WASHINGTON — The federal government would immediately spend $10 million for protective land buying in Louisiana’s Atchafalaya Basin under an amendment sponsored by a Louisiana senator and adopted Thursday by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The basin money is in an amendment by Sen. J. Bennett Johnston, D-Shreveport, to a supplemental appropriations bill that gives extra money to the Interior Department for spending in the current fiscal year.

Dow Chemical Co. has donated land and Louisiana has put up land and funds — totaling about a $10 million contribution — for a basin flood control project.

William Clark earlier worked out a verbal agreement to use a new bill for federal wetlands’ buying as a vehicle to get the federal government involved in the basin project.

But Clark had declined to ask for extra money for Louisiana under that separate, proposed wetlands program, and had said that if Congress would give him that bill, he would find Atchafalaya Basin money somewhere in Interior’s existing funds.

Clark refused to say where he’d find that money, and inside Interior sources point out the political difficulty of Clark’s probable need to take money away from another worthy wetlands project to assist the Louisiana project.

A spokesman for Johnston said the senator still supports the new, special wetlands legislation and would expect Washington to pump money into the basin in the future.

But the wetlands bill seems to be moving slowly, and Johnston decided he had to act now to provide for the basin sooner, the aide said.

Johnston’s office is unsure how the Reagan administration will react.

If the Interior supplemental funding bill gets loaded down with other spending amendments, Reagan probably would consider vetoing it, a Johnston aide theorized.