

# La. environmental groups form PAC

By BILL McMAHON  
 Capitol news bureau

Most of Louisiana's congressmen rank high in contributions from groups that want to weaken the Clean Water Act, officials of a new environmental political organization said Monday.

Members of Louisiana's environmental groups have formed their own political action committee, E-PAC, to counter PACs they say oppose environmental legislation.

The new organization will endorse candidates who favor improving Louisiana and federal environmental laws and regulations, organizers said at a news conference.

Mary Lee Orr of Baton Rouge, one of the organizers, said the new PAC will accept contributions from out-of-state sources.

"Our congressmen are impacting their lives" as well as the lives of their constituents here in Louisiana, Orr said.

Seven of Louisiana's nine members of Congress "got big money" from anti-Clean Air Act political action committees, she said.

Orr and Darryl Jalek-Wiley of New Orleans released a report of PAC contributions prepared by U.S. Public Interest Research Group, a national research and lobbying group on consumer and environmental issues.

PIRG's report listed contributions

to congressmen and senators from the 263 PACs that PIRG says have fought against strengthening the Clean Water Act.

The report also lists the 46 senators who signed the "Heflin/Grassley" letter urging Sen. Max Baucus, D-Montana, to weaken his version of the Clean Water Act.

Louisiana's U.S. senators, Democrats J. Bennett Johnston and John Breaux, both of whom signed the Heflin/Grassley letter, were big

recipients of PACs opposing strengthening the Clean Water Act.

E-PAC said Johnston ranked fourth among the senators, receiving \$324,319 from 1987 through 1992; and Breaux ranked eighth, receiving \$301,508 from the "dirty water PACs."

Five of the state's seven members of the U.S. House of Representatives ranked in the top 100 in such contributions during the same period, PIRG and E-PAC said.

Names and amounts include Reps. Billy Tauzin, D-Thibodaux, \$248,191; James McCreery, R-Shreveport, \$179,789; Jimmy Hayes, D-Lafayette, \$133,379; Robert Livingston, R-Metairie, \$105,702; and Richard Baker, R-Baton Rouge, \$100,722.

Tauzin ranked third among all House members in the amount of money he received from the anti-Clean Water Act company PACs, the report said.

## Southern grant to help farmers

By The Associated Press

Southern University will get a \$1.5 million grant from the Farmers Home Administration to help struggling farmers in six parishes keep their livelihoods growing.

Southern has been working with the FmHA for the past three years in an outreach program for minority farmers and those with limited resources, said Linda Benedict, a spokeswoman for the university's College of Agriculture and Home Economics.

"Because of our good work and effort, the Farmers Home Administration gave us a \$1.5 million grant to continue and expand the work that's currently going on," she said.

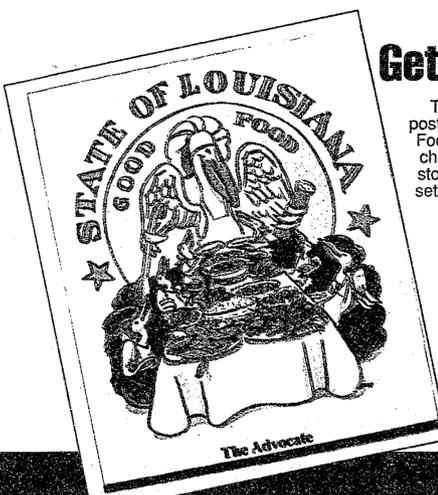
The project assists farmers in Concordia, Evangeline, St. Landry, St. Martin, Tensas and Franklin parishes.

The money, in installments of \$300,000 over five years, will be awarded in a ceremony Monday.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy is expected to attend, Benedict said.

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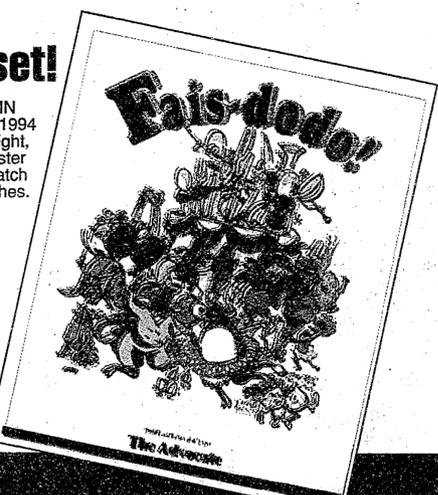


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