

**BAYOU MALLET TMDLS
FOR DISSOLVED OXYGEN, NUTRIENTS,
AND AMMONIA**

April 19, 2002

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AND AMMONIA**

SUBSEGMENT 050103

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act requires states to identify waterbodies that are not meeting water quality standards and to develop total maximum daily pollutant loads for those waterbodies. A total maximum daily load (TMDL) is the amount of pollutant that a waterbody can assimilate without exceeding the established water quality standard for that pollutant. Through a TMDL, pollutant loads can be distributed or allocated to point sources and nonpoint sources discharging to the waterbody. This report presents TMDLs developed for dissolved oxygen (DO), nutrients, and ammonia for Bayou Mallet (subsegment 050103) in the Mermentau basin in southern Louisiana.

The Bayou Mallet watershed includes Bayou Doza and several unnamed tributaries. The watershed is 141 mi² in area at its confluence with Bayou des Cannes. The area is sparsely populated outside its small municipalities, and land use is dominated by agriculture. One sewage treatment facility was explicitly included in the modeling effort.

Subsegment 050103 was listed on the Modified Court Ordered 303(d) List for Louisiana as not fully supporting the designated use of propagation of fish and wildlife and was ranked as priority #1 for TMDL development. It was not included on the 1998 303(d) List, but was later added to the list based on LDEQ assessment data collected during June – December 1998. The causes for impairment cited in the 303(d) List included organic enrichment/low DO. The water quality standard for DO is 5 mg/L December – February and 3 mg/L March – November.

A water quality model (LA-QUAL) was set up to simulate DO, carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD), ammonia nitrogen, and organic nitrogen. The model was calibrated using LDEQ assessment data collected during June – December 1998, data from FTN's synoptic survey in September 2000, and other various information obtained from LDEQ, Corps of Engineers, and US Geological Survey (USGS). There was also data from three intensive surveys of the unnamed tributary receiving wastewater from the City of Eunice Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). The projection simulation was run at critical flows and temperatures to address seasonality as required by the Clean Water Act. In order to maintain the summer DO

standard of 3 mg/L, reductions of existing loads from nonpoint sources were required in the summer projection simulation. No load reductions were required to meet the winter DO standard of 5 mg/L in the winter projection. In general, the modeling in this study was consistent with guidance in the Louisiana TMDL Technical Procedures Manual.

The TMDLs for oxygen demanding substances (CBOD, ammonia nitrogen, organic nitrogen, and sediment oxygen demand (SOD)) were calculated using the results of the projection simulations. Both implicit and explicit margins of safety were included in the TMDL calculations. The nutrient TMDLs were developed based on Louisiana's water quality standard for nutrients, which states that "the naturally occurring range of nitrogen to phosphorus ratios shall be maintained". The nutrient TMDLs were calculated using allowable nitrogen loadings from the projection simulation and applying a naturally occurring nitrogen to phosphorus ratio to determine the allowable phosphorus loadings. Because Louisiana does not have a water quality standard for ammonia, the ammonia TMDLs were based on: 1) maintaining the DO standard, and 2) not exceeding published EPA criteria for ammonia toxicity.

The TMDLs for this subsegment include wasteload allocations for one point source discharge plus an additional wasteload allocation for all of the other point sources with minor oxygen demanding discharges within the subsegment. Ammonia nitrogen releases from the City of Eunice WWTP will need to be less than 1.7 mg/L during the summer, and less than 4.3 mg/L in the winter to meet ammonia toxicity criteria. The City of Eunice WWTP does not currently have an ammonia nitrogen limit. Analyses of the City of Eunice WWTP effluent in 1992 and 1993 showed average ammonia nitrogen concentrations of 0.25 mg/L. Therefore a treatment upgrade of the City of Eunice WWTP may not be necessary. Nonpoint source reductions of 4% to 20% are required to meet the summer water quality standard for DO. The existing summer DO standard of 3 mg/L for subsegment 050103 appears to be achievable. No nonpoint source reductions were required to meet the winter water quality standard for DO.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) for dissolved oxygen (DO), nutrients, and ammonia for Bayou Mallet (subsegment 050103). Bayou Mallet was listed on the February 29, 2000 Modified Court Ordered 303(d) List for Louisiana (EPA 2000) as not fully supporting the designated use of propagation of fish and wildlife. It was not included on the 1998 303(d) List (LDEQ 1998a), but was later added to the list based on LDEQ assessment data collected during June – December 1998. The suspected sources and suspected causes for impairment in the 303(d) List are included in Table 1.1. Bayou Mallet was ranked as priority #1 for TMDL development. The TMDLs in this report were developed in accordance with Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act and EPA's regulations at 40 CFR 130.7. The 303(d) listings for other pollutants in this subsegment are being addressed by EPA and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) in other documents.

The purpose of a TMDL is to determine the pollutant loading that a waterbody can assimilate without exceeding the water quality standard for that pollutant and to establish the load reduction that is necessary to meet the standard in a waterbody. The TMDL is the sum of the wasteload allocation (WLA), the load allocation (LA), and a margin of safety (MOS). The WLA is the load allocated to point sources of the pollutant of concern, and the LA is the load that is allocated to nonpoint sources. The margin of safety is a percentage of the TMDL that accounts for the uncertainty associated with the model assumptions, data inadequacies, and future growth.

Table 1.1. Summary of 303(d) listing of Bayou Mallet (EPA 2000).

Subsegment Number	Waterbody Description	Suspected Sources	Suspected Causes	Priority Ranking (1 = highest)
050103	Bayou Mallet	Irrigated crop production Minor Municipal point sources Non-irrigated crop production Package plants (small flows) Petroleum activities Septic tanks Municipal	Oil & grease Suspended solids Turbidity Nutrients Ammonia Organic enrichment/ low DO	1

2.0 STUDY AREA DESCRIPTION

2.1 General Information

Bayou Mallet is located in the Mermentau basin in southern Louisiana. The Bayou Mallet watershed (subsegment 050103) includes Bayou Doza and several unnamed tributaries (see map in Appendix A). The drainage area for the watershed is 141 square miles (USGS 1971). The area is sparsely populated outside its small municipalities and land use is dominated by agriculture (Table 2.1). Primary crops are rice and soybeans (LDEQ 1993a). Water from draining rice fields is discharged to Bayou Mallet (LDEQ 1993a and 1994).

Table 2.1. Land uses in subsegment 050103 based on GAP data (USGS 1998).

Land Use Type	% of Total Area
Fresh Marsh	0.1%
Saline Marsh	0.0%
Wetland Forest	5.5%
Upland Forest	5.8%
Wetland scrub/shrub	0.1%
Upland scrub/shrub	1.4%
Agricultural	81.6%
Urban	3.7%
Barren	0.0%
Water	1.8%
TOTAL	100.0%

2.2 Water Quality Standards

The numeric water quality standards and designated uses for the Bayou Mallet watershed are shown in Table 2.2. The primary numeric standards for the TMDLs presented in this report are the DO standards of 3 mg/L for March – November and 5 mg/L for December – February. Bayou Mallet is classified as a naturally dystrophic system.

For nutrients, there are no specific numeric criteria, but there is a narrative standard that states “The naturally occurring range of nitrogen-phosphorus ratios shall be maintained...

Nutrient concentrations that produce aquatic growth to the extent that it creates a public nuisance or interferes with designated water uses shall not be added to any surface waters.” (LDEQ 2000a).

Table 2.2. Water quality standards and designated uses (LDEQ 2000a).

Subsegment Number	050103
Waterbody Description	Bayou Mallet-Headwaters to Bayou Des Cannes
Designated Uses:	ABCF
Criteria:	
Chloride	90 mg/L
Sulfate	30 mg/L
DO	5 mg/L Dec - Feb 3 mg/L Mar - Nov
pH	6.0 - 8.5
Temperature	32° C
TDS	260 mg/L

USES: A – primary contact recreation; B – secondary contact recreation; C – propagation of fish and wildlife; D – drinking water supply; E – oyster propagation; F – agriculture; G – outstanding natural resource water; L – limited aquatic life and wildlife use.

In addition, LDEQ issued a declaratory ruling on April 29, 1996, concerning this language and stated, “That DO directly correlates with overall nutrient impact is a well-established biological and ecological principle. Thus, when the LDEQ maintains and protects DO, the LDEQ is in effect also limiting and controlling nutrient concentrations and impacts.” DO serves as the indicator for the water quality criteria and for assessment of use support. For the TMDLs in this report, the nutrient loading required to maintain the DO standard is the nutrient TMDL.

For ammonia, there are no specific numeric criteria in the Louisiana water quality standards. However, the impacts of ammonia are usually controlled indirectly by maintaining the DO standard (as discussed above for nutrients). Also, the ammonia TMDL calculations in this report included checking to make sure that instream ammonia concentrations were below EPA’s published ammonia criteria for toxicity (EPA 1999).

