

Dear Mr. Duval:

Thank you for your presentation during the public meeting of the Mississippi River Commission in Houma, Louisiana, on August 23, 2002. In your statement you discussed the issue of coastal erosion and the Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection project.

The New Orleans District is currently finalizing the draft feasibility report for the Wetland Creation and Restoration, Barataria Basin, Louisiana, Feasibility Study. Additionally, the District is preparing the preliminary draft feasibility report for the Barrier Shoreline Restoration, Barataria Basin, Louisiana, Feasibility Study. These two products will be incorporated into the Louisiana Coastal Area Comprehensive Coastwide Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study, which was initiated in February 2002. A preliminary draft feasibility report for this study will be completed in July 2003. The Corps will continue to work closely with the State of Louisiana in developing a comprehensive ecosystem restoration plan for coastal Louisiana.

The Morganza to the Gulf of Mexico feasibility study is complete. The Chief of Engineers' report was signed on August 23, 2002. The National Economic Development plan providing a 100-year level of protection has been selected as the recommended plan. The Pre-construction Engineering and

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Design phase for levees and floodgates is underway. Work is progressing on the Project Management Plan. The first construction contract is scheduled for award in Fiscal Year 2005, pending Congressional authorization and appropriation of funds for construction.

In regard to the Isle de Jean Charles area that you mentioned, the community is not currently included in the Morganza to the Gulf project because it does not meet the requirements for economic justification. Relocation of property owners within the community is being considered and

will be addressed in a Post Authorization Change to the project if appropriate.

The Commission appreciates receiving your views and looks forward to hearing from you at our future public meetings.

Sincerely,

Don T. Riley
Brigadier General, U.S. Army
President Designee, Mississippi
River Commission