**From:** Seth Bordelon
**To:** Breaux, Brian W MVN
**Subject:** Grand Swamp Mitigation Bank (MVN-2012-02553-MB)
**Date:** Monday, July 01, 2013 8:37:44 AM

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Brian,

The Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has reviewed Public Notice MVN-2012-02553-MB, dated June 3, 2013. Fourth Louisiana Resource, LLC, has requested a Department of the Army permit to create a forested wetland mitigation bank (Grand Swamp Mitigation Bank) southeast of New Roads, in Pointe Coupee Parish, Louisiana. This report is submitted in accordance with provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

According to the Public Notice and accompanying prospectus, the proposed project site consists of 254.8 acres of pastureland that would be restored as bottomland hardwood forest. Specifically, the proposed project would include 177.1 acres of bottomland hardwood re-establishment, 5.8 acres of swamp re-establishment, and 8.8 acres of swamp rehabilitation. Approximately 51 acres of bottomland hardwood forest would be restored as upland buffer and would be designated as non-hydric inclusion. Onsite drainage ditches would be backfilled and culverts would be removed to restore the appropriate hydrologic conditions. The Bank Sponsor would plant appropriate tree species (bare-root seedlings) on 9-foot by 9-foot centers. Invasive plant species would be controlled through mechanical and/or chemical treatments.

Restoration of the project site would provide valuable habitat for a variety of wildlife species known to inhabit forested wetland ecosystems. Large mammals, including the Louisiana black bear (Ursus americanus luteolus), would likely benefit from the additional forested habitat within the Mississippi River floodplain. Project implementation would also create future habitat for a variety of birds including resident and migratory songbirds, raptors, and woodpeckers.

The Service conceptually supports development of the proposed bank due to its location within the landscape and its potential to be successfully restored. However, we recommend that a site visit be conducted before proceeding to a draft Mitigation Banking Instrument to allow resource agency personnel the opportunity to more closely evaluate the site and the proposed project components.

The above comments and recommendations constitute the report of the Department of Interior. Please feel free to contact me if additional information is needed.

Seth Bordelon

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