



Delta Chapter, **Honey Island Group**
St. Tammany, Tangipahoa, and Washington Parishes
PO Box 2529
Covington, Louisiana 70434.2529
985.893.5150

July 28, 2003

Mr. Ed Wedge, Project Manager
Louisiana Dept. Of Transportation & Development
PO BOX 94245
Baton, Rouge, LA 70804-9245

Re: State Project # 700-52-0124, I-12 to Bush Corridor Study

Dear Mr. Wedge,

Please enter this letter as official comments from the Honey Island Group of the Sierra Club -- as voted on and approved by our Executive Committee -- regarding the aforementioned project. We wish to register our outright objection to this project and formally request the "no build" option.

We are not aware of any published demonstration of need for this project. This has been a major part of its decades-long history. It is true that there are vocal anecdotal complaints about the drive time from Bush through Covington to Mandeville. However, there has been no scientific study supporting a **broad public** need for this road. In fact, at meetings attended by members of our Group, we heard opinions from these Bush residents stating they would **not** use a new highway located in the eastern parts of St. Tammany! Clearly, using the complaints of these few to justify a project affecting so many is unreasoned and unreasonable.

This project will directly contribute to St. Tammany's crushing sprawl problem

Overwhelmingly, the stated and implied justification for Highway 3241 is to "develop" east-central St. Tammany. **However**, there is **no** associated or budgeted strategy for incorporating it into Parish or Regional planning. This is exactly how St. Tammany has come to its present grid-lock situation! Adding more will just make it worse!!

For these reasons, and several others: **We, the Honey Island Group of the Sierra Club, oppose the building of Highway 3241.**

If - as seems to be the case - the project proceeds in spite of these obvious problems, we strongly favor a route imposing the least environmental impact. Clearly, this would be the current US11/LA41 corridor. As a lesser alternative, the railroad right-of-way immediately west of this route may be acceptable, *provided portions of the roadway are elevated to restore the east-west hydrology of the Bayou LaCombe watershed.* No other potential corridor offers an acceptable environmental impact. In all cases, we **strongly** believe this project will require (and we will use all means to obtain) a federal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Thank you for accepting this, our comment, into the public record.

Linda J. Beall
Secretary
Honey Island Group, Delta Chapter, Sierra Club



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