

Cost of levee work spoils Emerson's conservative image

To the editor:

While environmentalists and developers shout at each other over the value of fish and surplus commodities, a bit of calculator work makes the eyebrows lift when the subject of the St. John's Bayou levee project is examined.

If my figures are correct, U.S. taxpayers are going to shell out at least \$60 million for this project. They are doing this, officially, to help the residents of East Prairie who are said to have a flood problem resulting from the Mississippi River.

Census figures show a population of 3,227 in East Prairie. Divide \$60 million by the population, and you see we have been committed to spend \$18,593 for every man, woman and child in East Prairie to help them with this single problem.

Now this is a wild guess. Four people per household? If there are four humans under each roof, that comes to \$74,342 per household being spent to keep them from getting their feet wet in Mississippi backwater. We have to wonder if the houses in East Prairie are even worth \$74,342 on average.

What is happening to the word "conservative"? It used to mean using your head a little now and then and examining things in detail.

It is hard to believe U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson is anything like an old-time conservative when she pushes this project. What a waste.

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