

1) Eliminate the St. Charles Parish alignment, or, if this levee segment is built, operate the proposed water control structures to assure water circulation and estuarine organism movement through the levee.

2) Purchase non-development and flowage easements over the 9,700-acre wetland area in New Orleans East and modify the water control structures along the South Point to Gulf Intracoastal Waterway levee segment to allow water and estuarine organism movement through the levee, between the enclosed wetland area and the adjacent estuary.

3) Eliminate or reduce impacts associated with the proposed borrow holes in Lake Pontchartrain adjacent to the Jefferson Parish Lakefront levee by either hauling levee material from another area or developing a dredging method that will alleviate water quality or biological productivity problems caused by these holes.

4) Develop a mitigation plan that will fully compensate for all quantifiable project impacts to biological productivity resulting from past and future project work and that will be implemented simultaneously with construction of all project features.

Incorporation of a mitigation plan into the main report and supplement to the environmental impact statement is necessary if timely compensation of damages to fish and wildlife resources is to become an integral part of project funding and construction. The addition of a mitigation plan to these reports prior to their being forwarded to Washington for approval and funding will insure full compliance with the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and National Environmental Policy Act.

In the St. Charles Parish portion of the project area, the Service considers a levee with gated water-control structures that follows an alignment immediately adjacent to Airline Highway rather than 500 to 1,000 feet north of the highway to be the least damaging, viable alternative. We voiced our support for such an alternative alignment during a recent meeting attended by members of your staff.

The Service recognizes that project modifications to date have significantly reduced impacts to fish and wildlife resources. We stand ready to assist the Corps of Engineers in the refinement of measures to further mitigate those impacts.

Thank you.

EXHIBIT N

CLIO Sportsman's LEAGUE

Address Reply To: P. O. BOX 26353 • NEW ORLEANS, LA. 70186

4/12/84

My name is Glenn Mercadal and I'm here representing the Clio Sportsman's League of New Orleans whose membership comes from surrounding parishes as well as New Orleans.

I would first like to thank Colonel Lee and the Corps for holding this public meeting at a time when interested groups and individuals would be able to attend.

As we have done in the past, we would once again like to be put on record as opposing the construction of any barrier plan. We would also like to be put on record as not being opposed to hurricane protection but, being opposed to the protection of undeveloped private property at the expense of the public. Too many times so called "hurricane protection" has caused either directly or indirectly the development of acres upon acres of vital wetland habitat.

In St. Charles Parish we favor levee alignment #3. This alignment would provide the maximum opportunity for hurricane protection with a minimum amount of habitat loss.

This levee alignment, #3, should be immediately adjacent to the Airline highway and only deviate to protect existing developments north of the Airline highway. Such a levee should have several gated structures, not drainage structures, so that water circulation can be maintained.

In Jefferson Parish, the idea of dredging Lake Pontchartrain for levee material is totally unexceptable. The present trend seems to be finally shifting in the preservation of the lake. Although suffering from shell dredging, salt water intrusion, sewerage and urban runoff, steps such as limited dredging, new treatment plants and fresh water diversion structures are existing or in the plans to solve many of these problems.

A hole as described for levee construction would do nothing but harm. The Corps themselves even feel that physical and chemical stratification would occur and that such an area would become unfavorable to aquatic life. In lieu of dredging the lake the idea of hauling in fill seems the most environmentally favorable.

In New Orleans East a situation existswhich should have never happened and is definitely a prime example of how so called "hurricane protection" has caused the development of wetlands.

Although we tend to favor the Maxent Canal alignment (#2) such a levee would be inside an already existing levee.

Since the chance of removing an existing levee is remote the Maxent Canal alignment would be wasteful. This also seems to remove any real alternative to the existing levee alignment. We therefore can only favor the existing levee alignment with adequate water control structures. Such structures should be in both the eastern most alignment and the alignment north of I-10. Efforts should be made to see that the area bounded by Paris road, Highway 90, the eastern most levee alignment and Lake Pontchartrain be maintained in a wetland status and development limited.

We would also like to point out that unsuspecting home owners have had on-going serious sinking problems as a result of development in New Orleans East.

The St. Bernard levee alignment is virtually in the same situation as New Orleans East. Since levees already exist we can only recommend that improvements be made and that an adequate number of water control structures be installed. Development should be closely monitored and limited.

Mitigation is a very important aspect of this project. Although mentioned, there is no real specific proposed plan. The Corps should recommend a specific plan which should offer compensation for all past and future project damages to fish, wildlife and their habitat.

A possible mitigation for New Orleans East would be the purchase

of non-development rights and flow easements over such property.

No matter what mitigation plan is chosen a key issue we would like to stress is that mitigation must, we repeat, must , become a feature of any final plan before being sent to Washington for funding.

In closing, we again thank Colonel Lee and the Corps for the opportunity to express our views and request that they be considere

EXHIBIT O

CERTIFIED - P-669-875-509

May 11, 1984

Colonel Robert C. Lee
District Engineer
New Orleans District
Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, Louisiana 70160

Dear Colonel Lee:

Through this letter I wish to submit comments on the "Draft Main Report and Draft Supplement to the Environmental Impact Statement, Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana, and Vicinity Hurricane Protection Project," dated December, 1983 (DEIS). These comments are submitted in behalf of New Orleans East, Inc., for whom our firm serves as environmental and planning consultant.

New Orleans East, Inc., is a major landowner in eastern Orleans Parish and owns approximately 28,000 acres of land that will be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed project. Of the Corporation's holdings, approximately 18,100 acres lie inside of the proposed levee alignments and approximately 9,900 acres lie outside of the alignments. Approximately 5500 acres of the Corporation's land inside of the proposed alignment is presently under development.

As indicated in the DEIS, New Orleans East, Inc., has applied for a permit to drain 9800 acres of land inside of the existing levee alignment in preparation for additional urban development. This proposed project is consistent with long-term land use plans of the Orleans Parish Planning Commission and the Orleans Parish Council. Such plans for drainage and development of this area have been approved and endorsed by the parish government since the 1950s. The project will result in an urban development that has minimal environmental impacts, provides protection against natural hazards, and which will provide major social and economic benefits to the City of New Orleans and the region. The plans for this project are subject to further public review and permit procedures and as indicated in the DEIS are a separate issue from the hurricane protection levee.

Two possible alignments for the high level plan are considered in the DEIS in the area of the New Orleans East, Inc., properties. The alignment tentatively selected by the Corps follows existing hurricane protection levees. The alternative in designated as the Maxent Canal alignment.

