

Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) Modification of Davis Pond Diversion

Feasibility Study Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

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Scoping Meeting
Cytex
October 6, 2009



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Agenda

- **Open House**
- **Welcome and Introductions / Opening Remarks**
- **Louisiana Coastal Area Program Overview: Renee Sanders, OCPR Study Manager**
- **Davis Pond Project Overview: Tomma Barnes, Corps Project Manager**
- **National Environmental Policy Act Overview: Mike Brown, Corps Environmental Manager**
- **Question and Comments Session**



Louisiana Coastal Area Program

History and Milestones

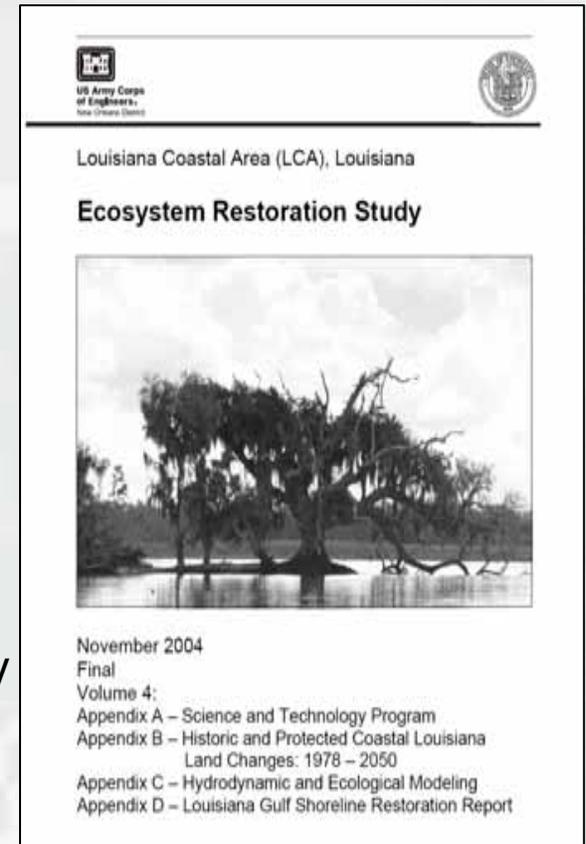
- **January 2005**
Chief's Report signed for LCA Ecosystem Restoration Program (“Near-term Plan”)

- **Spring 2006**
 - ▶ Continue LCA Barataria Basin Barrier Shoreline Feasibility Study
 - ▶ Initiate LCA Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Program Feasibility Study
 - ▶ Establish LCA Science and Technology (S&T) Program

- **November 2007**
Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) 2007 authorizes LCA Program



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LCA Program Goal

Reverse the current trend of degradation of the coastal Louisiana ecosystem by maximizing restoration strategies that

- **Reintroduce historic flows of water, nutrients and sediment to coastal wetlands**
- **Maintain the structural integrity of the coastal ecosystem**



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LCA Program Components

- Five Initial Projects (Construction Reports)
- Ten Additional Projects (Feasibility Studies)
- Beneficial Use of Dredged Material Program
- Science and Technology (S&T) Program
- Demonstration Project Program
- Investigations into Modifications of Existing Structures
- Large-Scale and Long-Term Studies

TOTAL PROGRAM COST: approx \$2.0 billion



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Why Are We Here?

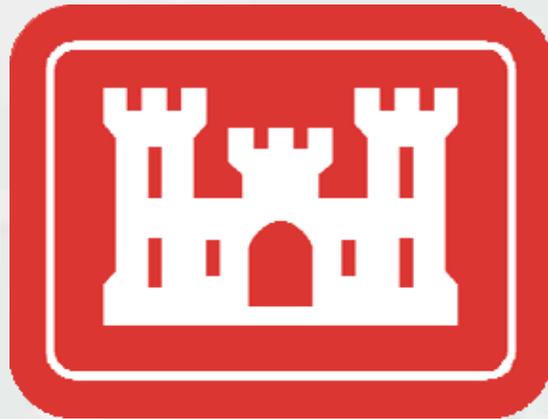
To determine the scope of significant issues and potential alternatives related to the LCA – Modification to Davis Pond Diversion Project.

