The solution is very simple. Open the natural bayous and close the pipelines. ... These spoil banks are killing the Basin, and we want the pipeline companies and the Corps of Engineers to do something about it.”

Mike Bienvenu
Crawfish trapper

people who set traps for crawfish throughout the Basin have been catching a few pounds a day, if any. An estimated 600 to 800 crawfish trappers would normally catch 1,000 pounds of crawfish a day. But lately, every time a trap is pulled up, 2 or 3 pounds of dead crawfish are in the bottom of a trap.

The Basin crawfish trappers want natural gas companies to make cuts in the spoil banks to allow water to flow, or they want the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to raise the flood level in the Basin from the current 14-foot stage to 20 feet, so the water can flow over the spoil banks.

“The solution is very simple,” crawfish trapper Mike Bienvenu said. “Open the natural bayous and close the pipelines. ... These spoil banks are killing the Basin, and we want the pipeline companies and the Corps of Engineers to do something about it.”

Bienvenu said compromises can be made. Cuts in the spoil banks on the north side of the Basin would allow water to flow. Closing the pipeline canals would mean landowners in the Basin would not have access to their property, said Toni DeBosier with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

The two big issues to all users of the Basin are water quality and access to property, DeBosier said. All groups — crawfish producers, bass fishermen, landowners, hunters, hoop-net fishermen and government regulators — all need to come to some agreement, DeBosier said.

“There are arguments between all the users,” she said.