

SO MUCH WATER, SO LITTLE PROTECTION

Since the 1970s, riverside communities in East Baton Rouge, Ascension and Livingston parishes have proposed various infrastructure to redirect, dam and pump water in the Amite River Basin. After the flood of 1983, specific engineering plans were drawn. However, to date, one project has been discarded and another stands incomplete.

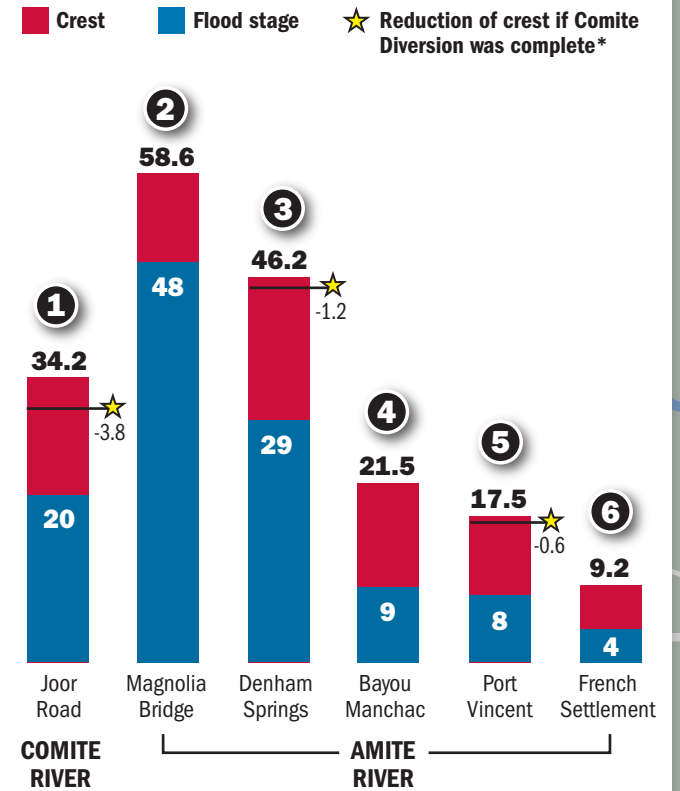
COMITE RIVER DIVERSION CANAL

Since the 1980s, people have dreamed of a 300-foot-wide canal linking the Comite to the Mississippi River to protect Central, Baker and Zachary by draining water out of the basin. While a flood control structure has been built, none of the canal has been dug.

DARLINGTON DAM AND RESERVOIR

Plans, since scrapped, called for a dam of the Amite River on the East Feliciana-St. Helena parish line. Engineers said a massive reservoir would have protected downstream communities like Denham Springs, but others pushed back with concerns about costs, effectiveness and relocating floodplain residents.

RIVER CRESTS DURING FLOOD



Arrows indicate backwater flow. Normally, the waterways flow into the Amite River, but during the flooding last week, water was backing up into those waterways.

ASCENSION DRAINAGE, LEVEE SYSTEM

Starting in the mid-1980s, Ascension Parish taxpayers began paying for pump stations, floodgates and a levee system to protect against high water in the Amite River Basin. All work together mostly to keep large portions of eastern Ascension, including Gonzales, Sorrento, St. Amant and parts of Prairieville, dry until the historic flooding last week overwhelmed the system without help farther upstream.