We welcome your comments!



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Mississippi River & Tributaries (MR&T) Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion

- Authorized by the Flood Control Act of 1965
- Modified by the Water Resources Development Acts of 1974, 1986, and 1996



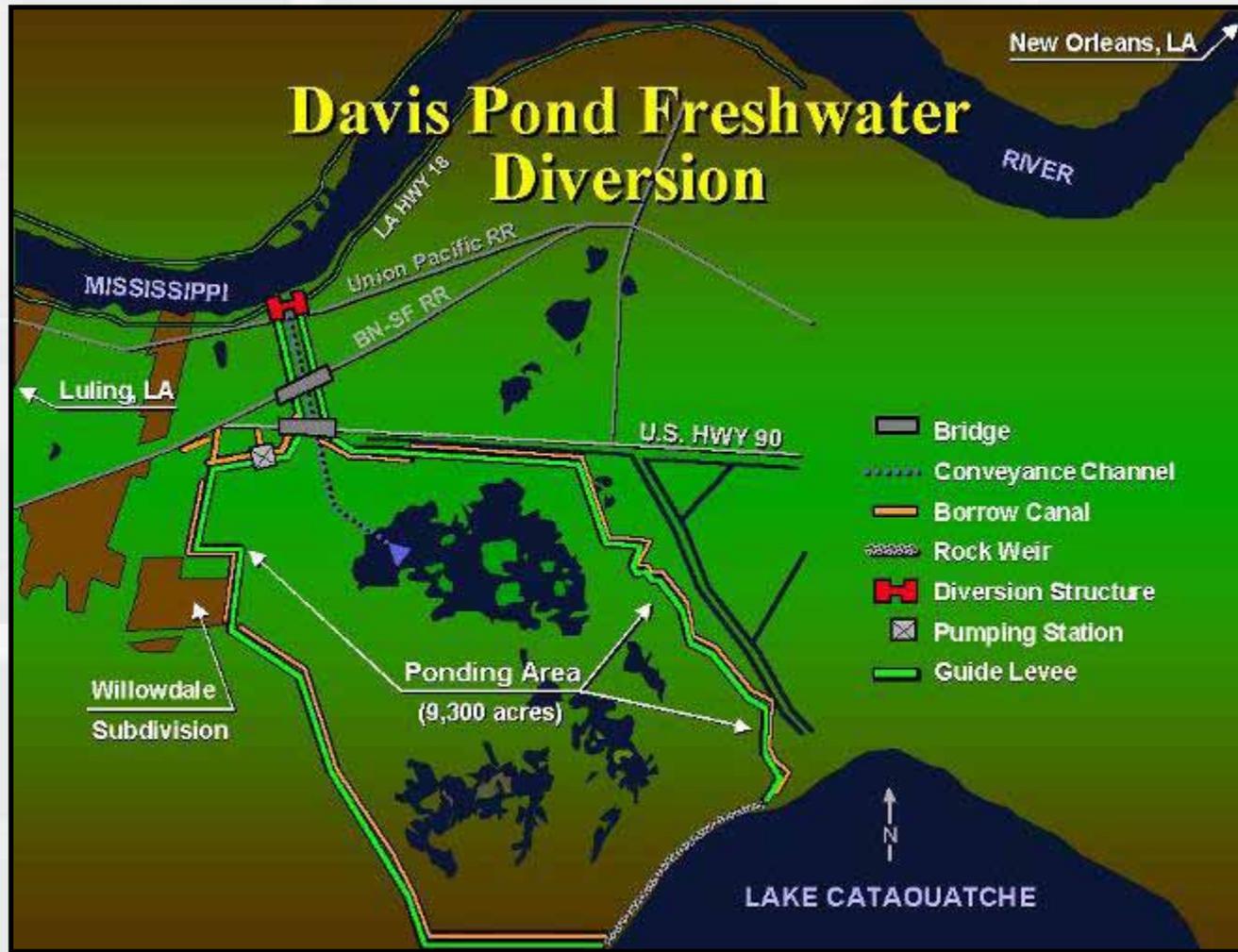
Construction began in 1997 and was completed in February 2002



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Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion



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Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion



