

NWS FORM E-5
(11-88)
(PRES. BY WSOM E-41)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

HYDROLOGIC SERVICE AREA (HSA)
New Orleans/Baton Rouge, LA

MONTHLY REPORT OF RIVER AND FLOOD CONDITIONS

REPORT FOR:

MONTH: **MARCH**

YEAR: **2003**

TO: Hydrometeorological Information Center, W/OH2
NOAA / National Weather Service
1325 East West Highway, Room 7230
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283

SIGNATURE

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In Charge of HSA

DATE **APRIL 10, 2003**

When no flooding occurs, include miscellaneous river conditions, such as significant rises, record low stages, ice conditions, snow cover, droughts, and hydrologic products issued (WSOM E-41).

...Periods of Rain and Minor Flooding bring in Spring...

The Lower Mississippi River Valley experienced bouts of heavy rainfall along with some river flooding in March, as spring got a chilly start. River flooding began in February at Morgan City, Louisiana on the Atchafalaya River; at Robert, Louisiana on the Tangipahoa River; and at Bogalusa and Pearl River, Louisiana on the Pearl River. The Tangipahoa River dropped below flood stage on March 1 at Robert. As winter waned, rainy weather kept swollen rivers above their flood stages at several locations for much of the month.

The storm system that produced flooding over parts of Louisiana the last week of February pushed east into Florida and the northern Gulf of Mexico. In response to the heavy rainfall, flooding developed at Graham Ferry, Mississippi on March 1 and continued through March 7. After the late-February system became near-stationary over the Gulf, another strong frontal boundary developed over the central Plains and pushed southeast into the region. Sandwiched between these two systems, reinforcing, widespread heavy rainfall developed over southeastern Louisiana and southern Mississippi from March 4 through March 7. Flooding developed on the Lower Mississippi River near Red River Landing, Louisiana on March 4 and continued through March 15.

High pressure provided a brief reprieve from the rainfall during the second week of March. However, by March 13, another strong frontal boundary arrived from the Plains. With the associated slow-moving mid- and upper-level low pressure areas centered over Louisiana and then Mississippi, widespread heavy rainfall produced flooding again on the Tangipahoa River at Robert from March 14 through March 16; on the Lower Mississippi River at Donaldsonville, Louisiana on March 14; and on the Tchefuncte River at Covington, Louisiana on March 15.

The weather remained unsettled through March 20, as another strong cold front pushed rapidly east; only light rain developed with this system. Toward the end of March, more stormy weather developed, as a series of spring storm systems rumbled across the eastern United States. Periods of heavy rainfall kept the Pearl River above flood stage until March 22 at Pearl River and until March 24 at Bogalusa. The Atchafalaya River remained in flood at Morgan City until March 30, when it dropped below its flood stage. Morgan City went into flood again for a brief period on March 31, before the river fell again.