2.3 Identification of Sources

2.3.1 Point Sources

Lists of NPDES permits that were identified in or near the study area are included in Appendix B. These permits were identified by searching two sources of information. The primary source was a listing of all the permits in the Mermentau basin (basin number 05) from the LDEQ static database. The secondary source was a listing of all the permits in the Mermentau basin (hydrologic units 08080101 and 08080102) from EPA's Permit Compliance System (PCS) on the EPA website. All of the information concerning permit parameters and design flow in Appendix B was obtained by manually retrieving hard copies of permit files from LDEQ's file room.

Facilities without oxygen demanding parameters in their permit were assumed to exert a negligible oxygen demand in the receiving stream; therefore, these facilities were excluded from any further consideration in these TMDLs. All of the facilities with oxygen demanding parameters in their permit were included in the TMDL calculations, but only one of them was considered large enough to be modeled explicitly (i.e., design flow >0.1 MGD). Facilities with design flows less than 0.1 MGD do not add significant oxygen demanding load to the system. Oxygen demanding discharges from facilities with design flows less than 0.1 MGD were included in the TMDLs by adding their loads to the loading simulated in the model.

The point source that was explicitly included in the model was the City of Eunice Sewage Treatment Plant (STP). The approximate location of this discharge is shown in Appendix A. The permit records, permit applications, and Discharge Monitoring Reports (DMRs) for this facility were examined and appropriate input information for the calibration and projection modeling runs was derived to the maximum extent possible.

Relevant information for the City of Eunice discharge is listed below:

	<u>City of Eunice STP</u>
Permit number	LA0041751
Receiving stream	Unnamed Tributary to Bayou Mallet
Design flow	2.5 mgd
Permit limits	10 mg/L BOD ₅ (monthly avg.)
Treatment	Activated sludge

2.3.2 Nonpoint Sources

Several nonpoint sources were cited as suspected sources of impairment in the 303(d) List (Table 1.1). These nonpoint sources include non-irrigated crop production, irrigated crop production, petroleum activities, and septic tanks.

2.4 Previous Data and Studies

Listed below are previous water quality data and studies in the study area. Locations of selected LDEQ ambient monitoring stations are shown in Appendix A.

- 1) Reconnaissance survey of the Unnamed Tributary of Bayou Mallet at Eunice, Louisiana, June 1991 (LDEQ 1991).
- 2) Intensive survey of the Unnamed Tributary to Bayou Mallet at Eunice September 20-22 and October 5-9, 1992 (LDEQ 1993a).
- 3) Eunice Biological Sampling Study, October 9, 1992 and November 18, 1992 (LDEQ 1993b).
- 4) Intensive Survey of Unnamed Tributary to Bayou Mallet at Eunice conducted September 19-23, 1993 (LDEQ 1994).
- 5) April 1999 survey for Bayou des Cannes watershed TMDL for dissolved oxygen and nutrients in subsegments 050101, 050103, and 050201 (LDEQ 1999).
- 6) Dissolved Oxygen Use Attainability Analysis for the Mermentau River Basin (LDEQ 1998b).

3.0 CALIBRATION OF WATER QUALITY MODEL

3.1 Model Setup

In order to evaluate the linkage between pollutant sources and water quality, a computer simulation model was used. The model used for these TMDLs was LA-QUAL (version 3.02), which was selected because it includes the relevant physical, chemical, and biological processes and it has been used successfully in the past for other TMDLs in Louisiana. The LA-QUAL model was set up to simulate organic nitrogen, ammonia nitrogen, ultimate carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD_u), and DO. Phosphorus and algae were not simulated because algae do not appear to have significant impacts on DO in this stream.

A vector diagram of the model is included in Appendix C. The vector diagram shows the reach/element design and the location of the modeled inflows and point source. The model has a main stem and one branch. The main stem represents Bayou Mallet downstream of Bayou Doza, and the branch represents the unnamed tributary receiving discharge from the City of Eunice STP.

3.2 Calibration Period

Several sources of field data were available for calibrating a water quality model for the Bayou Mallet system. A synoptic survey along the main stem of Bayou Mallet was performed by FTN in September 2000. Also, 3 intensive surveys of the unnamed tributary at Eunice were performed by LDEQ during 1992-93. The other source of data was the LDEQ 1998 assessment data collected at 1 station approximately twice per month.

In order to utilize the available survey data, the model was calibrated using the FTN September 2000 data for the main stem and the LDEQ 1992-93 data for the unnamed tributary. The 1992-93 surveys and the 2000 survey were all conducted during periods of relatively high temperature and low flow, which are characteristic of critical conditions for DO.

The main stem and the unnamed tributary were calibrated simultaneously using a single simulation of the combined system even though the main stem and the unnamed tributary were

calibrated to conditions for different years. This was considered acceptable because the surveys were performed under similar conditions and the unnamed tributary appears to have little impact on flow and water quality in the main stem during critical conditions (LDEQ 1999).

3.3 Temperature Correction of Kinetics (Data Type 4)

The temperature correction factors used in the model were consistent with the Louisiana Technical Procedures Manual (the “LTP”, LDEQ 2000b). These correction factors were:

- Correction for BOD decay: 1.047 (value in LTP is same as model default)
- Correction for SOD: 1.065 (value in LTP is same as model default)
- Correction for ammonia N decay: 1.070 (specified in Data Group 4)
- Correction for organic N decay: 1.020 (not specified in LTP; model default used)
- Correction for reaeration: calculated automatically by model

3.4 Hydraulics (Data Type 9)

Field data were used to develop depths and widths for the Bayou Mallet system. Values of average depth for Bayou Mallet were obtained from cross section measurements from the FTN intensive survey. A plot of these measured depths along with the depths used as model input is included in Appendix D. For widths, values were obtained from cross section measurements from the FTN survey. No cross sections were measured on the unnamed tributary at Eunice during the FTN survey. Therefore, the average width and depth of the unnamed tributary at Eunice was calculated from cross section data collected during the LDEQ intensive surveys of that unnamed tributary (LDEQ 1993, LDEQ 1994). A plot of these measured widths along with the widths used for specifying the model input is also included in Appendix D.

The stream hydraulics were specified in the input for the LA-QUAL model using the power functions ($\text{width} = a * Q^b + c$ and $\text{depth} = d * Q^e + f$). Since flow conditions during the synoptic survey were close to 7Q10 (based on USGS flow data for Bayou des Cannes near Eunice), it was assumed that the width and depth measurements taken during the survey were representative of stream geometry under critical conditions. Therefore, Bayou Mallet was

modeled with constant widths and depths. This was specified in the model by setting the coefficients and exponents as follows (the values for each reach are shown in Appendix D):

- width coefficient (a) = 0.0
- width exponent (b) = 0.0
- width constant (c) = width
- depth coefficient (d) = 0.0
- depth exponent (e) = 0.0
- depth constant (f) = depth

Flows reported for the unnamed tributary at Eunice in the LDEQ intensive surveys reports (LDEQ 1993a, LDEQ 1994) ranged from 0.03 cfs to 3.42 cfs. These flows are similar to those that will be used in the projection simulation. Therefore, the unnamed tributary at Eunice was also modeled with constant width and depth.

3.5 Initial Conditions (Data Type 11)

The primary parameter that is specified in the initial conditions for LA-QUAL is the temperature for each reach (because temperature was not being simulated). The temperature for each reach of the main stem was set to the average of the measured values from the FTN synoptic survey. The temperature for the unnamed tributary was set up to the average of the measured values from the LDEQ surveys. The input data and sources are shown in Appendix D.

For constituents not being simulated, the initial concentrations were set to zero; otherwise, the model would have assumed a fixed concentration of those constituents and the model would have included the effects of the unmodeled constituents on the modeled constituents (e.g., the effects of algae on DO).

3.6 Water Quality Kinetics (Data Types 12 and 13)

Kinetic rates used in LA-QUAL include reaeration rates, sediment oxygen demand (SOD), carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand (CBOD) decay rates, nitrification rates, and mineralization rates (organic nitrogen decay). The values used in the model input are shown in Appendix D.

The Louisiana Equation option was specified for reaeration in the model. The SOD rates were developed through iteration in the calibration. The SOD rate for each reach was adjusted so that predicted DO concentrations were similar to the calibration target values. The CBOD decay rate was set to 0.10/day based on LDEQ's guidance for uncalibrated modeling of the Mermentau and Vermilion-Teche basins (LDEQ 2000c) and information in the "Rates, Constants, and Kinetics Formulations in Surface Water Quality Modeling" publication (EPA 1985).

Mineralization rates (organic nitrogen decay) in the model were set to 0.02/day for all reaches. This value was based on information in "Rates, Constants, and Kinetics Formulations in Surface Water Quality Modeling" (EPA 1985). Nitrification rates were set to 0.10/day for all reaches, which is consistent with guidance in the LTP based on stream depth. The combination of these rates is consistent with LDEQ's guidance for uncalibrated modeling of the Mermentau and Vermilion-Teche basins (LDEQ 2000c). The LDEQ guidance specified a default rate of 0.05/day for nitrogenous biochemical oxygen demand (NBOD) decay, which represents the combination of mineralization and nitrification.