The Maxent Canal alternative alignment would require significant acreage of additional right-of-way through New Orleans East, Inc., property. It should also be pointed out that a segment of Interstate 10, one of the major hurricane evacuation routes for the City of New Orleans, is located within the area enclosed by the existing levee alignment. This section of I-10 was constructed on a low embankment with an average surface elevation of 5.2 feet above mean sea level. Its design was based upon the assumption that it would be within the confines of the hurricane protection levee

system and that the area adjacent to the embankment would be drained. Abandonment of the existing levee alignment in favor of the Maxent Canal alignment may result in the need to increase the elevation of the roadbed and make other design changes along this segment of the interstate. It appears that these costs have not been considered in comparing the alternatives.

The Corporation favors the tentatively selected high level plan which follows the existing levee alignment in Orleans Parish. This plan will provide needed flood protection for areas currently under development, can be done for the least cost, will require the least amount of additional right-of-way, and will not foreclose options for future land use change that are consistent with good regional planning.

The "Announcement of Public Meeting" for the Hurricane Protection Project, dated March 9, 1984, mentions marsh restoration work at the Chef Menteur barrier structure site. Construction of a bypass channel of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway around the structure site had begun prior to the court order that stopped the original barrier plan. Diked areas along the bypass channel have been opened and closures have been built in flotation channels and borrow pits to restore natural drainage and tidal flow. The announcement indicates that "the amount of environmental damage at this site requiring mitigation is being reevaluated in light of this restoration work." Since this damage affects New Orleans East, Inc., properties, the Corporation wishes to be kept fully apprised of all such reevaluations and proposals for restoration and/or mitigation in the vicinity of the barrier structure site as well as any other proposals for mitigation which may affect its properties.

It should also be noted that the long term plans for New Orleans East, Inc., for use of this strategically located property will be consistent with the approved plans of Orleans Parish, both in regard to areas designated for development, and for areas designated for conservation management. New Orleans East, Inc., has always been, and continues to be supportive of projects that represent a wise use of the land and its resources. It is the Corporation's intention to work in conjunction with public bodies in moving toward a long-term, multi-use plan for this strategically located property that will serve the people of the region in the best possible way.

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on this important project.

Sincerely yours,

Sherwood M. Gagliano

Sherwood M. Gagliano, Ph.D.
Agent for New Orleans East, Inc.

SMG/ld

cc: Nolan Marye
New Orleans East, Inc.

EXHIBIT P

STATEMENT: LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION LEVEE

IN OUR STATEMENT ON THIS MATTER DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC HEARING ON FEBRUARY 22, 1975, WE DISCUSSED THE LEVEE ALIGNMENT IN ST. CHARLES PARISH AND ADVOCATED THE U. S. HIGHWAY 61 ALIGNMENT. THIS ADVOCACY WAS BASED UPON SEVERAL CONSIDERATIONS THAT WE THOUGHT PARAMOUNT AT THAT TIME. THOSE CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDED THE ADVERSE IMPACT OF THE AUTHORIZED ALIGNMENT ON THE PRODUCTIVITY OF LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, AND THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER ENCROACHMENT OF DEVELOPMENT INTO THE WETLANDS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ISOLATED BY THE HURRICANE PROTECTION LEVEE ALONG THE LAKESHORE. ON THESE TWO POINTS OUR VIEWS REMAIN BASICALLY UNCHANGED. ALTHOUGH WE REALIZE THAT 404 HAS ALTERED THE COMPLEXION OF THE DEVELOPMENT ISSUE, IT HAS NOT BEEN ALTERED SUBSTANTIALLY ENOUGH TO CAUSE US TO TOTALLY REVERSE OUR STANCE.

OUR APPROACH TO THE IMPACT ANALYSIS AT THAT TIME WAS FROM AN AQUATIC ECOSYSTEM PERSPECTIVE, I.E. THE EFFECTS ON THE LAKE AND ITS PRODUCTIVITY. THE PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE SINCE COME TO LIGHT AFFECTING THE TERRESTRIAL SYSTEM IN THE AREA SUCH AS SALTWATER INTRUSION AND SUBSIDENCE WERE EITHER OVERLOOKED OR NOT CONSIDERED SIGNIFICANT AT THE TIME.

WE NOW FIND OURSLEVES IN A POSITION OF NECESSARILY ASSESSING THE POTENTIAL IMPACTS FROM BOTH THE AQUATIC AND TERRESTRIAL PERSPECTIVE. THE WETLANDS ARE NO LESS IMPORTANT TO THE LAKES PRODUCTIVITY TODAY THAN THEY WERE NINE YEARS AGO, HOWEVER THESE WETLANDS ARE BEING RAPIDLY DEGRADED, AND IN SOME CASES CONVERTED TO OPEN WATER, THUS LOWERING THEIR VALUE BOTH AS AN AQUATIC AND A TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEM. THIS DEGRADATION IS MOST NOTICEABLY MANIFESTED IN THE REDUCTION OF THE QUALITY OF WINTERING HABITAT FOR MIGRATORY WATERFOWL. THE INTRODUCTION

OF THE ALLIGATOR FLEA BEETLE INTO THE UNITED STATES BY THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND ITS EVENTUAL INVASION OF THE ST. CHARLES PARISH MARSHES ELIMINATED THIS IMPORTANT MARSH SEMI-AQUATIC PLANT. ITS REMOVAL PERMITTED AN ACCELERATED INTERCHANGE OF WATER FROM THE INTERIOR MARSHES AND SWAMPS. THE ILLINOIS GULF CENTRAL RAILROAD EMBANKMENT HAS PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN RETARDING THE DEGRADATION OF THESE MARSHES BY CONCENTRATING THE SALTWATER INTRUSION ALONG THE WATERWAYS LEADING TO THEIR TRESSELS. THIS IS CLEARLY SHOWN BY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SALTWATER PLANT COMMUNITIES SUCH AS WIREGRASS ON THE RIVER SIDE OF THE RAILROAD EMBANKMENT ADJACENT TO THESE OPENINGS. THE ALARMING EDAPHIC CHANGES IN THESE MARSHES IS NOT ONLY LIMITED TO THE MARSHLAND BUT HAS BEGUN TO CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE ITSELF IN THE CYPRESS TUPELO SWAMP COMPLEX. EACH YEAR THERE IS AN INCREASING NUMBER OF CYPRESS WHICH FAIL TO LEAF OUT IN THE SPRINGTIME AND THE GENERAL HEALTH AND VIGOR OF THE SWAMP IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE AREA ARE CLEARLY SHOWING THE STRESS OF SALTWATER INTRUSION. THIS IS WHERE THE SOUTHERN BALD EAGLE NEST IS LOCATED AND SHOULD BE GIVEN HIGH PRIORITY AS CRITICAL HABITAT FOR THIS ENDANGERED SPECIES.

