

FRWC discusses efforts to restore False River



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NEW ROADS, LA (FOX44) — The False River Watershed Council (FRWC) hosted an open house meeting to update people living near the False River on their efforts to restore the lake. Locals came out to give their thoughts on the potential plans for reviving the lake and have their questions answered. The FRWC was created by the state legislature to come up with more detailed game plan of how to fix the problems with the lake. The FRWC is a mix of representatives from state agencies, politicians, and community members.

Scientists say over the years silt drained from the watershed into the lake.

People living in the area say they've noticed a change in the quality of fishing.

"You know the fishing used to be really good, and it started declining and going down and getting worse and worse. The fish are just harder to catch," Michael Kelly, lives on False River said.

"Every now and then you'll here somebody catching a big bass," John Bueche, lives on False River, said. "But the sac-a-lait fishing, the broom fishing, and the bass fishing hasn't been the same since the late 80's early 90's. "

False River is still still a fine lake," Mike Wood, director of Inland Fisheries for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and Chairman of the FRWC, said. "There is still a reasonable fish population.

The question is it's not as good as it once was and it's deteriorating. We would like to stop that. We can make it much better than it is much more like it was.

The FRWC had to figure out the answer to two questions. How do they slow down the rate of sediment getting into the lake, and what do they do with the sediment already in the water.

The group worked with an engineering company to come up with some ideas. and presented them to crowd at the open house meeting. The FRWC wanted to get the public's input on the plans before the move a head and make a final recommendation to the Point Coupee Parish Police Jury.

"Taking the sediments in the flats and building an island with it by lowering the level [of the water] the material drains. It hardens and is more easily used in this case to construct the retaining berm for the island," Thomas Van Biersel, Coastal Resource Scientist with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, said.

Van Biersel said if the plan gets picked and permitted construction could begin in the Fall, "We would lower the lake a little more expose the flats, build a berm. Let the lake come back up. Then do the hydraulic dredging to build the core of the island. "

FRWC is also looking at modifying the channels that lead into the lake.

"We're trying to revitalize it back to it's glory days, but it's going to take some time," St. Rep. Major Thibaut, (D) New Roads said.

The FRWC and state agencies have took a small step to start the rebuilding process by adding gravel to the lake to create spawning beds for fish. The silt that sits in the lake creates a soft mush on the bottom of the lake. Biologist say the fish in False River don't like to spawn on soft surfaces, and the mud also blocks the fish eggs from getting sunlight. They say the gravel will be more attractive to the fish.

Thibaut explained over the years there has been a lot of studies done to figure out what the problems are in the lake, and potentially how to fix them.

People living along the water have grown frustrated, because they haven't seen a lot of action being taken to restore the lake.

He said the building of the potential island on the southern flats would be the first big round of construction.

"This kicks off actual machinery and tools and people being out there to fix the problems," Thibaut explained.

To learn more about the efforts to restore False River [click here](#).