One other input value was specified for characterizing the nitrification process. In the program constants section of the model input file (data type 3), the nitrification inhibition option was set to 1 instead of the default of option number 2. Option number 1 was also used in the model of Bayou Lacassine (FTN 2000a), which is similar to the system being simulated here. With the default option, the nitrification rate drops rapidly when the DO drops below 2 mg/L, which results in an unrealistic build up of ammonia nitrogen at low DO values. Option number 1 provides nitrification inhibition that is similar to what is used in other water quality models such as QUAL2E and WASP (see Figure 3.5 in Bayou Lacassine report).

3.7 Nonpoint Source Loads (Data Type 19)

The nonpoint source (NPS) loads that are specified in the model can be most easily understood as resuspended load from the bottom sediments and are modeled as SOD, benthic ammonia source rates, CBOD loads, and organic nitrogen loads. The SOD (specified in data type 12), the benthic ammonia source rates (specified in data type 13), and the mass loads of organic nitrogen and CBODu (specified in data type 19) were all treated as calibration parameters; their values were adjusted until the model output was similar to the calibration target values. The values used as model input are shown in Appendix D.

These four calibration parameters were adjusted in a specific order based on the interactions between state variables in the model. First, the organic nitrogen loads were adjusted until the predicted organic nitrogen concentrations were similar to the observed concentrations. Organic nitrogen was calibrated first because none of the other state variables (DO, CBOD, ammonia nitrogen) will affect the organic nitrogen concentrations. Next, the benthic ammonia source rates were adjusted until the predicted ammonia nitrogen concentrations were similar to the observed concentrations. Then the CBOD loads were adjusted until the predicted CBOD concentrations were similar to the observed concentrations. Finally, SOD was adjusted until the predicted DO concentrations were similar to the observed concentrations.

3.8 Headwater and Tributary Flow Rates (Data Types 20 and 24)

The headwater flow for Bayou Mallet was based on USGS daily flows for Bayou des Cannes near Eunice (08010000). The Bayou des Cannes flow for the 2000 FTN sampling date was divided by the drainage area at the USGS station to get an areal flow (i.e., cfs per square mile). The headwater flow for Bayou Mallet was then calculated by multiplying this areal flow by the drainage area of the Bayou Mallet headwater. The flows for the tributaries at RM 17.5, 15.75, 9.5, and 4.9 were also calculated by multiplying the areal flow from Bayou des Cannes with the estimated drainage area for each tributary. Drainage areas were estimated from USGS (1971) and 1:100,000 topographic maps. Values used as model input are shown in Appendix D.

The report of the 1992 LDEQ intensive survey (LDEQ 1993a) of the unnamed tributary at Eunice states that “The STP provides all flow to the tributary except when stormwater runoff

occurs during rain events.” Therefore, the headwater flow for the unnamed tributary at Eunice was assumed to be zero.

3.9 Headwater and Tributary Water Quality (Data Types 21 and 25)

Concentrations of DO, CBOD_u, organic nitrogen, and ammonia nitrogen were specified in the model for each headwater and tributary inflow. The values used as model input are shown in Appendix D.

FTN 2000 survey data were used for inflow water quality for the Bayou Mallet headwater and the tributaries at RM 17.5, 15.75, 9.5, and 4.9. The FTN 2000 survey data included DO, ammonia nitrogen, nitrate nitrogen, total kjeldahl nitrogen (TKN), and CBOD₅. CBOD_u was as 4.5 times CBOD₅, and organic nitrogen was estimated as TKN minus ammonia nitrogen. For the unnamed tributary at Eunice, headwater quality was not used by the model (the headwater flow was zero).

3.10 Point Source Inputs (Data Types 24 and 25)

Flows and water quality concentrations for the City of Eunice STP were based on the values reported for the Eunice STP in the LDEQ intensive survey reports (LDEQ 1993a, LDEQ 1994). Flow was set to the average discharges reported for the STP during the September sampling of LDEQ intensive surveys. CBOD_u was set to the average of September CBOD₂₀ concentration measured at the STP. DO and ammonia and nitrate nitrogen were set to the average of concentrations measured at the STP during September 1992 and 1993. Organic nitrogen was set to the average TKN measured at the STP during September 1992 and 1993 minus the average ammonia nitrogen. The values used as model input are shown in Appendix D.

3.11 Model Results for Calibration

Plots of predicted and observed water quality for the calibration are presented in Appendix E and a printout of the LA-QUAL output file is included as Appendix F. The calibration was considered to be acceptable based on the amount of data that were available.

4.0 WATER QUALITY MODEL PROJECTION

EPA's regulations at 40 CFR 130.7 require the determination of TMDLs to take into account critical conditions for stream flow, loading, and water quality parameters. Therefore, the calibrated model was used to project water quality for critical conditions. Since Bayou Mallet has different summer and winter DO standards, projections were made for both summer and winter critical conditions. The identification of critical conditions and the model input data used for critical conditions are discussed below.

4.1 Identification of Critical Conditions

Section 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act and EPA's regulations at 40 CFR 130.7 both require the consideration of seasonal variation of conditions affecting the constituent of concern and the inclusion of an MOS in the development of a TMDL. For the TMDLs in this report, analyses of LDEQ long-term ambient data were used to determine critical seasonal conditions. A combination of implicit and explicit margins of safety was used in developing the projection model.

Critical conditions for DO have been determined for the Mermentau basin in previous TMDL studies. The analyses concluded that the critical conditions for stream DO concentrations occur during periods with negligible nonpoint runoff, low stream flow, and high stream temperature.

When the rainfall runoff (and nonpoint loading) and stream flow are high, turbulence is higher due to the higher flow and the stream temperature is lowered by the cooler precipitation and runoff. In addition, runoff coefficients are higher in cooler weather due to reduced evaporation and evapotranspiration, so that the high flow periods of the year tend to be the cooler periods. DO saturation values are, of course, much higher when water temperatures are cooler, but BOD decay rates are much lower. For these reasons, periods of high loading are periods of higher reaeration and DO but not necessarily periods of high BOD decay.

LDEQ interprets this phenomenon in its TMDL modeling by assuming that the annual nonpoint loading, rather than loading for any particular day, is responsible for the accumulated benthic blanket of the stream, which is, in turn, expressed as SOD and/or resuspended BOD in the model. This accumulated loading has its greatest impact on the stream during periods of higher temperature and lower flow.

According to the LTP, critical summer conditions in DO TMDL projection modeling are simulated by using the annual 7Q10 flow or 0.1 cfs, whichever is higher, for all headwaters, and 90th percentile temperature for the summer season. Model loading is from point sources, perennial tributaries, SOD, and resuspension of sediments. Again, model loading is from point sources, perennial tributaries, SOD, and resuspension of sediments. In addition, all point sources are assumed to be discharging at design capacity.

In reality, the highest temperatures occur from July through August, the lowest stream flows occur in October and November, and the maximum point source discharge occurs following a significant rainfall (i.e., high-flow conditions). The combination of these conditions plus the impact of other conservative assumptions regarding rates and loadings yields an implicit MOS that is not quantified. Over and above this implicit MOS, an explicit MOS of 20% for point sources and 10% for nonpoint sources was incorporated into the TMDLs in this report to account for future growth and model uncertainty.

4.2 Temperature Inputs

The LTP (LDEQ 2000b) specified that the critical temperature should be determined by calculating the 90th percentile seasonal temperature for the waterbody being modeled. Because the LDEQ station on Bayou Mallet has only 6 months of data, data from the LDEQ station on Bayou des Cannes were used for this analysis. In the Bayou des Cannes TMDL (LDEQ 1999), long term temperature data from Bayou des Cannes (LDEQ station 0647) were used to calculate a 90th percentile summer temperature of 27.25°C and a 90th percentile winter temperature of 15.01°C. These values were specified in data type 11 in the model input and are shown in Appendix G.

4.3 Headwater and Tributary Inputs

The inputs for the headwaters and tributaries for the projection simulation were based on guidance in the LTP as well as historical water quality data. According to the LTP, the critical flow rates for summer should be set to either the 7Q10 flow or 0.1 cfs, whichever is greater. For winter the critical flow rate should be set to either the winter 7Q10 or 1.0 cfs, whichever is greater. Also, the LTP specifies that the DO concentration for headwater and tributary inflows should be set to 90% saturation at the critical temperature. The values used as model input in the projection simulation are shown in Appendix G.

Critical condition flows were estimated using historical flow data from the USGS gaging station on Bayou des Cannes (08010000). For summer critical conditions, the published annual 7Q10 was 0.043 cfs (Lee et al. 1997). For winter critical conditions, the lowest of the published monthly 7Q10s for the winter months (December – February) was 2.4 cfs (USGS 1980). These 7Q10 flows were divided by the drainage area of the gage to estimate areal 7Q10 flows. The areal flows were then multiplied by the Bayou Mallet tributary and headwater drainage areas to estimate 7Q10 flows for these streams. All of the estimated Bayou Mallet summer 7Q10 flows were less than 0.1 cfs, so for the summer projection model all tributary and headwater flows were set to 0.1 cfs. The estimated winter 7Q10 for the Bayou Mallet headwater was 2.4 cfs. The estimated winter 7Q10 flows for the unnamed tributary at Eunice headwater and the tributaries were all less than 1 cfs, so these flows were set to 1 cfs in the winter projection model.

