Clean Water
State Revolving Fund

MISSISSIPPI RIVER REINTRODUCTION IN BAYOU LAFOURCHE PROJECT

STATE PROGRAM: Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality

ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT: Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District

ASSISTANCE AMOUNT: $65M

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Bayou Lafourche has been largely disconnected from the Mississippi River at Donaldsonville, Louisiana for almost 120 years by a dam and subsequent levee improvements. These alterations reduced the freshwater flows to area marshes, and saltwater intrusion severely impaired drinking water quality. To help maximize freshwater conveyance down Bayou Lafourche from the Mississippi River, the Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District (BLFWD) and EPA introduced the concept of the Mississippi River Reintroduction into Bayou Lafourche Project in the early 1990s. The Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District proposes constructing a new pump station in the Mississippi River to reintroduce freshwater into the Bayou Lafourche and to dredge an area to create a sediment trap to prevent excess sediments from traveling downstream. This will minimize saltwater intrusion and protect the potable water supply for residents along Bayou Lafourche. A new pump station will have the capacity to convey up to 1,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) of freshwater into Bayou Lafourche from the Mississippi River, whose current capacity is only about 200 cfs. Nearly 300,000 people rely upon Bayou Lafourche for their potable water supply, and the additional fresh water supply from this project is critical to the businesses and residents in local parishes.

The project is funded in conjunction with Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority's (CPRA) GoMesa Funds. Without the SRF, CPRA funds were limited to what they could provide. BLFWD was able to leverage the SRF program to get more money allocated over a 20-year period from the CPRA to fund this project. The SRF will fund the project on the front end and the CPRA will disburse a specific dollar amount each year to BLFWD, which will in turn repay the loan.

To read more about this case study, please visit https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-04/pisces-2022-compendium.pdf.