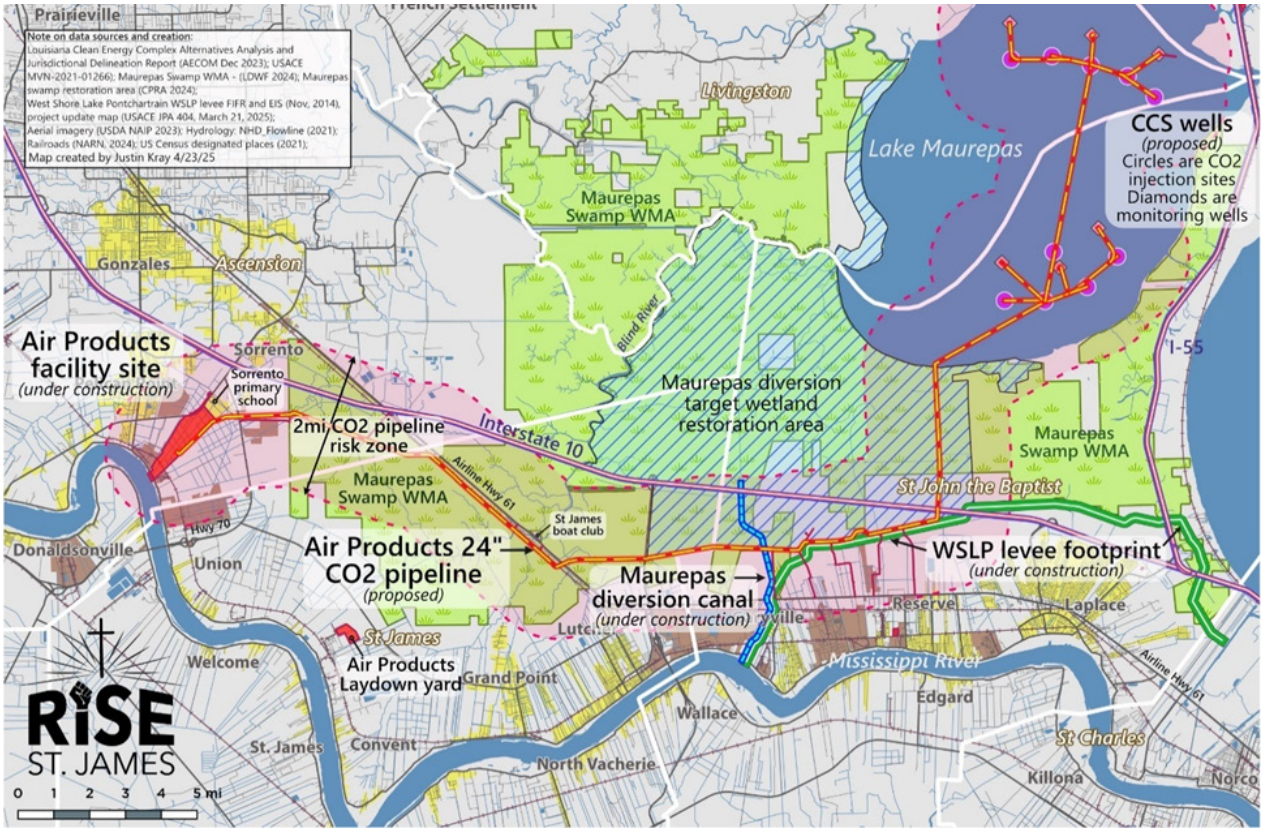
AIR PRODUCTS' LOUSIANNA "CLEAN" ENERGY COMPLEX

The proposed project would pollute river communities and run a carbon dioxide pipeline through a protected swamp area to inject carbon dioxide waste below Lake Maurepas



About the Project

Air Products' Louisiana "Clean" Energy Complex is a proposal for a giant "blue" hydrogen production facility and ammonia chemical plant. The hydrogen is considered "blue" because Air Products plans to use fossil gas and then capture and store the carbon dioxide emissions.

Air Products plans to capture carbon dioxide waste from its plant, which would then be compressed and transported 38 miles through a new pipeline that would run very close to Sorrento Primary School and neighboring subdivisions, through the protected Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area, near communities in St. John Parish, and then to a sprawling carbon sequestration system with a network of additional pipelines and 19 platforms spread throughout beautiful Lake Maurepas.

Air Products recently announced they are planning to sell off major components of their project, including the ammonia facility, marine terminal, carbon dioxide pipeline and sequestration components. Air Products only plans to keep the blue hydrogen manufacturing facility. Despite this, the company is still pursuing an Army Corps Clean Water Act permit and Louisiana Coastal Use Permit for the whole project, including the parts they plan to sell off.