Headwater and tributary DO were set to 90% saturation at the projection temperatures. All other water quality concentrations were the same as in the calibration model for both the summer and winter projection models.

4.4 Point Source Inputs

The model inputs for the City of Eunice STP were taken from the facility NPDES permit, the data collected during the LDEQ intensive surveys of the unnamed tributary at Eunice, and the LTP. The STP flow was set to 125% of the design flow in order to incorporate an explicit 20% MOS in the projections. The permitted monthly average CBOD₅ concentration was multiplied by 2.3 as recommended in the LTP to convert to CBOD_u for the projections. The ammonia nitrogen

concentration was set based on the CBOD₅ monthly average permit limit and the LTP. DO was set to 6 mg/L based on concentrations measured during the intensive surveys and the LTP. Nitrate nitrogen and organic nitrogen concentrations were the same as in the calibration model. The values used as model input in the projection simulation are shown in Appendix G.

4.5 Nonpoint Source Loads

The initial summer projection simulation showed low DO values in most of the Bayou Mallet reaches. The NPS loadings were reduced until all of the predicted DO values were equal to or greater than the summer water quality standard of 3.0 mg/L. Within each reach, the same percent reduction was applied to all components of the nonpoint source loads (SOD, benthic ammonia source rates, and mass loads of CBOD_u and organic nitrogen). The initial summer projection simulation showed DO values in the unnamed tributary at Eunice were greater than the summer DO standard. Therefore, no adjustment was made to the nonpoint source loads for this model reach.

The initial winter projection showed the winter water quality standard of 5 mg/L was met in all reaches. Therefore no adjustments were made to the NPS loads. The values used as model input in the projection simulations are shown in Appendix G.

4.6 Other Inputs

The only model inputs that were changed from the calibration to the projection simulation were the inputs discussed above in Sections 4.2 through 4.5. All of the other model inputs (e.g., hydraulic and dispersion coefficients, decay rates, reaeration rates, etc.) were unchanged from the calibration simulation.

4.7 Model Results for Projection

Plots of predicted water quality for the projection are presented in Appendix H and a printout of the LA-QUAL output file is included as Appendix I.

In the summer projection, NPS load reductions of 4% to 20% were required in Bayou Mallet to bring the predicted DO values to at least 3.0 mg/L. The summer water quality standard

was met in the unnamed tributary at Eunice without reducing either NPS loads or point source loads from the City of Eunice STP.

For the winter projection, reductions were not required for either NPS loads or the City of Eunice STP. Based on these results, the winter water quality DO standard should be met in this subsegment.

The percentage reductions for NPS loads mentioned above represent percentages of the entire NPS loading, not percentages of the manmade NPS loading. The NPS loads in this report were not divided between natural and manmade because it would be difficult to estimate natural NPS loads for the waterbodies in the study area.

5.0 TMDL CALCULATIONS

5.1 DO TMDLs

Summer and winter total maximum daily loads (TMDL) for DO have been calculated for the Bayou Mallet subsegment based on the results of the projection simulations. The DO TMDLs are presented as oxygen demand from CBODu, organic nitrogen, ammonia nitrogen, and SOD. Summaries of the loads are presented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2.

Table 5.1. Summer DO TMDL for Subsegment 050103.

Source of Oxygen Demand	Oxygen demand (kg/day) from:				Total oxygen demand (kg/day)
	CBODu	Organic N	Ammonia N	SOD	
WLA for Point Source (City of Eunice)	217	44	70	n.a.	331
WLA for minor point sources	30	n.a.	19	n.a.	49
MOS for Point Sources	62	11	22	n.a.	95
LA for Nonpoint sources	685	45	12	2375	3117
MOS for Nonpoint sources	76	5	1	264	346
Total Maximum Daily Load	1070	106	124	2639	3938

Table 5.2. Winter DO TMDL for Subsegment 050103.

Source of Oxygen Demand	Oxygen demand (kg/day) from:				Total oxygen demand (kg/day)
	CBODu	Organic N	Ammonia N	SOD	
WLA for Point Source (City of Eunice)	217	44	176	n.a.	438
WLA for minor point sources	30	n.a.	19	n.a.	49
MOS for Point Sources	62	11	49	n.a.	122
LA for Nonpoint sources	828	139	237	1285	2490
MOS for Nonpoint sources	92	16	26	143	277
Total Maximum Daily Load	1230	210	507	1428	3374

The oxygen demand from organic nitrogen and ammonia nitrogen was calculated as 4.33 times nitrogen loads (assuming that all organic nitrogen is eventually converted to ammonia). The value of 4.33 is the same ratio of oxygen demand to nitrogen that is used by the LA-QUAL

model. For the SOD loads, a temperature correction factor was included in the calculations (in order to be consistent with LDEQ procedures).

The WLAs for minor point sources represent the loads from small oxygen demanding discharges that were not explicitly modeled. These WLAs were based on current permit limits with no reductions. For discharges with no permit limits for ammonia nitrogen, effluent concentrations for ammonia nitrogen were assumed based on the BOD₅ permit limits and typical combinations of BOD₅ and ammonia nitrogen listed in the LTP (LDEQ 2000b).

Because the WLAs for minor point sources represented loads that were not simulated in the model, these loads were added to the total NPS load that was simulated in the model. The explicit MOS for NPS was set to 10% of the NPS load simulated in the model. The explicit MOS for point sources was set to 20% of the total point source loading.

5.2 Nutrient TMDLs

Because the subsegment was on the 303(d) list for nutrients as well as DO (see Table 1.1), nutrient TMDLs were also developed. As discussed in Section 2.2, Louisiana has no numeric standards for nutrients, but has a narrative standard that states that “the naturally occurring range of nitrogen-phosphorus ratios shall be maintained” (LDEQ 2000a). For these TMDLs, nutrients were defined as total inorganic nitrogen (ammonia nitrogen plus nitrate nitrogen) and total phosphorus. The value used for the naturally occurring nitrogen to phosphorus ratio was 1.96, which was the median ratio of total inorganic nitrogen to total phosphorus from historical data that was analyzed for a previous nutrient TMDL for the Lake Fausse Pointe/Dauterive Lake system (FTN 2000b).

The first step in calculating the nutrient TMDLs was to determine the loads of total inorganic nitrogen (TIN) that were simulated in the projection model. The loads in the projection model represent the maximum allowable loads that will maintain DO standards. Then the allowable loads of total phosphorus (TP) were calculated by dividing the nitrogen loads by the naturally occurring ratio of TIN to TP (which was 1.96 as discussed above). The resulting loads of TIN and TP for each subsegment are presented in Tables 5.3 and 5.4.

Table 5.3. Summer Nutrient TMDL for Subsegment 050103.

Source of Nutrients	Ammonia-N (kg/d)	Nitrate N (kg/d)	Total P (kg/d)
WLA for Point Source (City of Eunice)	16.1	106.2	62.5
WLA for minor point sources	5.4	n.a.	2.8
MOS for Point Sources	5.4	26.5	16.3
LA for Nonpoint Sources	2.8	0.01	1.4
MOS for Nonpoint Sources	0.3	0.001	0.2
Total Maximum Daily Load	29.9	15.3	23.1

Table 5.4. Winter Nutrient TMDL for Subsegment 050103.

Source of Nutrients	Ammonia-N (kg/d)	Nitrate N (kg/d)	Total P (kg/d)
WLA for Point Source (City of Eunice)	40.6	106.2	75.0
WLA for minor point sources	5.4	n.a.	2.8
MOS for Point Sources	11.5	26.5	19.4
LA for Nonpoint Sources	54.7	119.7	89.1
MOS for Nonpoint Sources	6.1	13.3	9.9
Total Maximum Daily Load	118.3	60.5	91.4

5.3 Ammonia TMDLs

Because the subsegment was on the 303(d) List for ammonia as well as DO (see Table 1.1), ammonia TMDLs were also developed (see Tables 5.3 and 5.4). As discussed in Section 2.2, Louisiana has no numeric or narrative standards for ammonia. The impacts of ammonia on DO have been addressed through the DO TMDLs presented above. Another potential impact that ammonia can have is toxicity to aquatic life. Therefore, the predicted instream ammonia concentrations from the projection model were checked to make sure that they did not exceed EPA's published ammonia criteria for toxicity (EPA 1999).

The ammonia criteria for toxicity were calculated based on pH and water temperature using an equation that yields chronic criterion concentration (CCC) values with fish early life stages present (EPA 1999; page 83). The pH used was the average pH from the FTN synoptic survey. This pH was similar to values measured at the LDEQ ambient monitoring station. The temperature used for each reach was the same as the critical temperature in the projection model.

Table 5.5. Comparison of Summer CCC and predicted ammonia nitrogen concentrations.

Reach Number	pH	Temperature (°C)	CCC (mg N/L)	Max. Predicted NH3 Conc. in Reach (mg N/L)	Below CCC?
1	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.48	Yes
2	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.23	Yes
3	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.22	Yes
4	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.38	Yes
5	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.34	Yes
6	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.20	Yes
7*	7.6	27.2	1.7	1.67	Yes
8	7.6	27.2	1.7	1.33	Yes
9	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.80	Yes
10	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.57	Yes
11	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.43	Yes
12	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.36	Yes
13	7.6	27.2	1.7	0.31	Yes

* Reach 7 is the Unnamed Tributary at Eunice (as shown in Appendix B).

