

OPTIONS FOR DIVERTING MISSISSIPPI RIVER WATER AND SEDIMENT

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Over the past 2 decades, dozens of concepts for the diversion of Mississippi River water and sediment have been built, or are under construction, or have been approved.

The Mississippi River Sediment, Nutrient, and Freshwater Redistribution study investigated these concepts to produce a comprehensive guide about the potential for the diversion of Mississippi River resources. The study also assessed the potential limitation and impacts of reallocating the river's flow and sediment. From these analyses, an array of the most efficient diversions and effective diversion techniques was developed. The Coast 2050 plan, produced under the direction of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources under the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act, integrated many of these concepts with publicly supported basinwide restoration strategies.

Results of the analysis of river diversion have shown that there is significant available potential for diverting river flows and sediment. This potential is controlled by river location, receiving area conditions, and achieving balance between environmental, commercial, navigation, and flood protection needs throughout the coastal system. The reintroduction of river resources into Louisiana's coastal estuaries will require focused and coordinated decision making from both the governmental and public arenas. Currently some highly effective and minimally complex alternatives for diversion are being actively developed.

The presentation will cover the current state of diversion, the identified potential for diversion, and the limits of the current recommendations for diversion and actions that are being taken.