THE ENCROACHMENT OF THE LAKE INTO THE ST. CHARLES WETLANDS MUST BE RETARDED OR REVERSED, IF POSSIBLE, TO MAINTAIN THE BALANCE THAT HAS EXISTED HERE FOR SOME TIME. ~~A~~ THAT MEANS THAT AQUATIC ORGANISMS MUST STILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE WETLANDS AND THE SCENIC STREAMS MUST REMAIN INTACT, BUT THE WETLANDS, TO MAINTAIN THEIR IMPORTANCE TO THESE ORGANISMS MUST ALSO BE MAINTAINED.

THE ONLY WAY THAT THE BALANCE CAN BE PRESERVED IS TO PREVENT FURTHER EROSION AND SALTWATER INTRUSION INTO WETLANDS. THE PREVENTION OF THE TWO MENTIONED ACTIVITIES <u>COULD</u> BE ACCOMPLISHED BY BUILDING THE

LEVEE ON THE LAKE FRONT, BUT THAT WOULD NOT MAINTAIN THE BALANCE AND AGAIN RAISE THE FORMER OBJECTIONS. BUILDING THE LEVEE ALONG HIGHWAY 61 WILL NOT, BY ITSELF, PREVENT THE FURTHER DEGRADATION OF THESE IMPORTANT WETLANDS. THEREFORE, A COMBINATION OF METHODS MUST BE EMPLOYED TO PROVIDE BOTH HURRICANE PROTECTION FOR THE DEVELOPED AREAS WHILE MAINTAINING THE INTEGRITY OF THE WETLANDS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAKE.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT SOME WORK BE ACCOMPLISHED ALONG THE LAKESHORE OF ST. CHARLES PARISH BETWEEN THE BONNET CARRE' AND THE JEFFERSON PARISH LINE. IF THIS IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED THEN THE MARSHES AND SWAMPS WILL CONTINUE TO CONVERT TO OPEN WATER EVENTUALLY RESULTING IN A LAKESHORE LEVEE ALIGNMENT BY DEFAULT. THAT IS THE LEVEE OR THE ILLINOIS GULF CENTRAL RAILROAD EMBANKMENT WILL BECOME THE LAKESHORE.

ST. CHARLES PARISH HAS A PLAN (A PORTION OF WHICH HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED) WHICH SHOULD BE OF BENEFIT TO THE WETLANDS HERE. WE ASK THE CORPS, AS PART OF THE MITIGATION PACKAGE FOR THIS PROJECT, TO ASSIST AND ENCOURAGE ST. CHARLES PARISH AND THE STATE OF LOUISIANA IN FUNDING AND IMPLEMENTING THIS PLAN, AND/OR CONSTRUCT SUCH BARRIERS, WATER CONTROL STRUCTURES AND APPURTENANCES THAT ARE REQUIRED TO STABILIZE AND PRESERVE THE ST. CHARLES WETLANDS WHICH WILL BE IMPACTED BOTH DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY AS A RESULT OF THIS PROJECT.

UNLESS SOME ACTION IS TAKEN TO MAINTAIN THESE WETLANDS AND THEIR ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, ST. CHARLES, JEFFERSON AND ORLEANS PARISHES, THE DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES CANNOT FULLY SUPPORT THE U. S. 61 ALIGNMENT DESPITE THE STAND THAT WE HAVE TAKEN IN PAST YEARS.

VI. SCENARIO PREPARED FOR PUBLIC MEETING

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY
HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT
12 APRIL 1984
PUBLIC MEETING
OPENING REMARKS

THEIS: GOOD EVENING LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WELCOME TO THIS MEETING. I AM ARTHUR THEIS, THE CHIEF ENGINEER FOR THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS OF THE LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND DEVELOPMENT. (INTRODUCES OPW STAFF) THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS IS A STATE AGENCY DESIGNATED TO REPRESENT OUR STATE IN THE REVIEW AND COORDINATION OF WATER RESOURCES STUDIES AND PROJECTS IN LOUISIANA. OUR PURPOSE HERE THIS EVENING IS TO GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT YOUR VIEWS ON THE TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN FOR COMPLETING THE ONGOING LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT.

THE CORPS' PRESENT STUDIES WERE BEGUN AS A RESULT OF LAWSUITS FILED IN 1975 AGAINST THE PROJECT AND A RESULTANT 1977 COURT INJUNCTION AGAINST PORTIONS OF THE PROJECT. THE GOAL OF THESE STUDIES IS TO DETERMINE THE BEST PLAN OF ACTION TO COMPLETE THE HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT AND LEGALLY DOCUMENT THE PLAN BY SUPPLEMENTING THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT.

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT PUBLIC MEETINGS SUCH AS THIS ONE ARE HELD TO OBTAIN THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF THOSE OF YOU WHO MAY BE AFFECTED BY IMPLEMENTING THE PROPOSED PLAN.

AT THIS TIME I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE TO YOU COLONEL ROBERT LEE, DISTRICT ENGINEER OF THE NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT OF THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS WHO WILL CONDUCT THE BUSINESS PORTION OF TODAY'S MEETING.

LEE: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AS MR. THEIS SAID, WE ARE HERE THIS EVENING TO PRESENT THE DETAILS OF OUR TENTATIVELY SELECTED PLAN FOR PROVIDING HURRICANE FLOOD PROTECTION AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME FOR PEOPLE RESIDING IN THE GREATER NEW ORLEANS METROPOLITAN AREA. THIS IS THE "HIGH LEVEL" OR LEVEES ONLY PLAN. AS THE PROJECT MANAGER WILL EXPLAIN, WE DECIDED ON THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN BASED ON TWO MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS. FIRST, THIS PLAN WILL PROVIDE HURRICANE PROTECTION TO THE CITIZENS OF GREATER NEW ORLEANS AT THE LOWEST COST, AND SECONDLY, IT WILL BE LESS ENVIRONMENTALLY DAMAGING THAN THE PREVIOUSLY PROPOSED BARRIER PLAN. WE EXPECT TO PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT PROTECTION TO THE MAJORITY OF AREA RESIDENTS BY 1990 WITH THIS PLAN.