Table 5.6. Comparison of Winter CCC and predicted ammonia nitrogen concentrations.

Reach	pH	Temperature (°C)	CCC (mg N/L)	Max. Predicted NH3 Conc. in Reach (mg N/L)	Below CCC?
1	7.6	15.0	3.7	0.82	Yes
2	7.6	15.0	3.7	0.68	Yes
3	7.6	15.0	3.7	0.57	Yes
4	7.6	15.0	3.7	0.59	Yes
5	7.6	15.0	3.7	0.60	Yes
6	7.6	15.0	3.7	0.54	Yes
7*	7.6	15.0	3.7	3.69	Yes
8	7.6	15.0	3.7	2.19	Yes
9	7.6	15.0	3.7	1.92	Yes
10	7.6	15.0	3.7	1.66	Yes
11	7.6	15.0	3.7	1.50	Yes
12	7.6	15.0	3.7	1.32	Yes
13	7.6	15.0	3.7	1.21	Yes

* Reach 7 is the Unnamed Tributary at Eunice (as shown in Appendix B).

Initially predicted ammonia concentrations were greater than the CCC values during both summer and winter projections. These potentially toxic ammonia nitrogen concentrations occurred in the Unnamed Tributary at Eunice and in Bayou Mallet downstream of the Unnamed Tributary at Eunice. The high ammonia nitrogen concentrations were the result of the influence of the City of Eunice WWTP. Therefore, the ammonia nitrogen concentrations for the City of Eunice WWTP were reduced to 1.7 mg/L for the summer and 4.3 mg/L for the winter to lower stream ammonia nitrogen concentrations to values below the CCC (Tables 5.5 and 5.6).

5.4 Summary of NPS Reductions and Point Source Upgrades

In summary, the projection modeling used to develop the TMDLs above showed that NPS loads need to be reduced 12.5% to maintain the DO standard during the summer critical period. This NPS reduction is the average for the entire subsegment. NPS loads did not need to be reduced during the winter critical period to maintain the DO standard. An ammonia nitrogen limit for the City of Eunice WWTP of 1.7 mg/L in the summer and 4.3 mg/L in the winter projection was needed to predict ammonia nitrogen concentrations values less than CCC. Measurements of ammonia nitrogen in WWTP effluent averaged 0.25 mg/L during the 1992 and 1993 intensive surveys of the unnamed tributary at Eunice.

5.5 Seasonal Variation

As discussed in Section 4.1, critical conditions for DO in Louisiana waterbodies have been determined to be when there is negligible nonpoint runoff and low stream flow combined with high water temperatures. In addition, the models account for loadings that occur at higher flows by modeling SOD. Oxygen demanding pollutants that enter the waterbodies during higher flows settle to the bottom and then exert the greatest oxygen demand during the high temperature seasons.

5.6 Margin of Safety

The MOS accounts for any lack of knowledge or uncertainty concerning the relationship between load allocations and water quality. As discussed in Section 4.1, the highest temperatures

occur from July through August, the lowest stream flows occur in October and November, and the maximum point source discharge occurs following a significant rainfall, i.e., high-flow conditions. The combination of these conditions, in addition to other conservative assumptions regarding rates and loadings, yields an implicit MOS that is not quantified. In addition to the implicit MOS, the TMDLs in this report included explicit margins of safety of 20% for point source loads and 10% for nonpoint source loads.

6.0 SENSITIVITY ANALYSES

All modeling studies necessarily involve uncertainty and some degree of approximation. It is therefore of value to consider the sensitivity of the model output to changes in model coefficients, and in the hypothesized relationships among the parameters of the model. The sensitivity analyses were performed by allowing the LA-QUAL model to vary one input parameter at a time while holding all other parameters to their original value. The summer projection simulation was used as the baseline for the sensitivity analysis. The percent change of the model's minimum DO projections to each parameter is presented in Table 6.1. Each parameter was varied by $\pm 30\%$, except for temperature, which was varied $\pm 2^\circ\text{C}$.

Values reported in Table 6.1 are sorted by percentage variation of minimum DO from smallest percentage variation to largest. Reaeration was the parameter to which DO was most sensitive (36% to 43%). The other parameters causing the greatest variations in the minimum DO values were SOD (30% to 33%), depth (3% to 17%), and temperature (20%). The model results were slightly sensitive to ammonia and BOD decay rates, velocity, and wasteload flow with variations in predicted DO ranging from $<1\%$ to 10%. The model was not sensitive to headwater flow, dispersion, organic nitrogen decay rate, wasteload DO, or wasteload organic nitrogen.

Table 6.1. Summary of results of sensitivity analyses.

Input Parameter	Parameter Change	Predicted minimum DO (mg/L)	Percent Change in Predicted DO (%)
Baseline	-	3.0	N/A
Headwater Flow	+30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load Organic N	+30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load DO	+30%	3.0	<1
Headwater Flow	-30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load Organic N	-30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load NH3	-30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load BOD	-30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load DO	-30%	3.0	<1
NH3 Decay Rate	-30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load Flow	+30%	3.0	<1
NH3 Decay Rate	+30%	3.0	<1
Organic N Decay Rate	+30%	3.0	<1
Organic N Decay Rate	-30%	3.0	<1
BOD Decay Rate	-30%	3.0	<1
Waste Load Flow	-30%	2.9	3
Waste Load NH3	+30%	2.9	3
Depth	-30%	3.1	3
BOD Decay Rate	+30%	2.8	7
Waste Load BOD	+30%	2.7	10
Velocity	-30%	3.3	10
Velocity	+30%	2.7	10
Depth	+30%	2.5	17
Initial Temperature	-2°C	3.6	20
Initial Temperature	+2°C	2.4	20
SOD	-30%	3.9	30
SOD	+30%	2.0	33
Reaeration	+30%	4.1	36
Reaeration	-30%	1.7	43

7.0 OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

This TMDL has been developed to be consistent with the antidegradation policy in the LDEQ water quality standards (LAC 33:IX.1109.A).

Although not required by this TMDL, LDEQ utilizes funds under Section 106 of the Federal Clean Water Act and under the authority of the Louisiana Environmental Quality Act to operate an established program for monitoring the quality of the state's surface waters. The LDEQ Surveillance Section collects surface water samples at various locations, utilizing appropriate sampling methods and procedures for ensuring the quality of the data collected. The objectives of the surface water monitoring program are to determine the quality of the state's surface waters, to develop a long-term data base for water quality trend analysis, and to monitor the effectiveness of pollution controls. The data obtained through the surface water monitoring program is used to develop the state's biennial 305(b) Report (Water Quality Inventory) and the 303(d) List of impaired waters. This information is also utilized in establishing priorities for the LDEQ nonpoint source program.

The LDEQ has implemented a watershed approach to surface water quality monitoring. Through this approach, the entire state is sampled over a five-year cycle with two targeted basins sampled each year. Long-term trend monitoring sites at various locations on the larger rivers and Lake Pontchartrain are sampled throughout the five-year cycle. Sampling is conducted on a monthly basis or more frequently if necessary to yield at least 12 samples per site each year. Sampling sites are located where they are considered to be representative of the waterbody. Under the current monitoring schedule, targeted basins follow the TMDL priorities. In this manner, the first TMDLs will have been implemented by the time the first priority basins will be monitored again in the second five-year cycle. This will allow the LDEQ to determine whether there has been any improvement in water quality following establishment of the TMDLs. As the monitoring results are evaluated at the end of each year, waterbodies may be added to or removed from the 303(d) List. The sampling schedule for the first five-year cycle is shown below. The Mermentau and Vermilion-Teche Basin will be sampled again in 2003.

1998 – Mermentau and Vermilion-Teche River Basins
1999 – Calcasieu and Ouachita River Basins
2000 – Barataria and Terrebonne Basins
2001 – Lake Pontchartrain Basin and Pearl River Basin
2002 – Red and Sabine River Basins

(Atchafalaya and Mississippi Rivers will be sampled continuously.)

In addition to ambient water quality sampling in the priority basins, the LDEQ has increased compliance monitoring in those basins, following the same schedule. Approximately 1,000 to 1,100 permitted facilities in the priority basins were targeted for inspections. The goal set by LDEQ was to inspect all of those facilities on the list and to sample 1/3 of the minors and 1/3 of the majors. During 1998, 476 compliance evaluation inspections and 165 compliance sampling inspections were conducted throughout the Mermentau and Vermilion-Teche River Basins.

8.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

When EPA establishes a TMDL, 40 CFR §130.7(d)(2) requires EPA to publicly notice and seek comment concerning the TMDL. Pursuant to an October 1, 1999 Court Order, this TMDL was prepared under contract to EPA. After submission of this TMDL to the Court, EPA commenced preparation of a notice seeking comments, information, and data from the general and affected public. Comments and additional information were submitted during the public comment period and this Court Ordered TMDL was revised accordingly. Responses to these comments and additional information are included in Appendix K. EPA has transmitted this revised TMDL to the Court and to LDEQ for incorporation into LDEQ's current water quality management plan.

