October 2003
Cost figures as of: February 2023

Benneys Bay Sediment Diversion (MR-13)

De-authorized

Project Status

Approved Date: 2001 **Project Area:** 21,518 acres
Approved Funds: $0.97 M **Total Est. Cost:** $0.97 M
Net Benefit After 20 Years: 5,706 acres
Status: De-authorized
Project Type: Water Diversion
PPL #: 10

Location

The diversion site is located on the east bank of the Mississippi River, in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, 7.5 miles above Head of Passes. The project would divert Mississippi River water and sediments into Benneys Bay.

Problems

The project area has lost over 15,000 acres of emergent wetlands since 1932, mainly because of subsidence and sediment deprivation. The 1983-90 land loss rate was 2.4% per year.

Restoration Strategy

The objective of the project is to restore vegetated wetlands in an area that is currently shallow open water. The project would divert sediments in an effort to create, nourish, and maintain approximately 5,828 acres of fresh to intermediate marsh in the Benneys Bay area over the 20-year project life.

The project consists of a conveyance channel for the large-scale diversion of water and sediments from the river. The conveyance channel would be constructed in two phases: (1) construction of an initial channel with an average discharge of 20,000 cubic feet per second (cfs); (2) after a period of intensive monitoring, enlargement of the channel to a 50,000 cfs discharge. Material from the construction of the channel would be used to create wetlands in the diversion outfall area.

The diversion would induce shoaling in the main navigation channel of the Mississippi River. Dredging of the channel is accomplished under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' ongoing Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Program for the river. The Pilottown anchorage area is not maintained under the O&M Program. The additional dredging of the induced shoaling in the navigation channel and anchorage area would be an added feature and cost of the project. The dredge material removed from these areas will be used to create wetlands where possible.

A dredge is being used to create marsh in the lower delta for the West Bay Sediment Diversion (MR-03) project. Work similar to this will take place during construction of the Benneys Bay project.

Progress to Date

Approximately one third of the design is complete. Final engineering will rely on information gained from the West Bay Sediment Diversion project (MR-03).

This project is on Priority Project List 10.

For more information, please contact:

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
New Orleans, LA
(504) 862-1597

Local Sponsor:
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
Baton Rouge, LA
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Diversion Site *

Project Boundary

* denotes proposed feature

Map Produced By:
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
National Wetlands Research Center
Coastal Restoration Field Station

Background Imagery:
2002 Thematic Mapper Imagery

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