THIS PLAN WAS PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC ONCE BEFORE IN NOVEMBER 1981 AT A MEETING HELD HERE. SINCE THAT TIME, THE PLAN HAS BEEN MODIFIED TO INCLUDE PROTECTION FOR THE EAST BANK OF ST. CHARLES PARISH. A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT WAS PREPARED AND WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC IN DECEMBER 1983 FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT. WE WILL CONSIDER WRITTEN COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE EIS AND STATEMENTS MADE AT THIS MEETING IN PREPARING THE FINAL EIS. WHEN FINALIZED, THE EIS WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AS A SUPPLEMENT TO THE EXISTING EIS.

I'D LIKE TO BRIEFLY EXPLAIN HOW WE PLAN TO PROCEED THIS EVENING. FIRST, WE'LL GIVE YOU A PRESENTATION ON OUR STUDY FINDINGS. FOLLOWING OUR PRESENTATION, WE'LL RECEIVE COMMENTS BY INDIVIDUALS BEGINNING WITH ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS. WITH US TONIGHT ARE ... (RECOGNIZES MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND IMPORTANT OFFICIALS).

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO INTRODUCE SEVERAL MEMBERS OF MY STAFF WHO ARE WITH ME TODAY. THEY HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN STUDY. (INTRODUCES STAFF). THESE FOLKS WILL BE AVAILABLE AFTER THE MEETING SHOULD YOU CARE TO SPEAK TO THEM ABOUT THE PROJECT.

AT THIS TIME I'LL HAVE THE STUDY MANAGER, LYNN DEVAUL PRESENT OUR STUDY FINDINGS.

DEVAUL: THANK YOU COL LEE

(SLIDE 1) THE LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN, LOUISIANA, AND VICINITY HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT AS ORIGINALLY AUTHORIZED CONSISTED (SLIDE 2) OF LEVEES AND FLOODWALLS ALONG LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN AND ENCIRCLING THE CHALMETTE AREA AS WELL AS BARRIER COMPLEXES AT THE LAKE'S MAIN TIDAL PASSES AT THE RIGOLETS, CHEF MENTEUR PASS, AND SEABROOK. (SLIDE 3). THE BARRIERS WOULD PROVIDE PROTECTION FROM HURRICANES ALONG CERTAIN PATHS WHICH TEND TO DRIVE WATER INTO THE LAKE. AS THE STORM PASSES, THE WINDS PUSH THE WATER AGAINST THE SOUTH SHORE INTO THE CITY. THESE BARRIER COMPLEXES, WHICH WOULD NORMALLY REMAIN OPEN, WOULD BE CLOSED ONLY WHEN HURRICANES APPROACH LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE BUILD-UP OF WATER LEVELS IN THE LAKE. CONSTRUCTION OF THE BARRIER COMPLEXES WOULD, THEREFORE, REDUCE THE HEIGHT AND COSTS OF LEVEE AND FLOODWALL CONSTRUCTION ALONG THE SOUTH SHORE OF LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN. (SLIDE 4) THE NEXT 3 SLIDES SHOW AN ARTIST'S DRAWING OF THE 3 BARRIER COMPLEXES. THE RIGOLETS, (SLIDE 5) CHEF MENTEUR, (SLIDE 6) SEABROOK.

(SLIDE 7) THE REMAINDER OF THE AUTHORIZED PLAN'S FEATURES CONSISTS OF LEVEES (SLIDE 8) AND FLOODWALLS. (SLIDE 9) CONSTRUCTION ON THIS PROJECT WAS INITIATED IN 1966. TO DATE THE PROJECT IS 51 PERCENT COMPLETE. EXCLUDING THE BARRIERS, THE PROJECT IS 75 PERCENT COMPLETE. A TOTAL OF $185 MILLION HAS BEEN SPENT ON CONSTRUCTION WORK SO FAR. THERE ARE ONLY TWO PORTIONS OF THE PROJECT WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN STARTED--THE ST. CHARLES PARISH LEVEE WHICH WAS DEFERRED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS AND THE MANDEVILLE SEAWALL.

(SLIDE 10) IN 1975 THE NEW ORLEANS DISTRICT COMPLETED AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON THE PROJECT. LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS CHALLENGED THE ADEQUACY OF THE EIS IN COURT AND IN 1977 THE COURT FOUND THAT THE EIS WAS INADEQUATE IN ITS ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPACTS OF TWO OF THE BARRIER STRUCTURES. THE COURT ENJOINED US FROM FURTHER WORK ON THE ENTIRE PROJECT UNTIL AN ADEQUATE EIS COULD BE PREPARED. (SLIDE 11) AFTER PRESENTATION OF ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE BY THE CORPS, THE INJUNCTION WAS MODIFIED IN 1978 TO INCLUDE ONLY THE RIGOLETS AND CHEF MENTEUR BARRIER STRUCTURES. WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CONTINUE WORK ON THE LEVEE AND FLOODWALL PORTIONS OF THE PROJECT.

(SLIDE 12) IN ADDITION TO PREPARING A SUPPLEMENT TO THE EIS, THE COURT DIRECTED THE CORPS TO INVESTIGATE ALTERNATIVE PLANS OF HURRICANE PROTECTION.

THERE ARE ONLY TWO METHODS OF PROTECTION--ONE IS TO USE BARRIERS COMBINED WITH LEVEES AND FLOODWALLS LIKE THE AUTHORIZED BARRIER PLAN. THE OTHER IS TO CONSTRUCT ONLY LEVEES AND FLOODWALLS. THIS PLAN CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN BECAUSE IT WOULD PROVIDE HIGHER LEVEES THAN THE BARRIER PLAN. UNDER THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN, THE LEVEES ALONG LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN WOULD BE CONSTRUCTED HIGH ENOUGH TO CONTAIN THE SWOLLEN LAKE WITHOUT THE USE OF BARRIER STRUCTURES. LEVEES ALONG THE GULF OUTLET, THE INNER HARBOR NAVIGATION CANAL, AND IN CHALMETTE WOULD BE THE SAME HEIGHT UNDER EITHER PLAN. WITHIN EACH PLAN, WE LOOKED AT DIFFERENT LEVEE ALIGNMENTS AND VARIOUS CONSTRUCTION METHODS TO DEVELOP THE BEST BARRIER PLAN AND THE BEST HIGH LEVEL PLAN BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY.

FIRST WE LOOKED AT VARYING LEVEE ALIGNMENTS AS A WAY OF REDUCING COSTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS. BECAUSE OF THE EXTENT OF EXISTING URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND THE DEGREE OF LEVEE WORK ALREADY COMPLETED, IT WAS ONLY POSSIBLE TO VARY ALIGNMENTS IN TWO AREAS, NEW ORLEANS EAST AND ST. CHARLES PARISH.

