

Project Number (to be assigned by ABP) 2010 05

8-19-10

FISCAL YEAR 2012 ANNUAL PLAN PROJECT NOMINATION FORM

1. Nominating Party (Please note affiliation, i.e. Parish, Association, Organization)

Name: Dean A. Wilson Affiliation: Atchafalaya Basinkeeper

Address: 162 Croydon Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70806

Phone: 225-692-4114 email: basinkeeper@aol.com

2. Statement of the Problem. (Please give a brief description of problem and current area conditions. If you think the problem relates to water quality, sediment accumulation, access, forest health, fisheries or other issues, please indicate as well).

Excessive sedimentation, poor water quality, blocked natural bayous & sloughs

3. Project Boundary: (attach map showing specific location of project area): ENTIRE BASIN

Parish: _____ Water Management Unit (if known): _____

Lat/Long (if known): _____

4. Affected Area: (attach map of the area anticipated to benefit from project- if known)

ENTIRE BASIN

Project Number (to be assigned by ABP) _____

5. Action Description: (any proposed action or suggestion to rectify the problem. List any anticipated benefits from the project-if known)

CLOSE COON TRAP

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

6. Survey and Preliminary Assessments: (Please attach any pertinent information or documents that you might have pertaining to the problem area for review and provide a list of the documents you have attached.)

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

7. Additional information regarding the project area, problem or proposed action (if known):

COON TRAP IS FILLING IN EAST GRAND LAKE & THOUSANDS

~~SEE ATTACHED~~ DOCUMENT OF ACRES OF

SWAMPS WITH SEDIMENTS.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

Please bring this form to one of the meetings listed or fax it to (225) 342-6887, return by mail to:

Toni DeBosier
Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
Atchafalaya Basin Program
P O Box 94396
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Atchafalaya Basinkeeper
Dean A. Wilson
Cell: (225) 692-4114



Atchafalaya Basinkeeper Asst.
Cara Leverett
Cell: (225) 685-9554

*Memorandum of Understanding
Atchafalaya Basin Code of Ethics for
Water Quality Projects Funded by Taxpayers Page 1 of 4*

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN STATE OF LOUISIANA - DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES,
ATCHAFALAYA BASINKEEPER AND LCPA-WEST

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish an Atchafalaya Basin Code of Ethics for Water Quality Projects Funded by Tax Payers and to articulate the goals of an Atchafalaya Basin Hydrology and Sediment Management Plan that will stop wetland loss, caused by excessive sedimentation, improve water quality and benefit our shrinking coast.

B. STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The future of the Atchafalaya Basin will be determined by the way we manage its water and sediments. This is the most important factor in determining whether we can preserve the wetlands, bayous and lakes within the Atchafalaya Basin. The Atchafalaya Basin, with its cypress-tupelo swamps, is truly one of the wonders of our country, containing some of the most productive wetlands in the world, and providing the last great habitat of its kind in North America. Millions of migratory birds depend on these wetlands for their survival. The continuation of the French-speaking Cajun fishing culture depends on it. Many people believe that sedimentation is a natural process and that it is inevitable. The answer to that is that the same is true about sewage: poop is a natural product and many animals poop in the rivers, but if you dump the poop of thousands of people into a river it will kill the river. The Atchafalaya Basin is filling in with sediment at an alarming rate because of human related activities. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' manipulation of the Mississippi River and the Atchafalaya Basin is unnatural; their aim to divert up to 65% of the Mississippi's sediment load into the Atchafalaya Basin is not part of the natural process, nor is the dredging of thousands of miles of canals throughout the Atchafalaya Basin and the building of a levee system that cut the surface area of the Basin to less than half of what it once was. We no longer have other habitat like the swamps of the Atchafalaya Basin; this fact demands that we stop the sedimentation of the Basin's cypress-tupelo swamps. Furthermore, the western hemisphere cannot afford to lose these swamps (to be replaced by acres of bottomland hardwood forest) because this is one of the last sizeable habitats critical to the survival of many bird species. We also cannot afford to degrade our unique Cajun fishing culture anymore, and much of the traditional Cajun way of life depends on the Atchafalaya Basin's swamps. In natural

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Dean A. Wilson
Cell: (225) 692-4114



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systems, overtime, some swamps may be converted into bottomland hardwood forests while new swamps are created elsewhere, but with human intervention this is no longer possible. The system is no longer natural and new swamps have no place to form at the speed that they are lost.

Although research is desirable and will always be needed, in this case we require no further research to begin taking immediate action to control sediment. The Corps' policy of diverting 65% of the Mississippi River's sediments into the Atchafalaya Basin must stop, and the Simmesport structures must be managed in a way that will improve water quality and increase the productivity of the Atchafalaya Basin's wetlands. By helping to oxygenate the water, constant changes of water levels throughout the high water season would dramatically improve water quality without increasing the sediment load.

The problem of the unnatural east-west pipelines and oil field canals and the associated spoil banks should also be addressed. Some pipeline canals distribute huge amounts of sediment far away from the river and they capture historical north-to-south flows. Pipeline and oil canals have spoil banks that profoundly alter the hydrology of the Basin, affecting both water quality and sedimentation rates. A long-term plan should be developed to address this issue. We should strive to open all bayous to their historical widths and depths and remove all spoil banks, which are barriers to historical (mostly) north-to-south flows.

