



27 Oct. 2004

Honorable Kathleen Babineaux Blanco  
Governor of Louisiana  
P. O. Box 94004  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Gov. Blanco,

Thank you for your great work in leading our state. The Sierra Club has enjoyed working with your appointee, Secretary Mike McDaniel on various projects over the years, we are very pleased with your leadership with the installing of new ozone monitors in the greater Baton Rouge area and we have noticed the renewed enthusiasm and dedication within the Department of Environmental Quality since you took office. We are very excited about this positive outlook and look forward to the changes that it brings.

We are contacting you because of our concern with the numerous reservoir projects that have been proposed for state funding over the past few years. Please see the enclosed copy of a resolution by passed by the Delta Chapter at its 17 Oct. 2004 meeting.

The Sierra Club fears that the number of reservoir projects proposed and the associated development will damage the Louisiana landscape. Natural, cultural and economic resources will be forever lost when inundated from a dam.

We believe that the state must determine reservoir development on the basis of meeting the state's present and realistic future water supply needs. Reservoir proposals should also undergo a cost-benefit analysis, and be subject to public hearings and comment, particularly in the affected communities, prior to the commitment of any substantial government funding to proceed with planning and construction. These components would be a fair and respectful use of tax dollars and sensible implementation of state business. We would also like to see the State Bond Commission not extend any Lines of Credit (LOC) until the above steps are taken.

We hope you will consider reviewing the state's policy toward reservoir development and call for changes that will provide a thorough evaluation of these projects prior to the commitment of over **\$ 21 millions dollars** of scarce taxpayer dollars and the sacrifice of homes, farms, forests, wildlife, scenic streams and the cultural heritage that goes along with these endearing elements of our great state.

Thank you for your help on this. Please let us know if our staff in our Baton Rouge Office can be of assistance.

Yours truly,

Maurice Coman  
Chair  
Delta Chapter

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF RESERVOIR**

### **DEVELOPMENT IN LOUISIANA**

WHEREAS, the development of a comprehensive groundwater management plan for Louisiana is in its infancy, and

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Legislature and the Louisiana Groundwater Management Task Force have recognized the important link between the state's ground and surface water resources, and

WHEREAS, Louisiana has an abundant water supply in parts of the state, including the state's share of Toledo Bend water, and numerous reservoirs in other places, while experiencing shortages and aquifer declines in other areas, and

WHEREAS, there has not been a comprehensive review of the state's surface water needs with respect to public supply, industrial and agricultural uses, and fish and wildlife habitat within the context of reservoir development, and

WHEREAS, during the last session of the Louisiana Legislature, no less than 6 reservoir development projects were included in the capital outlay budget to receive funding for various stages of planning and development, including Allen Parish Reservoir, Morehouse Parish Reservoir, Ouachita Water Supply Reservoir, Castor Creek-Little River Reservoir, Bayou DeLoutre Reservoir and Washington Parish Reservoir,\* and

WHEREAS, the development of reservoirs can severely impact fish and wildlife resources, forest and agriculture land, and generally substitute an abundant and increasing habitat type (open water, lacustrine habitat) for a diminishing habitat type (stream bottom, stream bank and riparian ecosystems, wildlife corridors), and

WHEREAS, new reservoirs consume land that supports forestry, hunting leases, and habitat for many wildlife species, including white-tailed deer, wild turkey, squirrel, and numerous nongame wildlife, and

WHEREAS, reservoir construction has the potential to drastically alter the important natural ebb and flow of streams, often with potential for significant adverse impact on downstream values, and

WHEREAS, segments of several streams within the Louisiana Natural and Scenic River System will be inundated or otherwise adversely impacted by the development of the aforementioned reservoirs, and

WHEREAS, private property is to be taken for the development of these reservoirs, even if the property owners are not willing to sell, and

WHEREAS, a number of concerned citizens groups have formed to oppose these proposed reservoirs, and

WHEREAS, the Sierra Club, Delta Chapter supports the efforts of these groups, and

WHEREAS, Article IX, Section I of the 1974-Revised Louisiana Constitution, as ruled on by the Louisiana Supreme Court, requires an agency or official, before granting approval of a proposed action, to determine that adverse impact has been avoided or minimized.

WHEREAS, Species that migrate for reproduction purposes are blocked by these reservoirs

WHEREAS, Mercury contamination is amplified by impoundments

WHEREAS, Endangered species are threatened and perhaps taken in this dam-building process

WHEREAS, Archeological and historical sites could be forever lost

WHEREAS, Valuable forests and farmland would be lost

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club opposes the construction of any new dams anywhere in Louisiana.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club requests the Louisiana Bond Commission not to issue any Lines of Credit (LOC) for these proposed reservoirs projects.

***Adopted by the Delta Chapter Sierra Club by its Executive Committee, 17 October 2004, in New Orleans, Louisiana.***

## **Proposed Bond Funding for Reservoirs in 2004 as listed in House Bill 2 ((Act 2) of 204 capital outlay budget.**

Reservoir funding per House Bill 2 (Act 2) of 2004:

-\$800,000 P1, \$300,000 P2, \$1,700,000 P5 bond funding for AC&P for Allen Parish Reservoir

-\$475,000 GF, \$4,750,000 P1, \$500,000 P2, \$1,000,000 P5 bond funding for AC&P for Poverty Point Reservoir (Richland)

-\$400,000 P1, \$100,000 P2, \$200,000 P5 bond funding for Ouachita Water Supply Reservoir

-\$100,000 P1, \$400,000 P2, \$1,000,000 P5 bond funding for Castor Creek-Little River Reservoir (LaSalle)

-\$300,000 P1 bond funding for feasibility study for New Morehouse Reservoir;

-\$600,000 P1, \$350,000 P2, \$1,250,000 P3, \$1,250,000 P4, \$1,200,000 P5 bond funding for feasibility and planning for Washington Parish Reservoir

-\$1,415,000 P1, \$500,000 P2, \$3,900,000 P3, \$4,000,000 P4, \$500,000 P5 bond funding for AC&P for Bayou Dechene Reservoir (Caldwell)

-\$35,000 P1 bond funding for planning and construction for Bayou De l'Outre Reservoir

General Funds total \$ 475,000

Priority #1 Funding total \$ 8,300,000

Priority #2 Funding total \$ 2,150,000

Priority #3 Funding total \$ 4,150,000

Priority #4 Funding total \$ 5,250,000

Priority #5 Funding total \$ 1,200,000

**TOTAL Proposed Bond Funds \$ 21,525,000**