

Dear Mr. Naquin:

Thank you for your presentation during the Mississippi River Commission public meeting in Houma, Louisiana, on August 23, 2002. In your statement you discussed the issue of the Morganza to the Gulf levee alignment in the vicinity of Montegut, Louisiana.

Federal law mandates that during the feasibility study, we assess alternative plans (levee alignments in this case) on an incremental basis. The incremental cost of realigning the levee to protect the Isle de Jean Charles community was found to be greater than the benefits derived from protecting the area. Construction of the levee through the marsh, as you suggest, is much more expensive than the selected plan levee alignment. The selected plan levee alignment minimizes construction through the marsh.

The incremental benefit-to-cost ratio for the Isle de Jean Charles alternative is 0.23 to 1. This means that for each \$1.00 spent, the project would derive only \$0.23 in benefits, thus making the cost prohibitive. By contrast, the benefit-to-cost ratio for the relocation alternative is 1.61 to 1, or \$1.61 in benefits for each \$1.00 spent. Relocation of property owners within the community is being considered and will be addressed in a post-authorization change to the project, if appropriate.

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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