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**APPENDICES A THROUGH J ARE
AVAILABLE FROM EPA UPON REQUEST**

APPENDIX K
Responses to Comments

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES
BAYOU MALLET
TMDLs FOR DO AND NUTRIENTS
April 19, 2002

EPA appreciates all comments concerning these TMDLs. Comments that were received are shown below with EPA responses inserted in a different font.

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY (LDEQ) (some of these comments may not apply to this report):

In view of LDEQ's TMDL development schedule and the rapidly approaching deadline, LDEQ has made a limited review of the TMDLs published by EPA on October 15, 2001. LDEQ expects to make a more detailed review on at least some of these TMDLs after the first of the year. In the future, LDEQ requests that EPA provide hard copies of the TMDLs and Appendices for LDEQ review. Several electronic files required software which is not used by LDEQ thus making it impossible to review some portions of several TMDLs. Hard copies will insure that the complete official document is being reviewed and will eliminate the time required for LDEQ to try to put together the document from electronic files. In general, LDEQ found these TMDLs to be unacceptable, based on inadequate data and not implementable.

Federal Register Notice: Volume 66, Number 199, pages 52403 - 52404 (10/15/2001)

- A. Vermilion River Cutoff DO and Nutrients .pdf
- B. Bayou Chene DO .pdf
- C. Bayou du Portage DO .pdf
- D. Bayou Mallet DO, Nutrients and Ammonia .pdf
- E. Bayou Petite Anse DO and Nutrients .pdf
- F. Bayou Tigre DO and Nutrients .pdf
- G. Big Constance Lake and Mermentau Coastal Bays and Gulf Water TMDLs for DO and Nutrients .pdf
- H. Charenton Drainage and Navigation Canal and West Cote Blanche Bay TMDLs for DO and Nutrients.pdf
- I. Chatlin Lake Canal/Bayou Du Lac and Bayou Des Glaises Diversion Channel TMDLs for DO and Nutrients.pdf
- J. Dugas Canal DO and Nutrients .pdf
- K. Franklin Canal DO and Nutrients .pdf
- L. Freshwater Bayou Canal DO and Nutrients .pdf
- M. Irish Ditch/Big Bayou DO .pdf

- N. Lake Arthur, Grand Lake, and Gulf Intracoastal Waterway TMDLs for DO, Nutrients, and Ammonia .pdf
- O. Lake Peigneur DO and Nutrients .pdf
- P. New Iberia Southern Drainage Canal DO and Nutrients .pdf
- Q. Spanish Lake DO .pdf
- R. Tete Bayou DO and Nutrients .pdf
- S. Bayou Carron DO and Nutrients .pdf
- T. West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee Borrow Pit Canal DO.pdf

1. Many of these TMDLs are based on models using historical water quality data gathered at a single location rather than survey data gathered at several sites spaced throughout the waterbody. Hydraulic information used was generally not taken at the same time as the water quality data used. The availability of only one water quality data site is not sufficient justification to simulate the subsegment using a one reach, one element model. Additional reaches and elements must be used to represent the subsegment and additional data must be obtained in order for these TMDLs to be valid. The recommended maximum limits cited in the LAQUAL User's Manual for element width and length have been grossly exceeded in many of the models. The spreadsheet calibration and projection graphs that were provided do not match the plots produced by the LA-QUAL model. Please explain why they do not match. The LAQUAL graphics for a few elements produces a graph that does not represent the model output. It's an anomaly of the graphics routine. The calibrations are inadequate due to the lack of a hydrologic calibration and the paucity of water quality data. The resulting TMDLs are invalid. LDEQ does not accept these TMDLs.

Response: The TMDLs were based on existing data plus information that could be obtained with available resources. Each model was developed using the most appropriate hydraulic information and water quality data that were available. The level of detail at which each subsegment was modeled was consistent with the amount of available data. Although having only one element in a model causes inaccuracies in the LAQUAL graphics, having only one element in a model does NOT cause errors in the tabular output (which is what the graphs in the reports are based on). Although LDEQ typically collects more data for model calibration than what was available for calibration of these models, EPA considers these model calibrations and the resulting TMDLs to be valid.

2. LDEQ does not consider any of these waters to be impaired due to nutrients or ammonia. LDEQ does not consider Vermilion River Cutoff (060803), Mermentau Coastal Bays and Gulf Water (050901), Charenton Drainage and Navigation Canal (060601), West Cote Blanche Bay (061001), Bayou Des Glaises Diversion channel (060207), Grand Lake (070701), Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (050702), Lake Peigneur (060909), New Iberia Southern Drainage Canal (060904) and West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee Borrow Pit Canal to be impaired by biochemical oxygen-demanding substances. Many of these waters simply have inappropriate

standards and criteria. The resources spent on developing these TMDLs could have been far more effectively and wisely spent on reviewing, approving, and assisting in the development of appropriate standards and criteria for these waters through the UAA process.

Response: TMDLs were developed for these subsegments based on the requirements of Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and regulations at 40 CFR 130.7 and the suspected causes of impairment (organic enrichment/low DO, nutrients, or ammonia) for each subsegment in the EPA Modified Court Ordered 303(d) List.

3. Remove the reference and all references to the unpublished LDEQ document, "Defaults for Uncalibrated Modeling". This is not an acceptable reference and any defaults selected on this basis must be reevaluated and based on acceptable references. Some of the models must be redone because of inappropriately selected defaults. At this time, LDEQ has no plans to revise, complete or publish this document.

Response: The unpublished LDEQ document that is mentioned here was provided to EPA's contractor without any instructions not to use it. The model coefficients listed in that document appear to be reasonable and consistent with values used in other modeling studies in southern Louisiana.

4. The percent reduction of the nonpoint source load must not be reported as an overall average of the individual percent reduction applied to each reach. This approach does not insure that standards will be met in all reaches and will be difficult to implement. In consideration of future implementation plans, LDEQ does not vary the percent reduction required from reach to reach. LDEQ uses a uniform percent reduction within a watershed unless there are unique conditions, such as a general change in landuse, that dictate a further breakdown. These unique conditions must be adequately documented in the report in order to facilitate future implementation plans. Specifying type of land use is helpful in defining nonpoint loading. LDEQ requests a calculation sheet of the NPS reduction percentages and asks that language be added to the report describing the calculation process.

Response: EPA appreciates this comment but believes that an average percent reduction is acceptable. EPA will consider this in future development of TMDLs in Louisiana.

In the lower Mermentau and Vermilion River Basins, much of the nonpoint loading affecting some of these subsegments and adding to their benthic blanket is coming from the tributaries feeding them. Many of the headwater tributaries have recent TMDL's that require dramatic percentage reductions to the nonpoint contributions. By implementing the reductions to nonpoint loads upstream, the current problems in these lower subsegments will be reduced.

Response: EPA recognizes that TMDLs have been developed upstream of several of these subsegments. Implementing upstream reductions in nonpoint loads should require much less reduction of loadings from within these subsegments. The required percent reductions for these subsegments were not intended to be in addition to upstream reductions.

5. The percentage reductions listed were not calculated based on the written procedure described in several TMDLs. These values did not take the MOS into consideration. It is also LDEQ's policy to make a no-man-made load projection run which will estimate the natural background loads. The contractor should include a no-man-made load projection run in each TMDL report.

Response: The percent reductions were calculated by subtracting the projection input value from the calibration input value and then dividing by the calibration input value. This procedure is slightly different than what LDEQ uses but still provides percent reductions that are useful.

6. CBODu and NH₃-N were estimated from surrogate parameters rather than actual measured data for most of the TMDLs. Based on the measured data from the last two years of LDEQ water quality surveys, LDEQ objects to the correlation of TOC to CBOD and NH₃-N to TKN, unless these correlations are taken from water quality data on the modeled waterbody. Our studies have shown only a moderate correlation between these two parameters within the same waterbody, however when this correlation was attempted across waterbodies extreme variability was seen and the correlation was not judged valid. It is possible that a combination of surrogates will obtain a better correlation, such as TOC along with color, turbidity, pH, etc. LDEQ is currently researching these options.

Response: EPA agrees that it would be ideal to have data collected from the modeled waterbody for relating TOC to CBOD and NH₃-N to TKN. However, for these subsegments, there was insufficient data from which these relationships could be developed.

7. LDEQ takes exception to the equating of COD to CBODu in some of the TMDLs. There is no data to support this assumption. No direct correlation has been drawn between these two parameters. The only correlations that have been found are variable and dependant on the type of discharge. LDEQ requests that facilities with only COD limits be removed from the WLA load calculations.

Response: EPA agrees that COD is not an ideal indicator of CBODu. However, EPA believes that most effluents that exert significant COD are likely to exert some oxygen demand in natural waterbodies and therefore the discharges with COD limits should be included in the TMDLs.

8. CBODU and Org-N settling rates were not used. This is not justifiable in areas dominated by agricultural activities and is poor practice for TMDLs on Louisiana waters. The models must be revised to include settling rates.

