



LOUISIANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

*"...conserving our natural resources and your right to enjoy them."*



**SUBJECT: FLOOD MITIGATION FOR AVOYELLES PARISH**

WHEREAS, when heavy rainfall occurs in Avoyelles and Rapides Parishes there is a tendency for flooding of homes, buildings and natural habitat in the Grand Cote National Wildlife Refuge, and

WHEREAS, this problem is costing taxpayers huge amounts of money for flood losses and has an impact on wildlife during nesting and parturition periods, and

WHEREAS, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is now operating in the red and has created boards to review these problems in specific areas of repetitive losses, and

WHEREAS, FEMA has created such a Flood Mitigation Review Board to review these problems in Avoyelles Parish, and

WHEREAS, based on field observations by NRCS and USFWS, there are additional opportunities for hydrologic restoration and flood water retention, and

WHEREAS, Grand Cote NWR was established for the primary purpose of waterfowl conservation, and passing flood water over Refuge lands would not impair the value of the refuge for waterfowl, and

WHEREAS, the Refuge was once the sump area for Avoyelles Parish, and restoring it to this function would ease flooding while restoring the natural sump area, and

WHEREAS, the use of control structures to regulate refuge water levels would dramatically ease flooding in Avoyelles Parish, and

WHEREAS, the use of water level control structures would also help resolve serious siltation problems in the 135,000-acre Spring Bayou Complex, and

WHEREAS, Executive order 11990 stipulates that Federal agencies must plan and manage water and related land resources to enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands, and

WHEREAS, Executive order 11988 requires that Federal agencies provide leadership and take action to reduce the risk of flood loss, minimize the impact of floods on human safety, health and welfare, and restore and preserve the natural and beneficial values of flood plains, and

WHEREAS, these flooding problems also affect local Indian Tribal Lands and the Tunica Biloxi Indian Tribe supports the goal of restoring the functionality of the Grand Cote flood plain, and

WHEREAS, the majority of the members of the Avoyelles Flood Mitigation Review Board agree that strategic breaching of the Grand Cote levee would help to alleviate regional flooding problems, but final approval of this recommendation by the board and submission to the Avoyelles Parish Police Jury for action has been delayed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation supports the Avoyelles Parish Commission's Hazard Mitigation Committee in its attempt to get this matter resolved.

*Adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife Federation in convention assembled, 3 March 2002, in Marksville, Louisiana*