- 535 feet long x 85 feet wide inflow channel
- 4 iron gated 14 foot square box culverts



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Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion

- 11,000 feet long x 120 feet wide outflow channel to the ponding area
- Total project area 10,084 acres including 9,300 acre ponding area



The structure is capable of 10,650 cubic feet per second (CFS) however on average it pumps about 5,000 cfs



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Existing Davis Pond Project Purpose

- Reduce saltwater intrusion
- Re-establish favorable salinities
- Reduce the rate of land loss
- Improve fish and wildlife habitat



Operational Plan

Target Salinity Ranges by Month 5 Parts Per Thousand

<u>Month</u>	<u>Salinity Range</u>
January	2-5
February	2-5
March	4-9
April	4-9
May	4-9
June	4-9
July	6-10
August	6-10
September	6-10
October	6-10
November	4-9
December	2-5

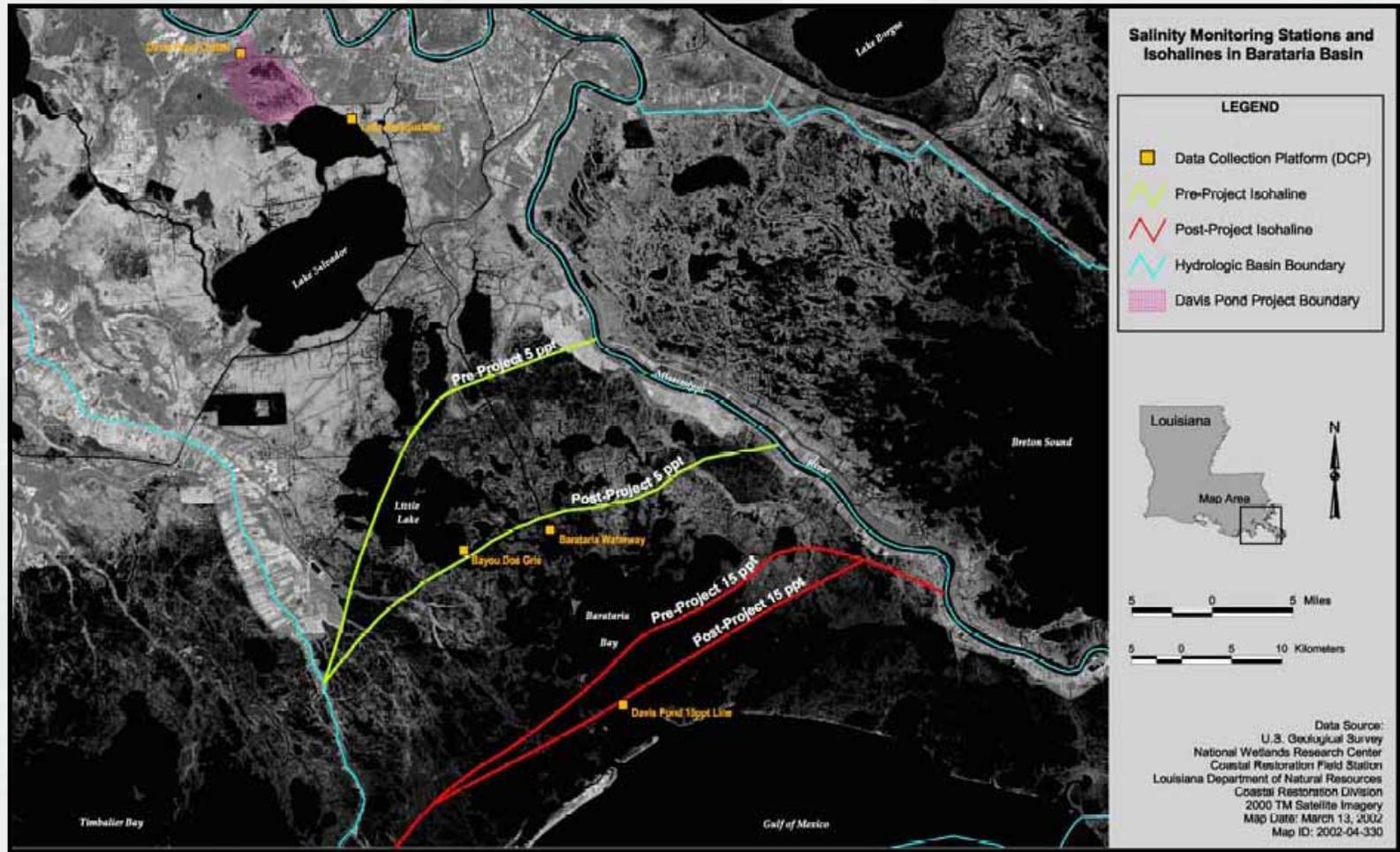


Operational Plan

- Notwithstanding these salinity targets, the following will remain in effect :
 - ▶ Operational procedures relating to emergency closure of the structure
 - ▶ Reduction of flow to reduce the threat of coastal flooding
 - ▶ High water levels reflected by monitoring
 - ▶ Operational procedures pertaining to low Mississippi River stage
 - ▶ Drought conditions
- Maintain, as an annual average, the position of the 5 ppt line at the designated “with project 5 ppt line”
- Maintain 1,100 cfs minimum flow
