

A Call to Action

Through historic public-private collaborations, the best minds from science and engineering have been working on a solution, one that can serve as a world model for coastal restoration and sustainability.

A continuing dialogue established between state and federal officials keeps the issue a priority. Executive roundtables with White House officials and federal leaders, agency briefings and requests to the President for action highlight the risk to Louisiana and the nation if **America's WETLAND** is lost.

And in Louisiana, the state legislature has made this issue a priority, passing legislation to address the problem and to make commitments for the state's share of the costs.

A call to action by Louisiana's Governor and every member of the Louisiana Congressional delegation urges companies, governmental agencies, organizations and citizens alike to join the fight and turn back the rising tide.

"Water supplies are in peril; oil and gas lines are exposed. Entire coastal towns are sinking ... And as the coast loses its protective buffer, inland areas are increasingly vulnerable to hurricanes."

- Washington Post, July 13, 2003



Don't Be a Big Loser. Act Now!

Like the American bald eagle, Louisiana's unique coast can thrive again, saved and protected for generations to come.

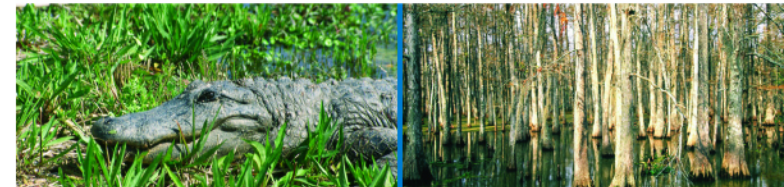
While startling to discover the consequences of losing our coastal wetlands, opinion leaders and citizens from across the nation are lending support and responding to meet the challenge.

They see how the loss of **America's WETLAND** affects the nation and the world. But there is more to do. Efforts to alert and educate the public continue. Like the forces attacking our wetlands, this task must be approached with relentless determination.

The American people are beginning to understand how important coastal Louisiana's wetlands are to their own well-being. Our energy security, economy and ecology are at stake.

We cannot afford to lose one our nation's critical assets – **America's WETLAND**.

For information on how you can support the **America's WETLAND** campaign, please visit www.americaswetland.com or call 1.866.4.WETLAND.



This brochure brought to you through the generous support of the Shell Oil Company.

Photos: Oysterboat on the MRGO (cover, upper left), Saipern 7000 and Module (inside, top center), Turtlecove Bull Tongue (left) © Bevil Knapp 2004 All Rights Reserved.





"Members of Congress, who will be asked to foot much of the bill, should view it as a national priority."

- New York Times, July 4, 2003

The American bald eagle lives and thrives in **America's WETLAND**. This country's citizens saved the symbol of our nation because losing this proud bird was unthinkable. Today, it lives and soars again in coastal Louisiana.

However, these vast American wetlands in Louisiana are also endangered – disappearing at a staggering rate – a football field of land every 30 minutes.

America's WETLAND, a valuable landscape extending along Louisiana's coast and encompassing nearly 3.4 million acres of wetlands, is home to a unique and intricate ecosystem that is in danger of collapse.

This seventh largest delta on earth vanishes minute by minute, relentlessly.

The raw beauty of these wetlands would be reason enough for rescue, but America's economic security is also threatened by this loss. It's as if a foreign enemy were quietly invading our shores.

This land along Louisiana's coast is being eaten away by a wet cancer. If allowed to continue, it will threaten the heart of our nation – that vast and rich territory economically and environmentally served by the Mississippi River.

But the nation is realizing we cannot afford to lose **America's WETLAND**.

What will we lose if America's WETLAND vanishes?

- One of the largest wetland estuaries and most productive river deltas in the world
- A landing point for up to 30% of the fisheries catch from America's lower forty-eight states
- Habitat for more than 70 threatened and endangered species and the America's largest wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl and songbirds
- Protection for the infrastructure that transports 25% of oil and gas consumed by America's communities to power our cars, homes, businesses and industries
- A home for unique and vibrant cultures shaped by their connection to the ecosystem
- A navigation, transportation and commercial hub housing the world's largest port system

The Solution

Restoring **America's WETLAND** will require billions of dollars of sustained support from state and federal governments, a small price compared to the estimated cost of inaction – more than \$100 billion in infrastructure alone.

Louisiana and its federal partners, through the Breaux Act, developed the Coast 2050 plan, a blueprint for restoring coastal Louisiana in a way that will sustain its value for the nation and world. The effort to restore **America's WETLAND** will be one of the largest engineering projects ever attempted. However, the costs are on a far larger scale than current funds allow.

In the largest public awareness initiative in its history, Louisiana has launched the **America's WETLAND: Campaign to Save Coastal Louisiana**, to raise awareness of the impact Louisiana's wetland loss has on the state, nation and world. Increased support for efforts to save coastal Louisiana will provide answers and drive solutions to coastal land loss challenges in America and around the globe.

"It's been over 200 years since the Louisiana Purchase made this land part of America, securing our nation and helping to make the United States a world economic power. Now we are threatened with losing this jewel, a vast wetland of world ecological significance and of strategic economic importance to our national energy security."

- Louisiana Governor Kathleen Babineaux Blanco

"Economics aside, an entire way of life, the Cajun culture, famous for its distinctive cuisine, close-knit families, lilting patois, colorful festivals and foot-stomping music, is threatened."

- Atlanta Journal-Constitution, October 3, 2003

"Another 500 square miles of land – an area larger than the city of Los Angeles – could be lost in the next 50 years if dramatic steps are not taken."

- Los Angeles Times, August 24, 2003

