

ATCHAFALAYA BASIN WATER MANAGEMENT UNIT INFORMATION*

Name of Unit: Henderson Lake

Location and Boundaries: Located in the northwest portion of Lower Atchafalaya Basin Floodway. Generally bordered on the north by U.S. Hwy 190, on the west by the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee, on the south by the Butte La Rose ridge, and on the east by the West Atchafalaya River Levee.

Issues: Issues include increases in invasive aquatic vegetation, poor water quality, and associated impacts to recreational and commercial fisheries, ecotourism, and local recreational opportunities. Primary hydrological inputs are through Bayou Courtableau and the Bayou Courtableau Outfall Channel. Minor flow also comes into Two O'clock Bayou. Water may flow into the unit from the south during high river stages. Primary outflow is controlled by a control structure at the south end of the unit.

Strategies: The primary strategies guiding ongoing planning for the Henderson Lake Pilot Water Management Unit project include improving interior circulation, removing/reducing barriers to facilitate improved water flow, and providing input of oxygenated fresh water from the Atchafalaya River. Secondary goals include managing sediment accretion, invasive aquatic species, and mercury in sediment.

Implementation Status: A tentatively recommended plan and draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is expected to be released for public review by September, 2011.

Available Funding:

Federal: Federal funds are being used for development of the Henderson Lake Pilot Water Management Unit EIS and plan.

State: \$758,000 is available for dredging access channels from existing boat launches along the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee into Lake Henderson to facilitate boat traffic, provide access to state water bottoms and provide deepwater fish habitat during lake drawdowns conducted for invasive aquatic plant (Hydrilla) control. That project is expected to begin construction in October or November 2011.

Additional Funding Needed: Initial costs estimates for implementation of the Henderson Lake pilot water management unit plan will be included in a Draft Engineering Report anticipated to be released for public review in August 2012. An estimated \$1.5 million in federal funding will be needed to complete the planning, Supplemental EIS, and engineering for that project.

* Focus is strictly on measures needed to address issues related to maintaining, restoring and/or enhancing the Basin's aquatic and wetland habitats