- Monthly target ranges take priority over average annual salinity at the with project 5 ppt line
- Operate within the monthly target salinity ranges except in extraordinary environmental circumstances as determined by the Technical Working Group and notification of DPAC



Isohalines in the Barataria Basin



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Authorization WRDA 2007

Section 7006

(e) ADDITIONAL PROJECTS—

(1) IN GENERAL—The Secretary is authorized to carry out the following projects referred to in the restoration plan if the Secretary determines such projects are feasible:

(D) Modification of Davis Pond Diversion at a total cost of \$64,200,000



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Problem Statement

Subsidence, erosion, storm damage and lack of riverine influences of the Mississippi River have all caused significant adverse impacts to the Barataria Basin and surrounding areas resulting in habitat loss and ecosystem degradation



Examples of Marsh Degradation



Altering the Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Structure operations could benefit saline marshes in Lafourche and Jefferson Parish



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Examples of Marsh Degradation



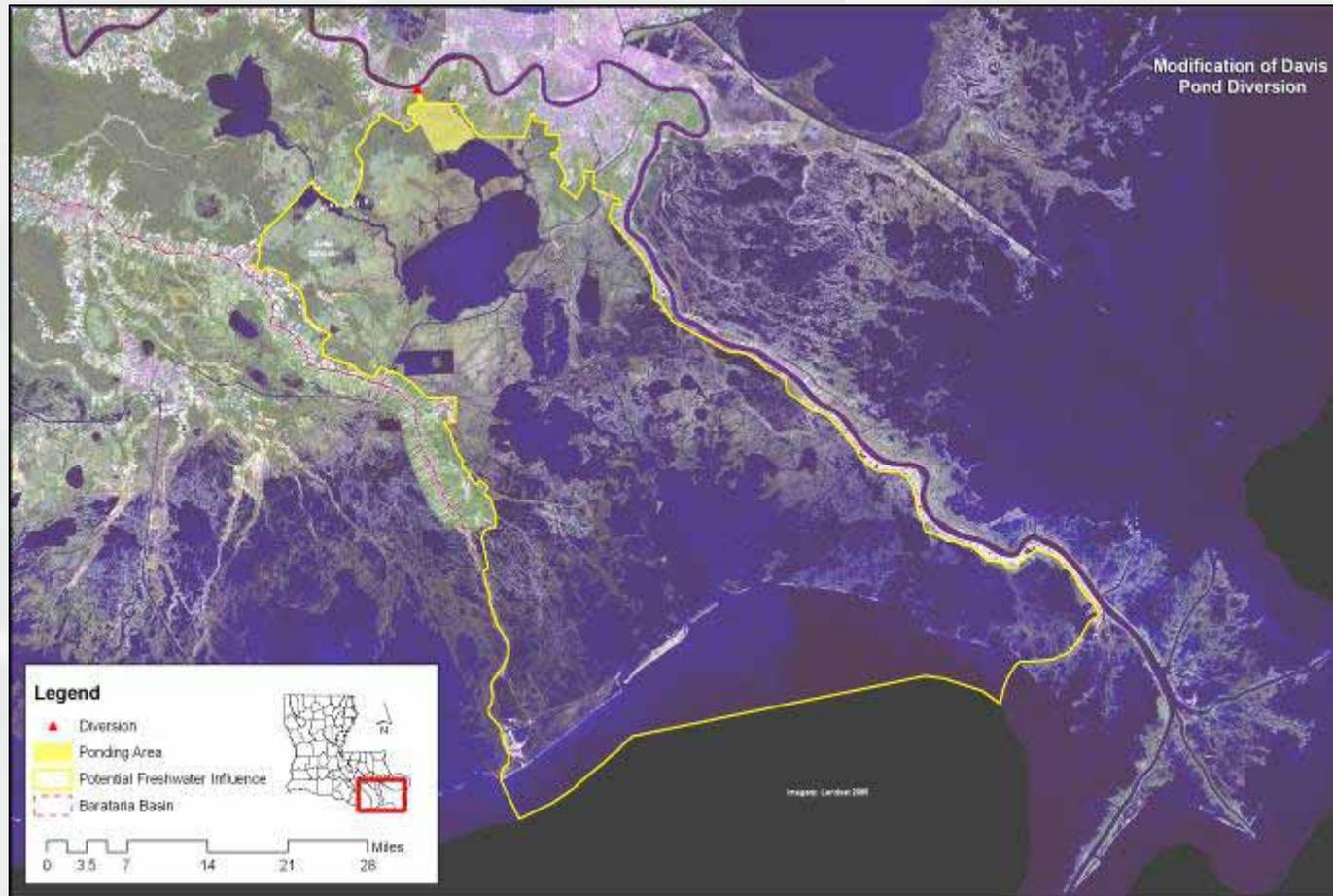
The Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion, if operated at a greater capacity would redistribute freshwater and sediment into the Barataria Basin