**C. THE SOLUTION: THE ATCHAFALAYA BASIN HYDROLOGY AND
SEDIMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Water and sediment management in the Atchafalaya Basin should be tied to coastal restoration plans for the benefit of both our coast and the Atchafalaya Basin. Projects should be common-sense projects, allowing the main channel of the river to transport the sediment as much as possible. Water quality projects that do not have a long-term sediment management plan should stop in all management units until a sediment-trap system is created and a long-term plan is developed and financed, which includes monitoring and maintenance of the sediment traps. Major sediment traps should be built at the head waters of all distributaries of the Atchafalaya River so that sediment deposited

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in traps can be suction-dredged back into the main river. Secondary sediment traps should be built at the head of all major bayous feeding the swamps and sediments should be managed by pumping them onto existing ridges or by creating islands with the goal of managing sediments to account for natural subsidence, preventing rapid accretion and stimulating cypress-tupelo regeneration. The misspending of funds on projects in the Basin, which will reduce public access or benefit industry or individuals to the detriment of our public wetlands, should stop.

C. MEANS BY WHICH TO ACCOMPLISH THE SOLUTION:

**1. ATCHAFALAYA BASIN CODE OF ETHICS FOR WATER QUALITY
PROJECTS FUNDED BY TAX PAYERS**

1. No more spoil banks should be created. Dredged material must be removed or placed in a designated area such as a large island. Beneficial use of dredge material should take place, whenever possible, to enhance bottomland hardwood forests or for coastal restoration.
2. Projects should be done correctly or not at all. Bayous must be restored without spoil banks and with consideration to aesthetics. Projects must restore historical water flows. Projects should be managed using adaptive management and changes should be made, when necessary, for the project to achieve its goals.
3. No projects should be done under a programmatic general permit via the Clean Water Act.
4. Projects that require surveying should comply with the Professional and Occupational Standards for Land Surveyors, LA. Admin. Code Title 46, Part LXI.
5. No projects should interfere with the historical natural flow of water throughout the Atchafalaya Basin.
6. A long-term sediment management must be included (with funding) for each project.
7. No member of any committee involved with a project may benefit financially from that project.

2. FOUNDATION FOR A FUTURE

· Although research will always be needed to improve the Atchafalaya Basin, no more research is needed to start implementing some of the measures mentioned above that will reestablish the Basin's natural hydrology and improve water quality.

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- Although the work required in order to protect the Atchafalaya Basin's deep swamps and restore historical flows may seem daunting, it may be manageable over time, if a long-term plan is created, budgeted for and implemented year after year.
- Like any patient in critical condition, the Atchafalaya Basin first needs to be stabilized, by implementing a sediment management plan that will give us time to deal with the many other issues like pipeline and location canals and restoring natural bayous and water flows.
- Pulsating water during the spring by continually changing water levels without draining the swamps may improve water quality in the short-term, while the master plan is implemented.
- The Code of Ethics should be used to develop any projects in the Atchafalaya Basin.
- The Environmental Protection Agency should be invited to help. The EPA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the United States Geological Survey, the State of Louisiana and NGOs should work together to create and implement a long-term plan that will truly preserve the deep swamps of the Atchafalaya Basin for future generations, increase delta-building at the coast and improve water quality throughout the Basin.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Memorandum of Understanding will go into effect on the date of the last approving signature.

4. CONCLUSION

The Basin has been studied to death. Action is necessary at this time, but not action for action's sake. Instead, citizens, government officials, and those who profit from the Basin must take action guided by the code of ethics contained herein, with the goal of sediment and hydrology management to preserve and promote the unique role the Basin upholds for wildlife, water quality, culture, and human wellbeing.

G. SIGNATURES

Project Number (to be assigned by ABP) 2010 05

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1. Nominating Party (Please note affiliation, i.e. Parish, Association, Organization)

Name: Dean Wilson Affiliation: Basin Keeper

Address: 162 Croydon Ave., Baton Rouge, La 70806

Phone: 225-692-4114 email: basin.keeper@aol.com

2. Statement of the Problem. (Please give a brief description of problem and current area conditions. If you think the problem relates to water quality, sediment accumulation, access, forest health, fisheries or other issues, please indicate as well).

Immediate closure of Coon Trap. It is believed to be a huge source of sediment to the Pigeon Bay area that is filling in the last remaining interior swamps off the River.

3. Project Boundary: (attach map showing specific location of project area):

Parish: St. Martin Water Management Unit (if known): Pigeon Bay

Lat/Long (if known): _____

4. Affected Area: (attach map of the area anticipated to benefit from project- if known)

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5. Action Description: (any proposed action or suggestion to rectify the problem. List any anticipated benefits from the project-if known)

Close the mouth at the River with an earthen dam – You could used dredged material from the area to the east of Coon Trap that has been filled in as a result of the opening.

6. Survey and Preliminary Assessments: (Please attach any pertinent information or documents that you might have pertaining to the problem area for review and provide a list of the documents you have attached.)

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Closure of Coon Trap

42



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

1 inch = 2,000 feet