Response: Without the use of settling rates, all of the pollutant loading remains in the water column where it can consume oxygen. Depending on the model settings for conversion of settled pollutant loading to SOD, the model can be more conservative without settling rates. Other applications of water quality models for TMDLs on southern Louisiana waterbodies have not used settling rates and have been approved by LDEQ.

9. The TMDLs should be for biochemical oxygen-demanding substances instead of DO. DO is an indicator of the impact of biochemical oxygen demanding load, hydrologic modifications, excessive algae blooms, etc.

Response: The TMDLs in Section 5 of each report are already expressed in terms of oxygen demand.

10. Nitrification inhibition option number 2 is valid for Louisiana's waterbodies. Various studies have shown that Louisiana does not have a buildup of NH₃-N in its waterbodies. If option 1 was needed for a proper calibration then that should be stated as such.

Response: The nitrification inhibition option was set based on algorithms in other widely used water quality models. Option 1 has been used in other water quality modeling applications for TMDLs on southern Louisiana waterbodies that have been approved by LDEQ.

11. A winter projection model was not developed for most of the TMDLs. Winter projection models must be developed to address seasonality requirements of the Clean Water Act. Where point sources have seasonally variable effluent limitations or such seasonal variations are proposed, a winter projection model is required to show that standards are met year-round.

Response: As discussed in Section 4.2 of each report, summer is the most critical season for meeting the year round standard for DO for this subsegment. Therefore, the summer simulation satisfies the seasonality requirements of the Clean Water Act. Performing additional simulations to evaluate permit limits that are seasonal or hydrograph controlled releases was not required for developing these TMDLs and can be done by LDEQ or by permittees.

12. There was no documentation (LA-QUAL plots) to indicate that the model was calibrated to all hydrologic parameters (i.e. flow, width, depth, time of travel, velocity, chloride balance, etc.). Apparently flow balances were performed, however a flow balance is not a hydrologic calibration. Most of the models must be recalibrated with adequate hydrologic data. Calibration plots for all of the hydrologic parameters must be provided in the appendices.

Response: The values of depth, width, and flow in each model were estimated based upon the most appropriate available information. Hydraulic calibration of each model was not possible due to a lack of data.

13. The calibration and projection plots for dissolved oxygen must be provided in the body of the reports. Additional projection plots for CBODU, NH₃-N, and Org-N must be provided in the appendices.

Response: The placement and number of plots in the draft reports are acceptable.

14. The calibration simulation must be used as the baseline for the sensitivity analysis, not the projection simulation. LDEQ requests that all TMDLs be revised in this regard.

Response: The sensitivity analysis can be developed using either the calibration or the projection as a baseline. EPA will consider this in future development of TMDLs in Louisiana.

15. A list of all point source dischargers must be provided in the body of the reports. Only dischargers with flows that reach the named waterbody should be included in the TMDLs.

In several TMDLs, a default 0.001 MGD flow rate was assigned to dischargers where a flow rate was not available. This practice is unacceptable to LDEQ. This default flow rate is extremely low (LDEQ would typically use 0.005 MGD as a minimum) and could strictly limit these dischargers' allowable permit loads when their permits are renewed. Additional research should be done to determine the facility type and anticipated flow rates of these facilities.

Response: The placement of the list of point source dischargers in the draft reports is acceptable. The dischargers with no flow rate information are believed to have very small flow rates representing a very small portion of the total TMDLs. The actual flow rate for each facility can be determined by LDEQ when the facility's permit is being renewed.

16. LDEQ does not agree with the minor point sources loads being subtracted from the NPS load as was done in several of the TMDLs. The pollutant loads being addressed are non-conservative loads. Many of these dischargers are located on small tributaries to the 303(d) waterbody which have recovered prior to entering into that system. Thus they are not contributing to the pollutant loads in the impaired waterbody. LDEQ's current procedure is to add these loads to the WLA portion of the TMDL.

Response: In the reports for which this comment is applicable, the TMDL calculations have been revised so that these loads are added to the WLA portion of the TMDL (same as LDEQ's procedure). For most of the draft reports, the TMDL calculations already used LDEQ's procedure of adding the minor point sources to the modeled loads.

17. Proper justification must be provided when using a nonpoint source margin of safety value other than the typical LDEQ value of 20%.

Response: The nonpoint margin of safety (MOS) was set to 10% based on other TMDLS on southern Louisiana waterbodies that have either been developed by LDEQ or approved by LDEQ. Eleven TMDL reports from LDEQ's website were reviewed to examine the explicit MOS for nonpoint sources. All 11 of these TMDLS were for oxygen demanding substances in the Mermentau or Vermilion-Teche basins. The explicit MOS for nonpoint sources was set to 20% for 2 reports, 10% for 3 reports, and 0% for 6 reports. Therefore, the value of 10% was considered to be a typical value that did not need special justification.

18. LDEQ has major concerns relating to the use of a one dimensional steady state model in coastal bays, lakes and estuaries. These systems are typically dominated by tides and winds and do not behave like riverine systems. LAQUAL can be used to simulate estuarine systems with riverine characteristics and some tidal influences; however to use it in these applications exceeds the model's recommended input limitations and appears to produce a meaningless output. Also the systems' unique hydrological characteristics do not adapt well to LAQUAL's one-dimensional capabilities. A multi-dimensional model such as WASP should be used for these waters. While a dynamic model would be preferred, a steady-state multi-dimensional model would be acceptable if it adequately addresses tidal influences. LDEQ objects to the use of LAQUAL in determining TMDLS for coastal bays, lakes and estuaries.

Response: A one dimensional steady state model such as LAQUAL was considered to be appropriate for all of these subsegments based on the amount of data that were available. Proper application of a multi-dimensional model or a dynamic model would require much more data and is simply not necessary for these waterbodies. For large, wide waterbodies, WASP will yield the same results as LAQUAL if the configuration of elements and model coefficients are the same between the two models.

19. The report uses the term synoptic survey multiple times. Please describe in detail what area this survey encompassed as well as site locations and what parameters were tested. Also, the raw data from this survey must be included in the appendices as support for the model inputs and calculations.

Response: A description of the synoptic survey and a summary of the data have been added to the appendices for each report in which those data are used.

20. In many of the calibration models the average water quality data from several LDEQ stations were used. It has been LDEQ's experience that a better calibration can be accomplished by using a single day's water quality and flow data. The additional daily values could then be used to perform multiple verifications of the model parameters before proceeding to the projection

stage. The flow data should be collected at the same time as the water quality data in order for the model to be valid.

Response: The models were calibrated to averages over multiple sampling events to minimize the effects of any single field measurement that might be of questionable quality or indicative of conditions that may have lasted only a very short time. For large systems with long residence times, using only a single snapshot of water quality data is often not representative of steady state conditions for that system.

21. Grammatical errors and misspelled words were found in these reports.

Response: The reports have been reviewed for grammar and spelling.

22. There does not appear to be any significant anthropogenic source of nutrients from agriculture, silviculture, aquaculture or urban runoff in many of these subsegments. Therefore, any occurrence of low DO is almost certainly natural. As a result, a UAA for the area is necessary to reset the DO standard. A TMDL is unwarranted for these subsegments, and LDEQ takes exception to EPA generating TMDLs which are impossible to implement.

Response: EPA is required to generate these TMDLs based on the Modified Court Ordered 303(d) List and the requirements of Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and regulations at 40 CFR 130.7.

23. LDEQ's nutrient standard is based on total phosphorus (TP) and total nitrogen (TN), not total inorganic nitrogen (TIN). Since phosphorus is not the limiting constituent in Louisiana, the nutrient allocations must be in terms of TN and only TN.

Response: LDEQ's nutrient standard (LAC 33:IX.1113.B.8) does not specify that nitrogen to phosphorus ratios should be based on total nitrogen. However, EPA will consider this in future development of TMDLs in Louisiana.

In the coastal areas, the nitrogen to phosphorus ratio used was based on freshwater streams and is not applicable to brackish Gulf waters. LDEQ takes exception to the calculation of a TMDL based on TN/TP ratios derived from waterbodies other than the modeled waterbody. It is LDEQ's experience that the natural allowable TN/TP ratio is waterbody-specific and can vary dramatically between streams.

Response: EPA agrees that it would be ideal to have a large database of nitrogen to phosphorus ratios for each waterbody. However, because these subsegments have only limited nutrient data, the previously developed nitrogen to phosphorus ratio that was used in the draft reports is considered acceptable.

LDEQ has not adopted the EPA recommended ammonia criteria (1999) and takes exception to its use in this TMDL. In general, LDEQ does not accept EPA's use of national guidance for TMDL endpoints. The nationally recommended criteria do not consider regional or site-specific conditions or species and may be inappropriately over protective or under protective. No ammonia nitrogen toxicity has been demonstrated or documented in any of the waterbodies in these TMDLs. The general criteria (in particular, LAC 33:IX.1113.B.5) require state waters be free from the effects of toxic substances.

Response: Ammonia TMDLs were developed for two subsegments based on the requirements of Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act and regulations at 40 CFR 130.7 and the fact that the Modified Court Ordered 303(d) List included ammonia as a suspected cause of impairment for those two subsegments. National guidance for ammonia toxicity was used in the absence of any numerical state water quality standards for ammonia.

