
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: BOYD
SUBJECT: EPA WATERSHED GRANTS
DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2002
CC: RENICK

EPA is launching a new grant program to encourage the protection and restoration of our country's water bodies through the use of watershed approaches--\$21 million for this Watershed Initiative. EPA will accept 2 nominations from each state or tribe. DEQ plans to submit two applications for this grant program: 1) Fecal Coliform Reduction in the Bay of St. Louis (fact sheet attached), 2) Upper Pearl River Watershed (fact sheet in development). The Choctaw Tribe has expressed some interest in the Upper Pearl River Watershed nomination.

DEQ is gathering additional information on the Upper Pearl River project. Once we have obtained additional information on the project, I suggest that both you and Chief Martin submit nominations and letters of support for this project.

Governor Foster's Office is seeking your support for the Lake Pontchartrain Watershed nomination that includes some Mississippi areas. EPA has informed DEQ that our support of the project will not count as a project submitted by Mississippi. Therefore, I recommend that you send a letter support Governor Foster's initiative, especially if we can obtain a letter of support for the Bay of St. Louis project. A copy of Foster's proposal is attached.

FACT SHEET

on

Watershed Initiative Nominations

WATERSHED: Saint Louis Bay Watershed

PROJECT: Implementation of Fecal Coliform TMDL for St. Louis Bay Estuary and Watershed

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this project is to initiate implementation of the fecal coliform TMDL for the St. Louis Bay Watershed by converting discharges of treated wastewater into DeLisle Bayou to land application of the treated wastewater. The improved water quality will be evaluated by implementing conservation strategies for shellfish by leasing three tracks of submerged lands for shellfish restoration. The overall goal is to reduce the discharge of treated wastewater into St. Louis Bay. This will result in improved water quality and provide sustainable harvests of shellfish.

Project task include the following:

1. Nature Conservancy, as a partner in this project, will lease the submerged lands and work to preserve and restore shellfish on these lands. Shellfish habitats are among the few types of submerged lands readily available for lease and are amenable to restoration, conservation and management;
2. The shellfish (oysters) beds will be monitored to determine water quality and to identify water quality improvement resulting from the fecal coliform TMDL implementation measures;
3. Treated wastewater discharges will be diverted from DeLisle Bayou and applied as land treatment to designated lands near the northern shore of St. Louis Bay. The project will eventually eliminate approximately 500,000 gallons per day of treated wastewater from being discharged into St. Louis Bay.

PROJECT SUPPORTERS/COLLABORATORS:

1. Nature Conservancy
2. Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
3. EPA Gulf of Mexico Programs
4. Harrison County Board of Supervisors
5. Hancock County Board of Supervisors