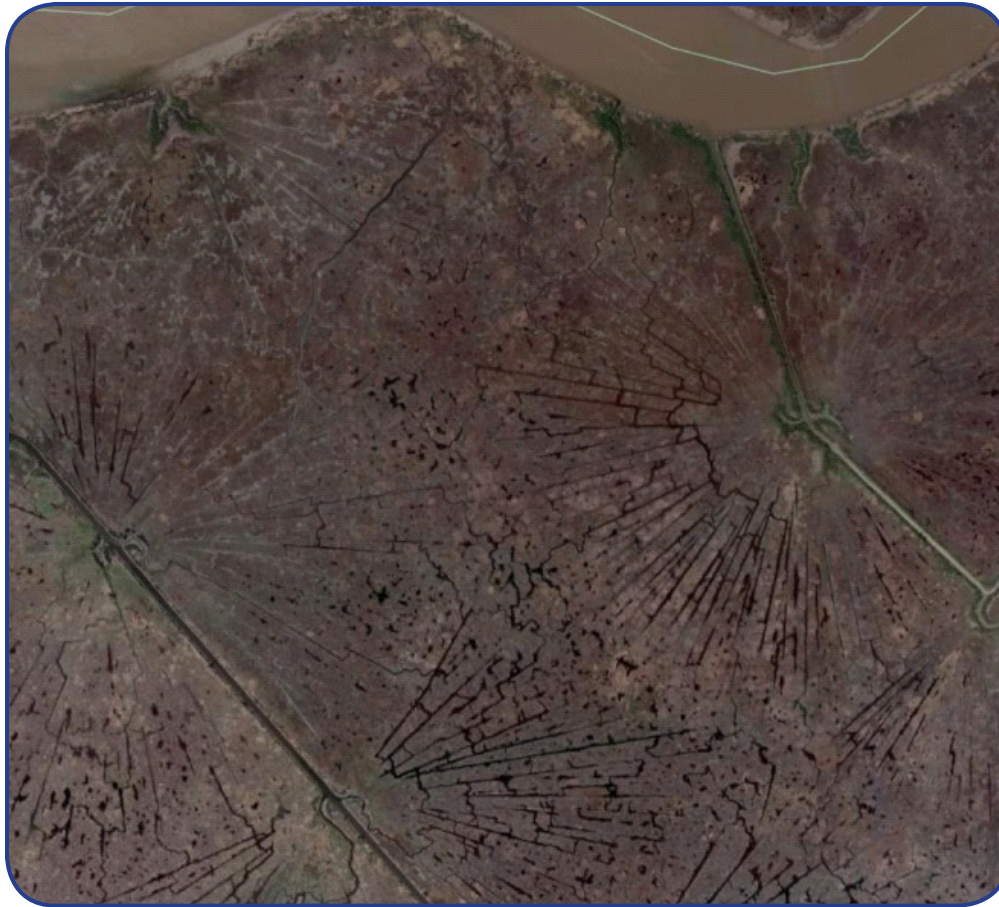


Cypress Logging Ditches in Manchac



As seen from this aerial photo of the marsh, from each canal, small feeder ditches radiate off in every direction like spokes in a wagon wheel.

To satisfy not only south Louisiana's, but also the nation's insatiable appetite for cypress, logging companies almost leveled the Manchac area between the late 1830s and 1956 when the last log was cut for the mills. Loggers criss-crossed the swamp, digging canals to move their steam-powered pullboats deeper and deeper into the swamp.

Scientists generally agree that natural and man-made forces are slowly killing the swamp and marsh. Clear-cut logging is not the only culprit. Other factors include natural land subsidence and rising global sea levels caused by long-term earth warming, the digging of logging and highway canals, the Mississippi River levee system that prevents natural sediment deposits in the swamp, and the introduction of nutria in the 1930s.