24. The implicit margin-of-safety must not be quantified.

Response: The text of the reports has been revised to eliminate any quantification of the implicit margin of safety.

25. EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES: Add summary tables of the WLAs, LAs, and TMDLs showing the allocations and margins of safety.

Response: The summary tables of the WLAs, LAs, and TMDLs can be easily found in Section 5 of each report and do not need to be repeated in the executive summary.

26. Temperature Correction of Kinetics: A temperature correction factor was set for reaeration. It is LDEQ's standard practice to allow LAQUAL to calculate this factor. There is more guidance on this in the LAQUAL User's Manual.

Response: The temperature correction factor for reaeration was set to the value of 1.024 based on guidance in Section 3.3.8 of the LTP.

27. Water Quality Kinetics: The Louisiana reaeration equation was used on reaches that are outside the maximum depth that it was designed for. A more appropriate reaeration equation must be selected.

Response: The Louisiana equation yielded reaeration coefficients that appeared more reasonable than coefficients from other equations.

28. Water Quality standards and designated uses tables did not include the BAC (bacterial criteria) values.

Response: The water quality standards for bacteria are not relevant for these TMDLs.

29. The statement was made in the Initial Conditions paragraphs in several of the reports that temperature was specified because the temperature was not being simulated. The section then states, "For constituents not being simulated, the initial concentrations were set to zero ...". Initial conditions provide a starting point for the iterative solution of modeled constituents. They also provide values for constituents that are needed as input but are not being simulated.

Response: EPA appreciates this comment.

30. Several reports describe the benthic ammonia source rate as a calibration parameter; however a review of the data type 13 calibration input section indicates a value of zero for this parameter, in all reaches.

Response: The benthic ammonia source rate was used as a calibration parameter; the value of that parameter that provided the best fit between predicted and observed values was zero.

31. Calibration, and Projection, Data type 27: A salinity value was set to zero in the boundary conditions for both the calibration and the projection models in several of the TMDLs. With this value set to zero the model will automatically adjust the values of the lowest reach's elements to the value set in the boundary conditions. Since most of the models were one-reach, one-element models, the model automatically set the element salinity to zero, thus calculating an inaccurate value for the DO saturation.

Response: The only models where salinity was set to zero in the downstream boundary conditions were those models where salinity was not considered high enough to have a significant impact on DO saturation.

32. It is not LDEQ's standard procedure to use a zero headwater flow. You may not have input a headwater flow, but the model did. Without a headwater flow the model would have crashed and not run. The model's programming allows for a 0.0000001 cms flow rate when the modeler has not input a headwater flow.

Response: Only two simulations (calibrations for Spanish Lake and Big Constance Lake) used a zero headwater flow. For all practical purposes, 0.0000001 m3/sec is the same as zero flow.

33. Hydraulics and Dispersion: The use of constant widths and depths requires proper justification.

Response: The widths and depths were justified in Section 3 of each report.

34. Several reports state that algae were not simulated because algae did not appear to have

significant impacts. What was the evidence for this statement? Did the contractor have any Chlorophyll a measurements?

Response: This statement was based on general knowledge of the Mermentau and Vermilion-Teche basins as well as a limited amount of diurnal DO data collected in these basins.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS FROM LDEQ FOR BAYOU MALLET:

1. See General Comments.

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY (LSU) AG CENTER (some of these comments may not apply to this report):

Through this letter the Louisiana State University AgCenter would like to submit official comments on TMDLs for dissolved oxygen and nutrients associated allocations for waterbodies in:

- Vermilion River Cutoff
- Bayou Chene
- Bayou Petite Anse
- Bayou Tigre
- Big Constance Lake and Mermentau Coastal Bays and Gulf Water
- Charenton Drainage and Navigation Canal and West Cote Blanche Bay
- Chatlin Lake Canal/Bayou Du Lac and Bayou Des Glaises Diversion Channel
- Dugas Canal
- Franklin Canal
- Freshwater Bayou Canal
- Irish Ditch/Big Bayou
- Lake Arthur, Grand Lake, and Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
- Lake Peigneur
- New Iberia Southern Drainage Canal
- Spanish Lake
- Tete Bayou
- Bayou Carron
- West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee Borrow Pit Canal

The number of different TMDLs sent out for comment at the same time may overwhelm the public's ability to comment. With only 30 days to prepare and submit comments it is impossible for a qualified faculty member to review the supporting data in depth and attend to his(her) official responsibilities. I realize that

the agency is under time constraints on completing these, but I earnestly request that more time per proposed TMDL be given in the future.

We must make several other general comments and objections that apply to most of the proposed TMDLs. In many cases the data used to calibrate the models for the stream segments was collected in the fall of 2000 near the end of a three year drought. Historic low flows were often commented on in the text of the TMDL. Low flows result in a biased estimate of the natural ability of the stream to reaerate and cleanse itself of pollutants. Low flows also enable the benthic blanket to accumulate and remain in place undisturbed causing overstatement of the benthic oxygen demand and the SOD which were in many cases the primary oxygen demand loads in the stream. While it is true that the high flows that come from storm events carry more organic and sediment loads into the stream, the high flow rates also scour material from the bottoms and move it on to a final deposit at the stream terminus. It was thus that most of Louisiana and all of our coastal areas were built. Prolonged drought conditions do not allow this natural cleansing to occur. Thus it is our belief that the part of the oxygen demand load attributed to benthic and sediments is overstated and that new data must be collected during normal rainfall conditions and the models re-calibrated.

Response: The Louisiana water quality standards are applicable during all flow conditions greater than the 7Q10. Because 7Q10 flow is frequently the most critical condition for maintaining the DO standard, it is desirable to collect field data for model calibration during times when the hydrology is as close as possible to 7Q10 conditions. It is believed that the flow conditions for these waterbodies may have been near 7Q10 conditions, but probably not lower than 7Q10 flows. Therefore, the summer-fall 1998 data is desirable for model calibration.

In far too many of the proposed TMDLs the phrase "*an intensive field survey was not conducted for the study area due to schedule and budget limitations*" was found. If municipalities, agriculture, and business entities are to be asked to make large commitments of funds, time and effort to resolve our water quality problems they deserve to have the benefit of a serious study of the problem. We request that all of the proposed TMDLs that contain this statement have this problem corrected and that TMDLs be prepared based on complete studies.

Response: There is no requirement for collecting a certain amount of data to make a TMDL valid. If additional data are collected in the future by LDEQ, other agencies, or local stakeholders, then those data can be evaluated at the time and the implementation of the TMDL can be altered as necessary. As outlined in the 1991 EPA document titled "Guidance for Water Quality-Based Decisions: The TMDL Process", developing and implementing TMDLs is a process and not a one-time event.

In several of the proposed TMDLs data was used that is 9 or 10 years old from studies on point source discharges. While the data is probably high quality it assumes that no change in the plant or its load have occurred in the last decade. This assumption may not be defensible. In the TMDLs where a treatment plant was included in the model the margin of error was calculated by using 125% of the design capacity. This assumes a plant will perform at the same level when it is operated in excess of its design load. This assumption is also questionable.

Response: For several subsegments, old data sets were used for calibration because they provided more extensive data than newer data sets. However, all of the projection runs simulated point source discharges based on the most recent information available. Simulating point source discharges at 125% of design flow is simply a way of incorporating an explicit margin of safety and does not assume that the facility can actually treat that much wastewater.

The standard for dissolved oxygen (DO) was held at 5 mg/L in some streams on a year round basis, even if it received or discharged into a stream with 5 mg/L winter and 2 or 3 mg/l summer standards. Other streams had a year DO oxygen standard of 4 mg/L. We strongly suggest that a review be made of the DO standards for all of the streams in south Louisiana that are shallow, sluggish, and subject to tidal influence and that uniform standards be set. In view of the remarks that achieving a DO of 5 mg/L was impossible in some of the streams that had little loading from human activities, we believe that the summer standard of 2 mg/L is much more applicable to these streams.

Response: The TMDLs are required to be developed for the existing DO standard, which is 5 mg/L year round for many of these subsegments. If the DO standard is revised in the future for any of these subsegments, the TMDL and implementation can be altered as necessary as part of the TMDL process.

Many of these TMDLs were drafted by an out of state contractor and do not appear to be as well researched as those drafted by LDEQ. Very little data was included in the contractor drafted TMDLs summaries as compared to the ones prepared by or in conjunction with LDEQ. Additionally, the bulk of the text appeared to be standard wording in all documents with short relevant inserts. We would request that if outside contractors be used in future TMDL assessments that they be held to the same standard of information inclusion that LDEQ provides. Stream diagrams and maps are often needed when reviewing descriptive text on stream location, tributary insert, and exact location.

Response: These TMDLs contain all the required components of a TMDL and the level of detail is considered acceptable. Because these TMDLs could not be funded at the same level as most of LDEQ's DO TMDLs, the analysis and documentation was not as extensive as most of LDEQ's DO TMDLs. However, some of the information that was mentioned in the comment (stream diagrams and maps) was included in the reports, but they were placed in the appendices (which were available from EPA upon request).