rev. October 2002
Cost figures as of: February 2023

River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp (PO-29)

Transferred

Project Status

Approved Date: 2001 **Project Area:** 36,121 acres
Approved Funds: $6.54 M **Total Est. Cost:** $6.54 M
Net Benefit After 20 Years: **see below*
Status: Transferred
Project Type: Water Diversion
PPL#: 11

Location

The proposed project is located south of Lake Maurepas in the upper Pontchartrain Basin. The waters diverted from the Mississippi River will affect St. John the Baptist, St. James, and Ascension Parishes, Louisiana.

Problems

Since the construction of the Mississippi River flood control levees, the Maurepas swamp has been virtually cut off from any fresh water, sediment, or nutrient input. Thus, the only soil building has come from organic production within the wetlands. Subsidence in this area is classified as intermediate, but when coupled with minimal soil building, it has produced a net lowering of ground surface elevation. This, in turn, has led to a doubling in flood frequency over the last four decades that leaves the swamps persistently flooded. Without restoration, the factors and processes that are contributing to stress and deterioration of the south Maurepas swamps will continue. The result would be the loss of the swamp, eventually followed by a succession to open water.

Restoration Strategy

The goal of the south Maurepas diversion project is to restore and protect the health and productivity of the swamps south of Lake Maurepas by reintroducing sediment- and nutrient-laden water from Mississippi River.

The specific objectives of the Maurepas project are to: restore natural swamp hydrology; increase sediment and nutrient loading to the project area; increase substrate accretion; retain and increase existing areas of swamp vegetation, including overstory cover; and reduce salinity levels.

The project's main structural features will include: two 10x10 box culverts capable of diverting 2,000 cubic feet of water per second; a 100x100 foot receiving pond reinforced with a 20-inch layer of riprap; and a 50-foot wide, 10-foot deep outflow channel roughly 27,500 feet long that will run from the river to U.S. Interstate 10.

The Maurepas Swamp in decline.

Progress to Date

This project was selected for Phase 1 (engineering and design) funding at the August 2001 CWPPRA Task Force meeting.

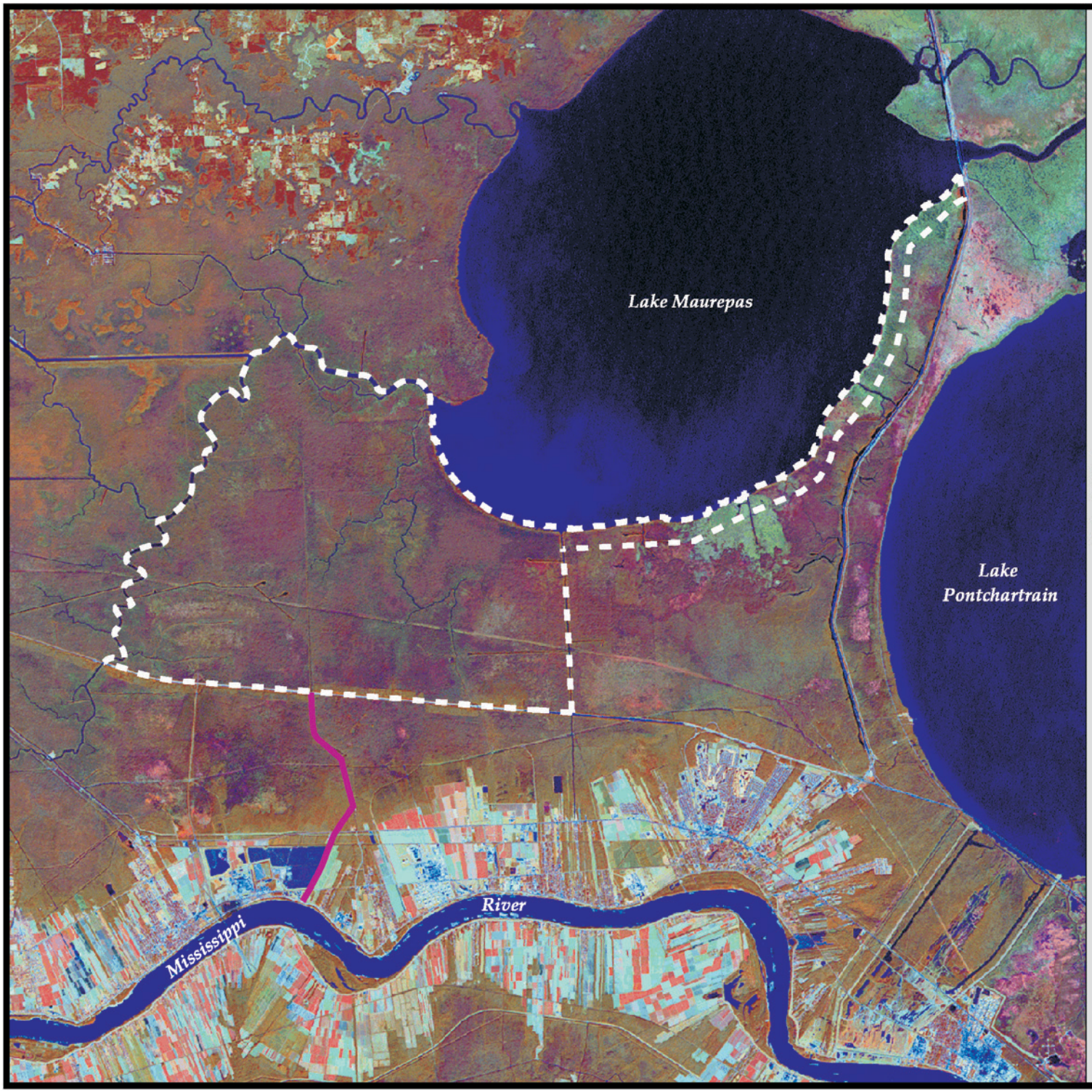
The project is on Priority Project List 11.

* The project will enhance an area of swamp (36,121 acres) that would be substantially degraded without the project.

For more information, please contact:

Federal Sponsor:
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Dallas, TX
(214) 665-6722

Local Sponsor:
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
Baton Rouge, LA
(225) 342-4736



River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp (PO-29)

Diversion *

Hydrologic Boundary (non-structural)

* denotes proposed features

N

2 0 2 4 Miles

2 0 2 4 Kilometers

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

Background Imagery:
Thematic Mapper Satellite Imagery 2000

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