From: Brooke Pickney
To: MVN Environmental;
cc: appelc@legis.state.la.us; larep081@legis.state.la.us; quinnj@legis.state.la.us; white323@cox.net; Mike Woods;
Subject: SAVE COCONUT BEACH!!
Date: Thursday, May 14, 2009 12:19:28 PM

Mr. Owen,

I have never emailed any elected official or any government agency about an issue or cause before; however I feel compelled to write to you to ask you to help save Coconut Beach, the Mickey Retif Beach Volleyball Compound on the Lake. Everyone has been made aware that the USACE wants to acquire 10 - 100% for the permanent pump station. Don't get me wrong, I am NOT against this and I am an advocate for the Corps, however Coconut Beach is a valuable recreational complex for the city.

I have been playing at Coconut Beach since I got back from college in 2003, and even played out there in High School. I know I am out there playing 2 - 3 nights per week, and my friends and I go out there on Sundays and play for 3 to 4 hours - just for fun!! Hundreds of people, myself included, consider Coconut Beach our "nightly home". We are there so often it has become home. I have met more people and established more friendships at Coconut Beach than I ever imagined. If the Corps thinks that taking some of land will help save the city in the event of another catastrophic event, then yes take some, but not all of it!!

Coconut Beach is a safe, fun atmosphere for people to play ball (exercise!!!), hang out with friends, relax and have fun. Yes it also has a bar, but players go out there to play - its an invaluable alternative to hanging out at just a bar or on Bourbon or in places where people don't belong because they just get in to trouble. In all of the years I have been out there, I have never heard of any sort of crime or offense or anything!! It's one of the safest places in the city and you want to take it away?? Besides that, the facility has been a fixture in the city since 1988. It is the largest man made sand complex in the United States (and you want to take that away?? That's actually something New Orleans can take PRIDE in!), with over 4,000 players a week (a week!!!!!) participating and has hosted over 524 tournaments with over 18,000 teams that have participated in the leagues. Coconut has also raised over $1,000,000.00 for Children Hospital and other charities.

Coconut Beach is a place for people of all ages, from teens to 60's where age doesn't matter, background doesn't matter, nothing matters except playing volleyball and having fun. It would truly be a shame to lose this playground. Bruce White and Mike Drury have put so much of their hearts, sweat, time & love into this facility, and all it does is better the state! It betters the City of New Orleans (which isn't that what we are trying to do? And isn't that what's needed??). The Corps does not need all of the land. Leave some for the people who live at Coconut, who look forward to going out there in the evenings, who can't wait for the day to end so they can go play volleyball with their friends. Coconut Beach's home is on the Lakefront, on West End. It means more to the people who play out there, who live out there than you would ever know or could ever imagine.

I know if it comes down to the public debate it will be Save Volleyball Courts vs. Save the City of New Orleans. It doesn't have to be that way - both can happen. If the Corps needs to take some of the land, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, for the sake of one of the most popular, safe, entertaining and loved places in the entire City of New ORleans and surrounding areas, please lean towards 10% if using any of that land is a necessity. PLEASE DON'T TAKE AWAY COCONUT BEACH!

I implore you to consider the impact of this facility on the public and the people who use it! PLEASE SAVE COCONUT BEACH!!!

Thank you for your time,

Brooke Pickney

I LOVE COCONUT BEACH NOLA!!!