

Louisiana Forestry Association Position Statement

Corps of Engineers Action relating to Cypress Logging in Louisiana Forests

- **Most of the cypress forests in Louisiana are owned by private landowners** who have been managing them for years. Harvests are stable and the recent forest inventory data shows that Louisiana has more than 800,000 acres of these forests. It also shows that we are growing more than we are harvesting each year.
- **Beginning in 2001, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, began using (for the first time) the 1899 Rivers and Harbors Act to shut down logging** in wetland forests saying logging is an impediment to navigation. No other Corps District has issued a similar ruling although similar situations arise across the nation.
- **The Corps order states that such logging requires a permit, although NO such permits have been issued in the last 104 years** of the 1899 law. This is an expansion of regulatory authority with no purpose other than to disrupt and stop the flow of valuable forest resources.
- **None of the activities is an impediment to navigation.** Similar activities in wetland areas have been conducted for years without harm and without Corps involvement. The offending activity, mat logging, is actually recommended to be used in wetland areas to protect the ground. The logger fells trees for a road for a corridor for heavy machinery. At the end of the job, the logs are removed as the logger exits the site. (See photo)
- **Section 404 of the 1972 Clean Water Act, governed by the EPA, exempts ongoing silvicultural (forestry) activities from permitting.** The Corps says a permit is needed.

Damage from the Corps action to date:

- 1 – Nearly \$200,000 worth of timber on the ground has rotted and is no longer marketable. The Corps refused landowner requests to salvage this timber on the “cease and desist” site.
- 2 – The action has already had a chilling effect on the sale of land in those areas where it is now questionable whether owners can recover the value of their timber.
- 3 – Cypress logging in the area has been virtually shut down.

Solution

The Louisiana Forestry Association would like the Corps to stop requiring permits under Section 10 when the activity does not impede navigation and the area is managed according to sustainable forestry principles. Lack of responsiveness from the Corps has lead interested parties to seek Congressional resolution. We support Sen. Vitter’s amendment now being considered.

Say YES to SCR 71

The Louisiana Forestry Association is the largest association representing the forestry community in Louisiana with over 3,500 members. For more information, contact C.A. “Buck” Vandersteen at (318) 443-2558 or e-mail him at lfa@lforestry.com