A Bad Deal for All

According to a 2025 report by the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, Air Products' Louisiana "Clean" Energy Complex's carbon capture scheme is "a lose-lose proposition

that would cost billions of dollars in subsidies for essentially zero environmental benefit." In fact, the report finds that "the project will likely result in substantial new [carbon dioxide] emissions at enormous cost to taxpayers; Air Products could claim up to $440 million [in tax credits] per year and $6.3 billion over a 12-year period."

Public Health and Quality of Life: Facility Impacts

The facility would impact quality of life and potentially decrease the value of nearby residential properties due to the noise, light, and odors from the facility that would operate 24/7. Two 160-foot boilers and seven industrial flares, ranging in height from 147 to 220 feet, would be visible for miles around the plant site. Flaring events at the facility would produce large flames, along with noise, vibrations, and sometime plumes of smoke. Odors, especially ammonia, may also be noticeable.

The plant would be built in an area that already has some of the worst air pollution in the state. The cancer risk from exposure to air toxics is already in the 99th percentile in the state for the 3,700 people who live within 2 miles of Air Products' plant site and the respiratory hazard from exposure to air toxics is the 91st percentile. Air Products would add a lot more air pollution to the area.

Louisiana already has the highest emissions of ammonia from industrial sources, and Ascension Parish's ammonia emissions are the highest in the state (almost 50% of the state's ammonia emissions!. In addition to the Air Products' proposed ammonia emissions (66.72 tons per year), two other companies (CF Industries and Clean Hydrogen Works) also seek to build new large ammonia plants in Ascension Parish just upriver of Donaldsonville. Chronic exposure to ammonia can increase the risk of respiratory irritation, cough, wheezing, tightness in the chest, and impaired lung function.

Public Safety: Chemical Accidents

Air Products has failed to provide information to the public that shows the worst-case scenario should there be a chemical release.

Ammonia accidents are a serious concern, especially given the proximity of Air Products' proposed plant to Sorrento Primary School and several residential subdivisions. Ammonia is toxic, flammable, and potentially explosive. An ammonia gas leak in December 2022 at the CF Industries plant in Ascension Parish led to the evacuation of all students and staff at Donaldsonville Primary School approximately one mile away and the closure of the two primary highways to the city.

Hydrogen production creates safety hazards given the highly explosive nature of gas. A catastrophic event at an Air Products' facility in California in 2019 illustrates the hazards associated with hydrogen. A major uncontrolled release of high-pressure hydrogen occurred at the facility causing a fire and explosion that "shook buildings and residents at least five miles away."

Public Safety: Carbon Dioxide Pipeline Risks

Carbon dioxide pipelines pose unique public safety risks because they can rupture and open like a zipper. Large releases of carbon dioxide, which is heavier than air, can create a suffocation hazard by displacing oxygen. Such releases can also prevent car engines from functioning properly, posing challenges for emergency response and evacuation.

For example, in Sataria, Mississippi, a carbon dioxide pipeline ruptured causing the hospitalization of forty-five people and the evacuation of over 200 people from their homes. Unconscious people were reported at 0.6 to 1.2 miles from the rupture site. Cars were stalling because their combustion engines didn't have the oxygen needed.

Air Products is proposing to build a 38-mile 24-inch pipeline that would transport carbon dioxide waste emissions through Ascension, St. James, St. John, Tangipahoa, and Livingston Parishes.

The following areas are of special concern:

