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Science, Law, and Public Voice Prevail in Federal Challenge to Yazoo Pumps
Conservation groups' lawsuit prompts Army Corps' reversal

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) released a [memo withdrawing the agency's January 15, 2021, Record of Decision](#) that green-lighted its proposed 2020 Yazoo Pumps plan, a destructive agricultural drainage project in Mississippi's South Delta. The Corps cited the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) recent restoring of its 2008 Clean Water Act 404(c) veto as a basis for their decision.

Federal lawsuits filed earlier this year by Earthjustice on behalf of American Rivers, National Audubon Society, Sierra Club, and Healthy Gulf, against the Corps, EPA, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, challenged the Trump administration's rushed 2020 attempt to revive the Pumps. The Corps' official withdrawal of their approval was prompted by these legal challenges, which serves as a final step in stopping the Pumps and ensuring some of the nation's richest wetland and water resources are protected once again.

Statement by American Rivers, National Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Healthy Gulf, and Earthjustice:

"The Corps' reversal of the outdated, ineffective Pumps is an unequivocal reminder of the power of science, the law, and the public's voice in holding agencies accountable for their irresponsible actions – namely the Corps' unprecedented effort to illegally sidestep bedrock environmental laws, abdicate agency responsibilities, and ignore key scientific findings about the 2020 Pumps' plan.

The Corps unlawfully refused to consider any other alternatives except the Pumps, yet they themselves acknowledge their plan would leave most local communities vulnerable – Corps data shows only 17% of the backwater would receive any flood relief from the Pumps.¹ No more time or taxpayer money should be spent on pursuing a boondoggle that would only deliver more environmental injustice to the Mississippi Delta.

This conclusion of the Pumps' saga underscores the real opportunity to deliver meaningful flood relief to vulnerable backwater communities through [existing federal programs](#) that are available now to get [money on the ground](#) to those who need it the most.

We stand ready to support this new chapter that can benefit people's lives, property, and livelihoods while safeguarding this globally important area for future generations."

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¹ Corps' 2020 FSEIS, Appendix C (Tables) at Table 5.3; Corps' 2020 SEIS, Appendix G (Engineering Report) at 135, Table 2-26.