(SLIDE 13) TWO ALIGNMENTS WERE STUDIED IN NEW ORLEANS EAST.

THE AUTHORIZED LEVEE ALIGNMENT WOULD RAISE AND STRENGTHEN THE EXISTING LEVEES SURROUNDING NEW ORLEANS EAST. THE EXISTING DRAINAGE STRUCTURES WOULD BE MODIFIED SO THAT THE DRAINAGE PATTERNS IN THE ENCLOSED AREA WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED.

IN THE NEW ORLEANS EAST AREA CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED OVER THE ENCLOSURE OF 13,000 ACRES OF WETLANDS BY THE AUTHORIZED ALIGNMENT. THEREFORE, WE STUDIED AN ALTERNATIVE LEVEE ALIGNMENT ROUGHLY PARALLELING MAXENT CANAL FOR BOTH BARRIER AND HIGH LEVEL PLAN. (SLIDE 14) THE MAXENT CANAL ALIGNMENT WOULD EXCLUDE ABOUT 13,000 ACRES OF WETLANDS. ALTHOUGH THIS ALIGNMENT IS MUCH SHORTER IN LENGTH THAN THE AUTHORIZED LEVEE ALIGNMENT IT WOULD REQUIRE CONSTRUCTION OF A BRAND NEW LEVEE RATHER THAN MERELY IMPROVING EXISTING LEVEES. FOR THIS REASON, THE MAXENT CANAL ALIGNMENT WOULD COST APPROXIMATELY $70 MILLION MORE THAN THE AUTHORIZED LEVEE ALIGNMENT FOR EITHER THE BARRIER OR THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN.

THE COST DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN THE TWO ALIGNMENTS IS ~~EVEN~~ ACTUALLY GREATER THAN THE $70 MILLION THAT WAS ~~ORIGINALLY~~ CALCULATED FOR THE REPORT. CONSTRUCTION WORK HAS ~~BEEN ONGOING~~ CONTINUED ON THE AUTHORIZED ALIGNMENT SINCE THE TIME THESE COSTS ESTIMATES WERE PREPARED, SO THE COST TO COMPLETE THE AUTHORIZED ALIGNMENT IS NOW LESS.

(SLIDE 15) THE WETLAND AREA BETWEEN THE TWO LEVEE ALIGNMENTS HAS BEEN ENCLOSED BY LOCALLY-BUILT LEVEES AND RAILROAD EMBANKMENTS SINCE 1958. CONTROL STRUCTURES IN THE EXISTING LEVEE PROVIDE FOR ONE-WAY DRAINAGE OUT OF THE AREA. SINCE THIS AREA HAD BEEN CUT FROM NORMAL TIDAL EXCHANGE PRIOR TO THE FEDERAL HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT, SELECTING THE AUTHORIZED ALIGNMENT WOULD NOT CHANGE THE DRAINAGE CONDITION. NO NEW WETLAND AREAS ARE GOING TO BE ENCLOSED. BASED ON OUR ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, THE SELECTION OF THE MAXENT CANAL ALIGNMENT FOR AN ADDITIONAL $70 MILLION OR MORE SOLELY TO EXCLUDE THE~~SE~~ WETLANDS, ALREADY ENCLOSED, IS NOT ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED.

CONCERN HAS BEEN EXPRESSED THAT THE WETLANDS INSIDE THE AUTHORIZED ALIGNMENT WOULD BE SUBJECT TO DRAINAGE AND DEVELOPMENT. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE WETLANDS WILL CONTINUE TO BE REGULATED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT WHICH REQUIRES A PERMIT FROM THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS TO DEPOSIT DREDGE OR FILL MATERIAL IN WETLANDS. THESE PERMIT DECISIONS ARE MADE BASED ON THE OVERALL PUBLIC INTEREST. IF A PERMIT WERE ISSUED FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THIS AREA, THE DEVELOPER WOULD BE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE MITIGATION. (SLIDE 16) IN ADDITION, WE DID NOT CLAIM ANY BENEFITS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THESE WETLANDS. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE HURRICANE PROTECTION PROJECT DOES NOT DEPEND ON POTENTIAL FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEW ORLEANS EAST WETLANDS. WE CHOSE THE AUTHORIZED LEVEE ALIGNMENT IN THIS AREA FOR BOTH THE BARRIER AND THE HIGH LEVEL PLANS BECAUSE IT IS THE MOST ECONOMICAL ALTERNATIVE AND WILL NOT CHANGE EXISTING DRAINAGE PATTERNS. ¶ WE THEN LOOKED AT LEVEE ALIGNMENTS IN ST. CHARLES PARISH.

THE PLAN PRESENTED AT THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD IN 1981 DID NOT INCLUDE HURRICANE PROTECTION FOR ST. CHARLES PARISH BECAUSE NONE WAS BELIEVED TO BE ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED. FIELD INVESTIGATIONS MADE SINCE THAT TIME HAVE INDICATED THAT HURRICANE DAMAGES IN ST. CHARLES PARISH WOULD BE GREATER THAN ORIGINALLY CALCULATED AND WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY PROVIDING PROTECTION.

(SLIDE 17) IN THE ST. CHARLES PARISH AREA, WE LOOKED AT THREE LEVEE ALIGNMENTS: THE AUTHORIZED LAKEFRONT ALIGNMENT, AN ALIGNMENT RUNNING NORTH OF AND GENERALLY PARALLEL TO THE AIRLINE HIGHWAY (THE NORTH OF AIRLINE HIGHWAY ALIGNMENT), AND A THIRD ALIGNMENT WHICH IS SIMILAR TO THE SECOND EXCEPT THAT A PORTION OF THE LEVEE WOULD JOG SOUTH OF AIRLINE HIGHWAY.

