Delta Wide Crevasses (MR-09)

Location
The project is located in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, within the Pass a Loutre Wildlife Management Area (Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries) and the Delta National Wildlife Refuge (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Problems
The Mississippi River Delta is one of the hallmark symbols of Louisiana’s rich natural heritage. Unfortunately, natural and man-made alterations to the Mississippi River have changed the hydrology of the river and impeded the natural wetland building processes in the delta. Levees constructed for navigation maintenance and flood control have reduced natural sedimentation and freshwater flow, causing deterioration of wetlands and saltwater intrusion. Crevasses are breaks in the levees that allow the river to deposit sediments into adjacent shallow bays. The wetlands formed from the deposition of these sediments are called crevasse splays. This restoration project mimics the natural process of crevasse formation that was responsible for building much of the Mississippi River Delta.

Restoration Strategy
The project consists of maintaining presently existing crevasse splays, the construction of new crevasse splays and plugs, and future maintenance of selected crevasse splays in both the Pass a Loutre Wildlife Management Area and the Delta National Wildlife Refuge. The objective is to promote the formation of emergent freshwater and intermediate marsh.

Progress to Date
The first dredging cycle of construction was completed in 1999; three dredging cycles are scheduled in the future. The second cycle is scheduled for early summer 2004.

This project is listed on Priority Project List 6.

For more project information, please contact:

Federal Sponsor:
National Marine Fisheries Service
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(225) 389-0508

Local Sponsor:
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
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