FLOOD TRACKING CHART, AMITE RIVER BASIN, LOUISIANA

U.S. Geological Survey
Open-File Report 96-649

Prepared in cooperation with the
AMITE RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE AND
WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Prepared by

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FLOOD TRACKING CHART

For real-time data, access the USGS "Home Page" at http://wwwdlabrg.er.usgs.gov/public/dist000.html

AMITE RIVER BASIN, LOUISIANA

This Amite River Basin Flood Tracking Chart can be used by local citizens and emergency response personnel to record the latest river stage and predicted flood crest information along the Amite and Comite Rivers and Bayou Manchac. By comparing the current stage (water-surface elevation above some datum) and predicted flood crest to the recorded peak stages of previous floods, emergency response personnel and residents can make an informed decision concerning the threat to life and property. This chart shows a map of the basin, with the location of major real-time stream gaging stations and the historical recorded peak stages at each station. Each station has a scale on which to record the most recently reported river stage from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Also for each station, the predicted flood crest information from the National Weather Service (NWS) can be recorded.

During a flood, the USGS provides current river stage information to the public through news releases, and more directly through the USGS "Home Page" on the Internet and a voice message:

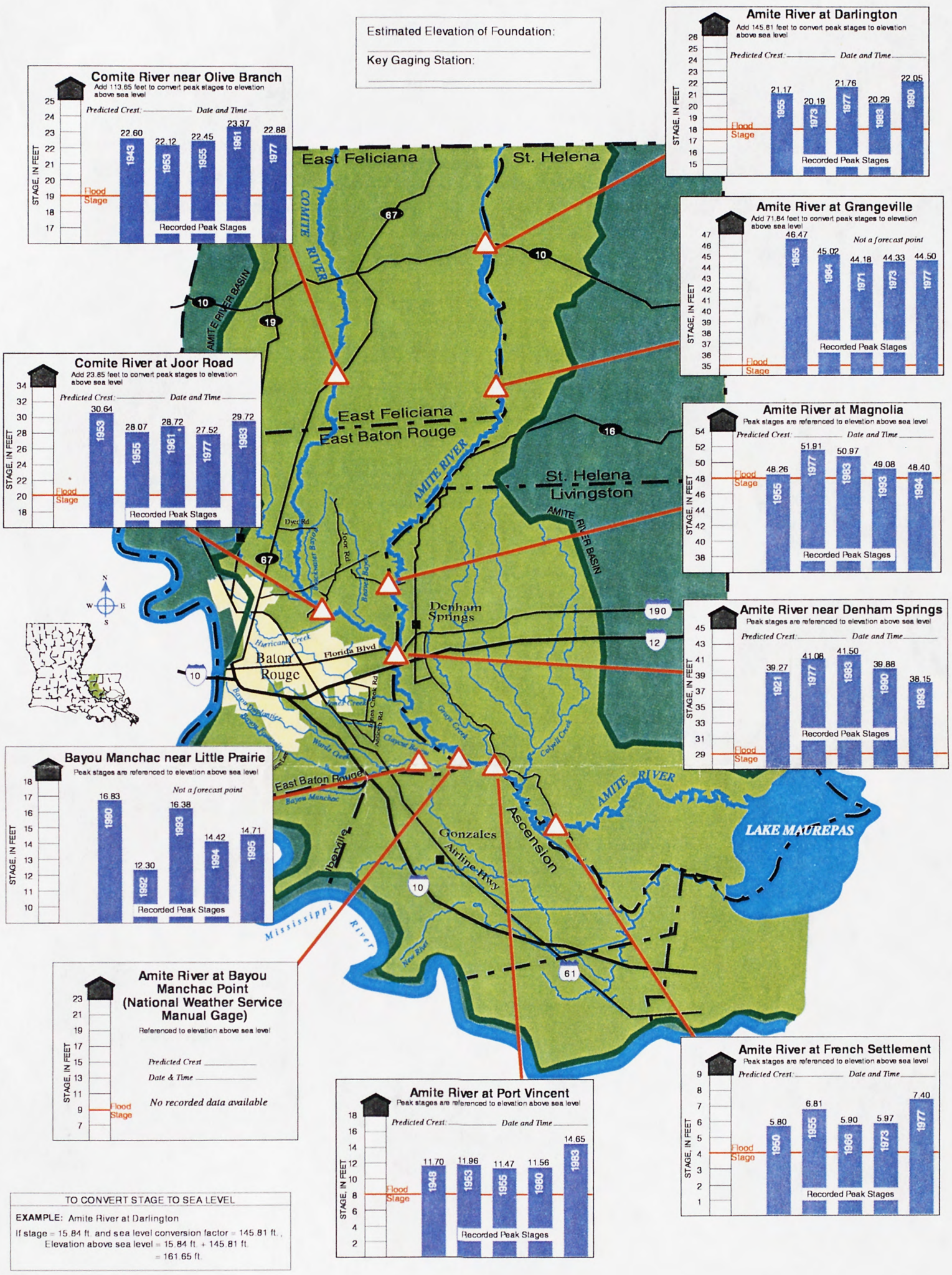
- The Louisiana District of the USGS displays available real-time river stage data on the World Wide Web at the following Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address: http://wwwdlabrg.er.usgs.gov/public/dist000.html.
- A voice message, which is updated by the USGS, gives the latest river stages; it can be accessed by calling the Advocate Info Line[a] at (504) 383-0000 and specifying extension 4444 for the East Baton Rouge Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness.

The NWS has direct access to all information collected by the USGS for use in their forecasting models, and broadcasts this forecast information routinely to the news media and on short-wave radio at a frequency of 162.40 MHz (megahertz).

To use the chart for a particular property, determine the approximate elevation of the threatened property and record this in the appropriate box (at the top of the map) along with the "key gaging station." The "key gaging station" is the station that is closest to the threatened property. For example, most people in Denham Springs, Louisiana, probably will use the Amite River near Denham Springs station as their "key gaging station." By the ways described above, routinely find out the latest river stage information. Record this information at each station, especially the "key gaging station," and compare to the elevation of the property to immediately know if the property has an impending threat of flooding. One must be cautioned by the fact that the surface of flowing water is not flat, but has a slope, and that the water-surface elevation near a threatened property might not be the same as the river stages at these gaging stations because of this slope.

Estimated Elevation of Foundation: _____

Key Gaging Station: _____



TO CONVERT STAGE TO SEA LEVEL
EXAMPLE: Amite River at Darlington
If stage = 15.84 ft. and sea level conversion factor = 145.81 ft., Elevation above sea level = 15.84 ft. + 145.81 ft. = 161.65 ft.

Four of the stations in the upper part of the basin must have their readings adjusted to express those readings as elevation above sea level. The adjustment factor for each of these stations is shown in the corresponding box for that station, and can be added to the current river stage and also to the historical recorded peak stages to relate this information to sea level elevations. See the example in the lower left corner of the map.

The flood tracking chart was produced as part of a cooperative program between the USGS and the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District. The network of river gaging stations is operated by the USGS, in cooperation with several Federal, State, and local agencies. These agencies include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, East Baton Rouge Parish, and the Amite River Basin Drainage and Water Conservation District.

[a] Any use of trade, product, or firm names is for descriptive purposes only and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Geological Survey.

For additional information, write to:

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Louisiana District