THE LAKEFRONT ALIGNMENT WOULD BE THE MOST EXPENSIVE OF THE ALTERNATIVES TO CONSTRUCT. IT WOULD COST APPROXIMATELY 2 1/2 TIMES AS MUCH AS THE CHEAPEST ALTERNATIVE OR OVER $80 MILLION MORE. THIS ALIGNMENT WOULD ALSO HAVE THE MOST SEVERE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS. (SLIDE 18) IT WOULD RESTRICT TIDAL EXCHANGE TO A VERY VALUABLE AND PRODUCTIVE WETLAND AREA. THE LEVEE WOULD ALSO IMPACT BAYOU LA BRANCHE AND BAYOU TREPAGNIER WHICH THE STATE HAS DESIGNATED AS NATURAL AND SCENIC STREAMS. THEREFORE, WE ELIMINATED THIS ALIGNMENT FOR BOTH ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS. (SLIDE 19) THE NORTH OF AIRLINE HIGHWAY ALIGNMENT IS THE LEAST EXPENSIVE ALTERNATIVE. CULVERTS WOULD BE PROVIDED IN THE LEVEE TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING DRAINAGE PATTERNS IN THE WETLANDS SOUTH OF AIRLINE. THESE WETLANDS CURRENTLY RECEIVE FLOW THROUGH CULVERTS UNDERNEATH THE AIRLINE HIGHWAY EMBANKMENT.

THIS ALIGNMENT WOULD LEAVE 26,000 ACRES OF VALUABLE WETLANDS BETWEEN THE LAKE AND THE LEVEE OPEN TO TIDAL INTERCHANGE.

(SLIDE 20) WE ALSO STUDIED AN ALIGNMENT SOUTH OF AIRLINE HIGHWAY. THIS ALIGNMENT WOULD SWING BEHIND A 3,200-ACRE WETLAND AREA. SINCE THE DRAINAGE PATTERNS FOR THE NORTH AND SOUTH ALIGNMENTS WOULD BE IDENTICAL, THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH ALIGNMENTS WOULD BE LIMITED TO THOSE DIRECTLY RELATED TO CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES AND WOULD BE SIMILAR. THE SOUTH ALIGNMENT IS OVER 2 MILES LONGER THAN THE NORTH ALIGNMENT AND WOULD COST 20 TO 25 PERCENT MORE. WE SELECTED THE NORTH ALIGNMENT FOR BOTH THE BARRIER AND HIGH LEVEL PLANS ON THE BASIS OF ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS.

AS IN NEW ORLEANS EAST, UNCONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE IN THE WETLANDS INCLOSED BY THE LEVEE SYSTEM. DEVELOPMENT IN THIS AREA WOULD REMAIN SUBJECT TO PERMITTING BY THE CORPS UNDER SECTION 404 OF THE CLEAN WATER ACT.

IN ADDITION TO ANALYZING LEVEE ALIGNMENTS, WE LOOKED AT THE BEST WAY TO CONSTRUCT INDIVIDUAL LEVEE REACHES. I WILL SUMMARIZE THE ANALYSIS OF CONSTRUCTION METHODS FOR ONE REACH ONLY--JEFFERSON PARISH LAKEFRONT.

(SLIDE 21) THERE ARE TWO GENERAL DESIGNS THAT COULD BE USED, AN ALL EARTHEN LEVEE OR A LEVEE WITH AN I-WALL ON TOP. THE I-WALL DESIGN COULD ALSO INCLUDE A WIDE BARGE BERM ON THE LAKE SIDE TO PREVENT RUNAWAY BARGES FROM HITTING AND POSSIBLY DAMAGING THE I-WALL. WITHOUT THE BARGE BERM, THE I-WALL DESIGN WOULD NOT HAVE THE SAME DEGREE OF INTEGRITY AS THE ALL EARTH LEVEE.

THIS SLIDE SHOWS 7 ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPED AND THEIR RESPECTIVE COSTS. THE SELECTION WAS NARROWED TO THE THREE ALTERNATIVES WITH A FIRST COST UNDER $200 MILLION. THESE ALTERNATIVES ARE THE ALL EARTHEN LEVEE HYDRAULIC FILL WITHOUT PONDING AREA, I-WALL ON LEVEE WITH BARGE BERM USING HYDRAULIC FILL WITHOUT PONDING AREA, AND I-WALL ON LEVEE WITHOUT BARGE BERM USING HAULED CLAY FILL. ON THE BASIS OF COST AND DESIGN INTEGRITY WE SELECTED THE ALL EARTH LEVEE CONSTRUCTED OF HYDRAULIC FILL WITHOUT PONDING AREA. WE ALSO CONSIDERED THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THIS ALTERNATIVE.

THE LEVEE WILL BE CONSTRUCTED FROM MATERIAL OBTAINED FROM BORROW PITS WITH A TOTAL ACREAGE OF 573 ACRES IN LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN OFFSHORE OF JEFFERSON PARISH. THE BORROW PITS WILL BE UP TO 60 FEET DEEP. SHALLOWER BORROW PITS COULD NOT BE ECONOMICALLY USED. THE FIRST 40 FEET OF MATERIAL IS COMPOSED PRIMARILY OF SOFT CLAY AND MUCK AND IS NOT VERY SUITABLE FOR LEVEE BUILDING BECAUSE OF ITS HIGH WATER CONTENT. IF ONLY THIS MATERIAL WERE USED, TWICE AS MUCH MATERIAL WOULD BE NEEDED AND SUBSEQUENTLY THE SURFACE AREA OF THE BORROW PITS WOULD NEED TO BE MUCH LARGER. BECAUSE MORE MATERIAL WOULD BE NEEDED, THE COST WOULD ALSO INCREASE BY ABOUT 60 PERCENT.

THE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE BORROW PITS FALL INTO TWO CATEGORIES. THE FIRST WOULD BE THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BENTHIC COMMUNITY IN THE AREA OF THE BORROW PITS. BENTHOS ARE ANIMALS WHICH LIVE ON OR IN THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE SUCH AS WORMS, CLAMS, AND SHRIMP. THE PROPOSED BORROW PITS WOULD DESTROY THE BENTHOS IN THE CONSTRUCTION AREA, AND THEY WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO REESTABLISH BECAUSE OF THE DEPTH OF THE HOLE. HOWEVER, THE AREA IMPACTED REPRESENTS ONLY ONE TENTH OF ONE PERCENT OF THE TOTAL BENTHIC HABITAT IN THE LAKE.

THE SECOND ADVERSE IMPACT ASSOCIATED WITH THE BORROW PITS IS THE EFFECT ON WATER QUALITY. ~~POLLUTANTS AND~~ ~~SALT~~ MORE SALINE WATER ~~WOULD~~ COULD ~~TEND TO~~ COLLECT IN THE HOLES. DISSOLVED OXYGEN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HOLES COULD BECOME TOO LOW TO SUPPORT AQUATIC LIFE IN A FEW MONTHS OF THE YEAR. ~~NORMALLY~~ HOWEVER, THERE WOULD NOT BE ANY SIGNIFICANT MIXING BETWEEN THE WATER AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BORROW PITS AND THE SURROUNDING WATER. ~~A SEVERE STORM COULD CAUSE ENOUGH TURBULENCE FOR MIXING.~~

THE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE BORROW PITS IN LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN COULD BE ELIMINATED ALL TOGETHER BY USING MATERIAL HAULED IN FROM ANOTHER LOCATION SUCH AS THE BONNET CARRE SPILLWAY.