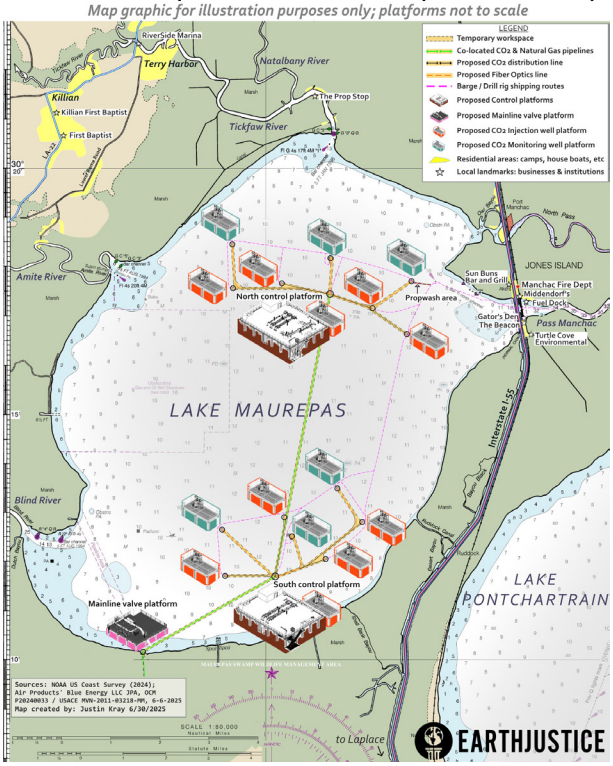
- within a ½ mile of Sorrento Primary School
- within 1 mile of several residential subdivisions in Ascension Parish, including Ascension Trace, River Ridge, Pelican Crossing, and Sugar Mill
- through the Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area
- adjacent to Airline Highway
- across the Blind River, a state Natural and Scenic River
- within ¼ mile of the St. James Boat Club, which hosts many large events
- north of Gramercy, Garyville, and Reserve, coming within 2 miles of residential areas, churches, Reserve Veterans' Home, and a local airport
- 10 miles through Lake Maurepas to the carbon dioxide waste injection system for storage deep beneath the lake

Sorrento Primary School would be sandwiched between a hydrogen pipeline and a carbon dioxide pipeline. A pipeline transporting compressed hydrogen would run within less than a ¼ mile from Sorrento Primary School, and even closer to residences. A high-pressure carbon dioxide pipeline would run within a ½ mile of Sorrento Primary School.

The pipeline could also interfere with a flood protection levee. The US Army Corps is currently building the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain levee whose purpose is to protect residential areas in St. John the Baptist Parish from storm surge. Air Products proposes to build access roads across the levee and to place the carbon dioxide pipeline immediately adjacent to the new levee, permanently removing trees that stabilize the levee and provide storm surge protection.

Air Products' Proposed Carbon Dioxide Sequestration Facility

Map graphic for illustration purposes only; platforms not to scale



Wetlands and Water Quality Impacts

The proposed carbon dioxide pipeline would cut through vitally important wetlands and swamp habitat, permanently destroying over 225 acres of forested wetlands (predominantly cypress-tupelo forest) within the Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area - one of the largest areas of forested coastal wetlands in Louisiana set aside for conservation. And the whole project would impact a total of 363 acres of wetlands.

The pipeline threatens habitat for threatened and endangered species and could undermine important coastal restoration and flood protection projects, including swamp restoration projects and the flood protection levee.

The Project would harm Lake Maurepas. The carbon dioxide pipeline would enter Lake Maurepas at the south shore and run under the lake bottom for 10 miles. In total, Air Products would build nineteen platforms supported with concrete pile foundations

throughout the lake, including two 100 x 75 feet control platforms that would tower 19 feet above the lake surface. More pipelines would be buried below the lake bottom to distribute carbon dioxide from the control platforms to 10 injection wells that would be 20 x 8.5 feet, and 8 feet above the water surface, creating additional navigation hazards and "off limits" zones throughout the Lake. Furthermore, there would be 6 platforms with 8 monitoring wells connected with fiber optic cables, and one additional flow control platform at the south shore of the lake

Lake Maurepas is important for the local economy, including commercial fishing, seafood retailers, restaurants, bars, marine businesses, kayak tours, and the Tickfaw 200, the state's largest power boat charity run.

Lake Maurepas is vital for recreational activities like fishing, boating, kayak tours, wildlife observation, and photography.

Construction would greatly interfere with navigation and enjoyment of the lake. It could stir up and resuspend heavy metals and other contaminants in the sediment, impact water quality, and potentially harm crabs, fish, and other aquatic life, such as the threatened West Indian Manatee observed in these waters.

Preserving Cultural Resources of Orange Grove Plantation

Air Products' plant site was a large sugar plantation known as Orange Grove where hundreds of people were enslaved. In 1860 alone, records show that John Burnside—then owner of Orange Grove—enslaved over 750 people at sugar estates that included Orange Grove. Burnside was one of the largest holders of enslaved people in U.S. history.

Now, Air Products plans to redevelop the site, converting it from a place that held people in bondage in horrific conditions (as detailed in historian Katy Shannon's report) to another use that will put elementary school children and nearby residents in the shadow of a highly polluting plant that has risks of catastrophic failures.

A question remains as to where the enslaved people who died at Orange Grove would have been buried and whether construction activities could destroy unmarked burial sites.

RISE St. James has asked the Army Corps to require Air Products to cease its construction activities until an archeological investigation of the full site has been conducted using current survey standards and until the agency has completed its required reviews. This process must be made known to the public, especially to area residents and potential descendants.