

## 4-H students plants trees to help levee

By The Associated Press

DULARGE — A group of Thibodaux students planted 400 trees on the edge of a hurricane protection levee in the hope of cutting back on coastal erosion.

The seedlings are similar to the marsh-building grasses from New Orleans students planted on Isle de Jean Charles last week in hopes they will form marsh and help hold the land together.

On Monday, about 50 students from the St. Joseph Catholic Elementary School's 4-H Club brought Southern bald cypress, Southern wax myrtle and black mangrove to the levee, damaged by Tropical Storm Isidore and Hurricane Lili.

"A month ago, you guys would have been standing up to your necks in salt water," David Bourgeois, director of the LSU AgCenter fisheries program in Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes, told the students.

Students in 14 schools in Louisiana are participating in the AgCenter project, growing seedlings native to the marshes that they plant during the fall in south Louisiana.

Betty Danos, St. Joseph's 4-H moderator, said the students have been learning about coastal erosion, including plant life and saltwater levels.

"We try to do lots of hands-on activities," Danos said. "I just have a love for science. When this activity became available, I just dove right in."