THE CHEAPEST HAULED MATERIAL ALTERNATIVE IS $126 MILLION MORE THAN THE ALTERNATIVE SELECTED. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS TO THE LAKE ARE SEVERE ENOUGH TO WARRANT SPENDING $126 MILLION TO AVOID THEM. WE ARE CONTINUING TO INVESTIGATE WAYS TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACTS OF THE HOLES AT A REASONABLE COST.

BASED ON THE RESULTS OF OUR STUDIES OF ALIGNMENTS AND CONSTRUCTION METHODS, WE FORMULATED A "BEST" BARRIER PLAN AND A "BEST" HIGH LEVEL PLAN. (SLIDE 22) (SLIDE 23) THESE PLANS USE THE SAME ALIGNMENTS. THEY DIFFER ONLY IN THE LEVEE HEIGHTS AND THE USE OF THE BARRIER STRUCTURES.

THESE TWO BEST PLANS WERE THEN COMPARED TO EACH OTHER. THE THREE CATEGORIES OF COMPARISON USED WERE ECONOMICS (COSTS AND BENEFITS), ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS (BOTH SHORT TERM AND LONG TERM), AND SOCIAL IMPACTS.

(SLIDE 24) A COMPARISON OF COSTS SHOWS THAT THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN WOULD COST APPROXIMATELY $115 MILLION LESS TO COMPLETE THAN THE BARRIER PLAN. THE NET BENEFITS, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ANNUAL COST AND ANNUAL BENEFITS, ARE GREATER FOR THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN - $73 MILLION VERSUS $61 MILLION. THIS IS THE MAJOR CRITERION THE CORPS USES FOR ECONOMIC DECISION MAKING.

(SLIDE 25) THE AUTHORIZATION FOR THIS PROJECT REQUIRED THAT NON-FEDERAL INTERESTS CONTRIBUTE 30 PERCENT OF THE FIRST COST OF THE PROJECT. THE NON-FEDERAL SHARE CONSISTS OF LANDS, RELOCATIONS, AND CASH OR EQUIVALENT WORK. THE LOCAL SPONSORS FOR THIS PROJECT WILL INCLUDE THE STATE OF LOUISIANA, SEVERAL LEVEE DISTRICTS, AND A PARISH POLICE JURY.

(SLIDE 26) SELECTION OF THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN WOULD RESULT IN AN OVERALL DECREASE IN THE LOCAL SPONSORS' SHARE EXCEPT IN JEFFERSON PARISH WHERE THE COST WOULD INCREASE AND IN ST. BERNARD WHERE THE SHARE WOULD NOT CHANGE. THESE NUMBERS ARE BASED ON ESTIMATES OF CONSTRUCTION COST AND ARE FOR COMPARISON PURPOSES. THE FINAL LOCAL SHARE IS BASED ON THE ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION COST.

(SLIDE 27) THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN WOULD HAVE MORE SEVERE SHORT TERM SOCIAL IMPACTS THAN THE BARRIER PLAN. DURING CONSTRUCTION, THERE WOULD BE A REDUCTION OF THE ESTHETICS AND RECREATION VALUES ALONG THE JEFFERSON AND ORLEANS PARISHES LAKEFRONTS. ON A LONG TERM BASIS, HOWEVER, THERE WOULD BE LITTLE OR NO ADVERSE SOCIAL IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN. THE BARRIER PLAN WOULD HAVE LONG TERM ADVERSE SOCIAL IMPACTS SINCE THE BARRIERS COULD HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON NAVIGATION THROUGH THE RIGOLETS AND CHEF MENTEUR PASS.

(SLIDE 28) THE SHORT TERM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS WOULD BE SIMILAR FOR THE TWO PLANS. IN BOTH CASES THERE WOULD BE AN INCREASE IN TURBIDITY LEVELS AT THE CONSTRUCTION SITES. FOR THE BARRIER PLAN TURBIDITY WOULD INCREASE AT THE BARRIER LOCATIONS AND FOR THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN PRIMARILY ALONG THE JEFFERSON PARISH LAKEFRONT. LONG TERM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS WERE MEASURED IN TERMS OF LOST HABITAT UNITS. ON THIS BASIS THE IMPACTS OF THE BARRIER PLAN ARE MORE SEVERE. IN ADDITION TO THE LOST HABITAT, THE BARRIERS WOULD HAVE AN ADDITIONAL UNQUANTIFIED EFFECT ON THE NURSERY AND BIOLOGICAL VALUES OF LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN BECAUSE OF RESTRICTING THE TIDAL PASSES.

LOCATION		1 % CHANCE STAGE IN FEET NGVD	SPH STAGE IN FEET NGVD
REACH 8	PRE PROJ	+ 8.0	+ 9.3
	EXISTING	+ 0.5	+ 4.0
	PROJECT	- 4.0	- 4.0

GROUND ELEV AT JFK HS IS ABOUT -2; ACROSS BAYOU ST. JOHN, THE GROUND RANGES FROM -4 TO -6 FEET NGVD.

REACH 15	PRE PROJ	+ 8.0	+ 9.3
	EXISTING	+ 1.0	+ 2.0
	PROJECT	- .2.0	- 2.0

GROUND ELEV AT SUPERDOME IS ABOUT + 1; AT JEFFERSON DAVIS PARKWAY AND TULANE, ABOUT -3 FEET NGVD.

REACH 16	PRE PROJ	+ 8.0	+ 9.3
	EXISTING	+ 1.0	+ 2.0
	CURRENT	- 2.0	- 2.0

GROUND ELEV AT AUDUBON PARK AND ST. CHARLES IS ABOUT + 7; AT CALHOUN AND CLAIBORNE ABOUT -3 FEET NGVD.

REACH 5	PRE PROJ	+ 10.0	+10.5
	EXISTING	- 4.0	+ 2.5
	PROJECT	- 5.0	- 5.0

GROUND ELEV AVERAGES ABOUT - 6 FEET NGVD IN THE CITRUS AREA; AREAS NEAR THE LAKE AND CHEF HIGHWAY ARE SOMEWHAT HIGHER.