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Study Area



Project Goal and Objective

To assess changes in the operation of the existing Davis Pond Freshwater Diversion Structure

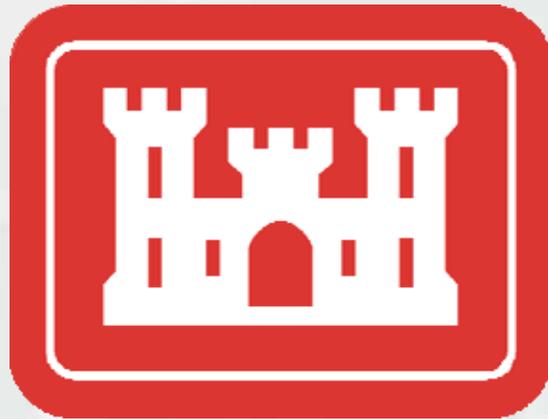
- To increase wetland creation and restoration outputs
- To achieve a sustainable coastal ecosystem that can support and protect the environment, economy, and culture of southern Louisiana and thus the Nation



Opportunities

- No Action – Leave current salinity targets as is
- Change or eliminate the salinity targets
- Modify and/or change the operation of the structure
- Optimize wildlife and fisheries
- Modify outfall to redistribute freshwater and sediment



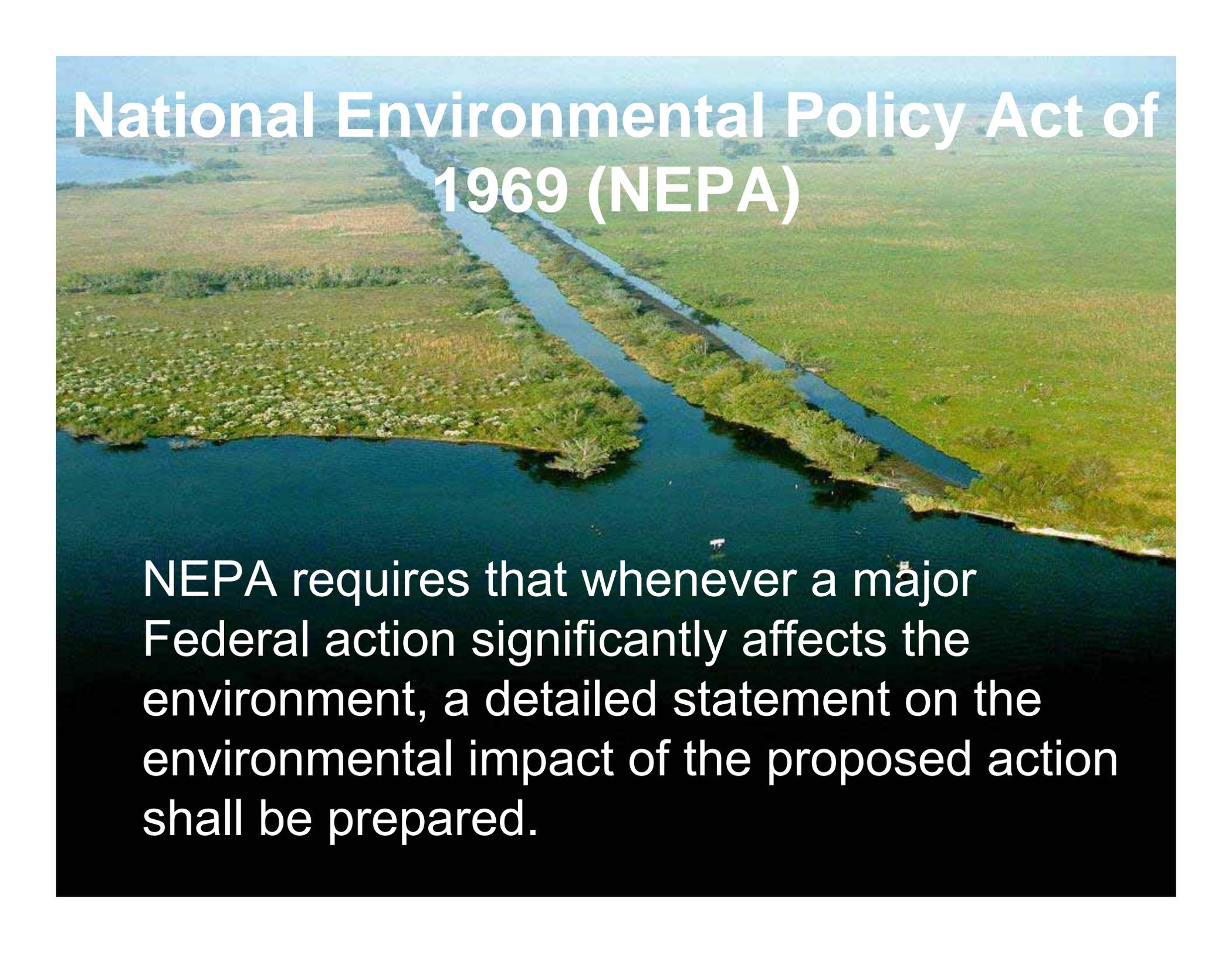


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An aerial photograph of a river winding through a lush green landscape. The river is dark blue and flows from the top center towards the bottom right. The surrounding land is covered in dense green vegetation, with some areas appearing more open or agricultural. The sky is a pale blue, suggesting a clear day.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA)

NEPA requires that whenever a major Federal action significantly affects the environment, a detailed statement on the environmental impact of the proposed action shall be prepared.

Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)

- NEPA procedures ensure: Environmental and Economic information is available to the public and decision-makers before decisions are made.



Timeline

Notice of Intent
September 2009

Scoping Process
Tonight's Meeting

Draft SEIS
June 2011

Final SEIS
November 2011

Record of Decision



Scoping

- Publish Notice of Intent (September 2009)
- Invite participation of interested parties
- Provide opportunity to express concerns



Ground Rules

- **Question and Answer Session is not a forum to debate differing opinions**
- **Please be polite and courteous**
- **Please complete a Speaker Request Card**
- **Questions and comments will be taken in order and recorded**



Scoping Questions

- **Question #1: What are the most important issues, resources, and impacts that should be considered in the SEIS?**
- **Question #2: Are there any other alternatives that should be considered in the SEIS?**

Questions regarding Draft Feasibility Study should be addressed to:

**Renee Sanders, Study Manager
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**Tomma K. Barnes, Project Manager
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Questions regarding the Draft EIS should be addressed to:

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THANK YOU



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