

The Louisiana Purchase Timeline

1763:

France gave Louisiana to Spain.

March 1801:

Napoleon wanted a French empire in North America. So, under pressure, Spain returned Louisiana to France.

Federalists in the United States were alarmed that France now owned Louisiana. They wanted to use force against France. But Jefferson (a Democratic-Republican) sent Robert R. Livingston, the U.S. minister to France to attempt to buy New Orleans.

January 1803:

U.S. sent James Monroe to join Livingston and try to buy New Orleans and West Florida from France.

April 1803:

Napoleon gave up his dream of an American empire because he was overwhelmed by the slave revolt in Haiti and also wanted to go to war with Britain.

The French offered Livingston and Monroe all of Louisiana (not just New Orleans). Livingston and Monroe signed a treaty. For roughly \$15 million, the U.S. acquired some 828,000 square miles of land, doubling the national territory of the United States.

October 1803:

The Senate ratified the treaty and in December the United States acquired the Louisiana Purchase.