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WE FEEL EITHER PLAN IS OVERWHELMINGLY JUSTIFIED. BOTH PLANS WOULD MAKE USE OF MOST OF THE WORK ALREADY DONE. SINCE ONLY LEVEE WORK HAS BEEN DONE SINCE THE COURT INJUNCTION, THIS WORK COUNTED TOWARDS EITHER THE BARRIER OR HIGH LEVEL PLAN. THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN WOULD PROVIDE PROTECTION TO THE CITY A FEW YEARS EARLIER. MOST OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA WOULD BE PROVIDED HURRICANE PROTECTION BY 1990. OUR DATA INDICATE THAT OF THE TWO PLANS, THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN IS SUPERIOR BOTH ECONOMICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY.

(SLIDE 29) THEREFORE, WE PLAN TO RECOMMEND THAT THE AUTHORIZED PLAN OF HURRICANE PROTECTION BE MODIFIED FROM A BARRIER PLAN TO A HIGH LEVEL PLAN. WE HAVE PREPARED A REEVALUATION REPORT AND DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN. YOUR WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND COMMENTS FROM THIS MEETING WILL BE CONSIDERED IN THE PREPARATION OF OUR FINAL REPORT.

SINCE THIS PROJECT HAS ALREADY BEEN AUTHORIZED, WE DO NOT NEED TO SUBMIT THE REEVALUATION REPORT TO CONGRESS FOR AUTHORIZATION. THE REEVALUATION REPORT WHICH DOCUMENTS THE REASONS FOR DESIGN CHANGES TO AN AUTHORIZED PROJECT CAN BE APPROVED BY GENERAL BRATTON, THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS, IN WASHINGTON. IF APPROVED BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER, WE WILL BE ABLE TO BEGIN CONSTRUCTION OF ELEMENTS OF THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN NEXT YEAR. BECAUSE OF THE COURT INJUNCTION WE WOULD SOON EXPERIENCE A SLOW DOWN IN CONSTRUCTION WORK AND A CORRESPONDING DELAY IN PROVIDING HURRICANE PROTECTION TO THE AREA WITHOUT A CHANGE IN PLANS.

WE HAVE ALSO BEEN WORKING ON A PLAN TO MITIGATE FOR CONSTRUCTION RELATED DAMAGES. SINCE NO MITIGATION WAS PROPOSED FOR THE AUTHORIZED PLAN, WE WILL HAVE TO SUBMIT A REQUEST FOR A POST-AUTHORIZATION CHANGE TO ADD MITIGATION TO THE PROJECT.

THE MITIGATION PLAN WILL ADDRESS NOT ONLY THE DAMAGES FROM THE WORK REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE HIGH LEVEL PLAN BUT ALSO FOR WORK ALREADY DONE UNDER THE AUTHORIZED BARRIER PLAN.

AN OPEN SCOPING MEETING WILL BE HELD THIS JUNE TO GET PUBLIC INPUT ON WHAT FORM THE MITIGATION SHOULD TAKE. A SCOPING MEETING IS CONDUCTED ON A MORE INFORMAL BASIS THAN A MEETING SUCH AS THIS ONE. WORKSHOPS MAY ALSO BE SCHEDULED AT A LATER DATE WITH INTERESTED PARTIES TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS OF A MITIGATION PLAN.

WE ANTICIPATE FINALIZING THE MITIGATION PLAN AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON THE PLAN IN TWO YEARS.

I WOULD LIKE TO STRESS AGAIN THAT IDENTIFYING YOUR VIEWS AND RECEIVING YOUR INPUT IS THE REASON FOR HOLDING THIS MEETING.

NOW I'LL TURN THE MEETING BACK OVER TO COLONEL LEE.

LEE: THANK YOU LYNN. AT THIS TIME, WE'LL HAVE A QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION ON THE PRESENTATION.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

I'M NOW GOING TO CALL ON THOSE PEOPLE WHO INDICATED ON THEIR REGISTRATION CARDS THAT THEY WISHED TO MAKE A STATEMENT. AFTER THAT, I'LL CALL ON ANYONE ELSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK. PLEASE IDENTIFY YOURSELF BEFORE YOU SPEAK AND INDICATE WHAT GROUP YOU REPRESENT, IF ANY. WE ALSO ASK THAT YOU TRY AND LIMIT YOUR STATEMENTS TO 5 MINUTES.

IF YOU HAVE A WRITTEN STATEMENT WITH YOU NOW, WE ASK THAT YOU LEAVE A COPY OF IT WITH US.

.....(CALL NAMES -- ELECTED OFFICIALS, OTHERS)

THAT IS THE LAST SPEAKER WE HAVE ON OUR LIST. DOES ANYONE ELSE WISH TO SPEAK AT THIS TIME?

(AFTER LAST SPEAKER)

THANK YOU.

LEE: LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE RECORD FOR THIS PUBLIC MEETING WILL REMAIN OPEN UNTIL THE 12TH OF MAY TO GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT ANY WRITTEN STATEMENTS FOR INCLUSION IN THE RECORD. WE WILL ALSO PREPARE A SUMMARY OF THE MEETING. COPIES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE ABOUT 8 WEEKS AFTER THE RECORD CLOSES AT THE COST OF REPRODUCTION. WE THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMING HERE TONIGHT AND PARTICIPATING IN THIS MEETING. WE WILL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION THE INFORMATION THAT YOU'VE GIVEN US TONIGHT AS WE COMPLETE OUR STUDY.

LIST OF SLIDES

1. TITLE SLIDE
2. AUTHORIZED PROJECT
3. SWOLLEN LAKE
4. RIGOLETS COMPLEX
5. CHEF MENTEUR COMPLEX
6. SEABROOK COMPLEX
7. LEVEES
8. FLOODWALLS
9. CONSTRUCTION STATUS
10. LITIGATION
11. ENJOINED FEATURES
12. ALTERNATIVE PLANS
13. NEW ORLEAND EAST - 2 ALIGNMENTS
14. NEW ORLEANS EAST MAXENT CANAL
15. NEW ORLEANS EAST WETLANDS
16. NEW ORLEAND EAST - ALIGNMENTS
17. ST. CHARLES - LAKEFRONT
18. ST. CHARLES WETLANDS
19. ST. CHARLES - NORTH
20. ST. CHARLES - SOUTH
21. JEFF - COSTS
22. BEST BARRIER
23. BEST HIGH-LEVEL
24. COST COMPARISON
25. LOCAL SPONSOR
26. COST SHARING
27. SOCIAL IMPACT
28. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS
29. HIGH LEVEL PLAN