



# Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority



**Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority Board Meeting**  
**Wednesday, June 14, 2023**  
**State Capitol-House Committee Room 1**  
**Baton Rouge, LA 70802**  
**9:30AM**

*The following constitute minutes of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board Meeting and are not a verbatim transcript of the proceedings. Audio and video recordings of the meetings are available for viewing and kept at the Office of the Governor-Coastal Activities Office in Baton Rouge, LA.*

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Roll Call**

Chairman Kline, Executive Assistant, Coastal Activities	Present
Charles Reulet, DNR	Present
Barbara Agullard, DOTD	Present
Patrick Banks, LDWF	Present
Celena Cage, DEQ	Absent
Pat Witty LED	Present
Joey Breaux, LDAF	Present
Barbara Goodson, DOA	Present
Billy Broussard, LDI	Present
Casey Tingle, GOHSEP	Present
Simone Maloz for Karen Gautreaux, Gov’s Advisory Comm- Co-Chair	Present
Nick Cali for Scott Burke, Barataria Basin	Present
Monica Gorman, Pontchartrain Basin	Present
John Helmers, Plaquemines Parish Coastal Zone/ Mississippi Delta Basin	Present
Dwayne Bourgeois, Terrebonne Basin	Present
Bill Hidalgo, Atchafalaya Basin	Present
Laurie Cormier, Calcasieu/Sabine Basin	Absent
Stephen Sagrera, Teche/Vermillion Parish	Absent
Michael Ince, Designee for the Lieutenant Governor	Absent
John Lane for Pres. McInnis, Breton Sound Basin	Present
Rep. Zeringue, Ex-officio, Designee of the Speaker of the House	Present
Sen. Hensgens, Ex-officio, Designee of the President of the Senate	Absent

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Motion by Mr. Bourgeois  
Second by Ms. Salins-Gorman  
Unanimously Approved

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

Motion by Ms. Maloz  
Second by Mr. Banks  
Unanimously Approved

**V. Old Business/Announcements**



# Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority



- VI. **National Estuarine Research Reserve Update – Brian Lezina, CPRA; Dr. Brian Roberts, LUMCON (video: 0:2:39)** Mr. Lezina & Dr. Roberts updated the board on the Atchafalaya NERR which is a network of 30 protected places through NOAA as lead federal agency. Mr. Lezina stated that the state’s role is land ownership and management and reserve staff members program implementation funding (30 percent match). And the federal role is national policy and program guidance and technical assistance program coordination funding (70 percent). Mr. Lezina also provided a timeline: Letter of Interest that the Governor provided to NOAA, a site selection and nomination (public input on site), draft and final environmental impact statement and management plan (public comment and hearing), designation and operations (MOU, Findings, record of decision). 2022 (State Nominates Atchafalaya Site to NOAA), 2023 (Prepare Management Plan, Prepare Environmental Impact Statement, Develop NOAA-State MOUs), Finding and Record of Decision, and 2024 Designation. And lastly, CPRA and Sea Grant have been tasked with getting this project up and moving. Dr. Roberts shared with the board about his background in NERR research and how he is ready to collaborate with local, state and federal partners (universities) and getting this NERR system up and running.
- VII. **CPRA Implementation Update— Bren Haase, CPRA (video: 0:19:30)** Mr. Grandy presented to the board that there are 113 active projects, 44 of them are in construction, 66 are in E&D, with 3 more in the planning stage. Of the projects now being constructed, 33 are hurricane protection projects and 39 are creating marsh. Marsh creation leads the way in E&D with 27 projects moving toward the construction phase. Mr. Haase updated the board on the following projects: **South Pass Bird Island Enhancement (Plaquemines Parish)** The South Pass Bird Island Enhancement project will create approximately 5 acres of nesting island with sediments dredged from South Pass. This is about a \$2 million dollar project coming from multiple funding sources on this project: GOMESA/DNR/LOSCO/SWIG. This project is located in the heart of the Bird’s Foot in south Plaquemines Parish. And it will created about 5 acres worth of new nesting habitat for birds. The project is cleaning out two existing crevasses and beneficially using that material to construct the Bird Island. This is the second “cleanout and island creation”. The Island migrated north 500ft from the original location. **West Shore-Lake Pontchartrain:** The 17.5-mile levee alignment is divided into 13 reaches, each with its own construction contract. Several contracts for prep work leading up to the levee construction have been completed, including construction of nine access roads connecting existing highways to the alignment, three sand/clay stockpile contracts, and two sand placement contracts that allowed for the creation of a 3-foot sand base. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently awarded a contract for constructing the third levee reach on the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain (WSLP) Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction project. This contract will construct approximately 1.8 miles of the 17.5-mile-long levee system that will provide 100-year level risk reduction to the area primarily in St. John the Baptist, St. James and St. Charles Parish. The contract was awarded on April 28, 2023, to Onshore Materials, LLC, of Thibodaux, Louisiana, for the construction of levee reach 101a, which is approximately 1.8 miles long. The contract at award is \$22,595,265.00. The levee elevation will be 12.5 feet. Mr. Haase also announced to the board that the LA Legislature unanimously passed the 2023 Coastal Master Plan and the Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Plan on May 25th. He mentioned that the Governor joined the CPRA and others at the Spanish Pass Project ribbon cutting ceremony on May 12<sup>th</sup>. This is the largest marsh and ridge project constructed to date. There was also a celebration for the almost completed project Upper Barataria Marsh Creation, which will help allow public access to the lakes etc. In conclusion,



# Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority



Mr. Haase gave a brief follow up on State of the Coast 2023: We had about 90 CPRA and GOCA staff in attendance with 24 staff from CPRA and GOCA who presented or were on panels at SOC23. Presentations ranged from project discussions like the River Reintroduction into Maurepas, discussions on how to utilize the 2023 Coastal Master Plan, and discussions on climate change, blue carbon, resilience and much more. \*Mr. Haase also gave a brief story on “Wilson” the bird.

**VIII. Morganza to the Gulf – Col. Cullen Jones (video:1:07:06)** Col. Jones provided an update of the Morganza to the Gulf of Mexico which is appropriated over \$440M. **PROGRESS FORWARD: Southwest Coastal Louisiana:** Structure Raising and Ecosystem Restoration, \$6.8B Estimated Cost, Project Area: Cameron Parish, Calcasieu Parish, Vermillion Parish, MOU signed 17 May 2023, Project Partnership Agreement executed today (14 Jun 23). **Lower Mississippi River (LMR) Comprehensive Management Study:** 5-yr/\$25M multi-purpose LMR study to identify actionable recommendations, USACE has identified numerous challenges and opportunities to be further refined through stakeholder engagement/discussion, Initiated study rollout with notification to CODEL and public this month, Scheduling stakeholder/public engagements. **West Shore Lake Pontchartrain Project:** 18-mile levee system in St. John Parish and ring levees in St. James Parish, 25 Total USACE Contracts (13 Contracts awarded to date, 10 more contracts to be awarded this calendar year). State to construct Maurepas Mitigation features and associated levees.

**MORGANZA TO THE GULF LEVEE SYSTEM FEDERAL WORK UNDERWAY**  
Funding: Over \$440M Appropriated

- Construction Ongoing**
  - Humble Canal Sector Gate Preload
- Features Funded for Design and Construction** (Design underway for all listed below)
  - Levee Features**
    - Reach A Levee portion
    - Lockport to Larose Levee portion
  - Structure Features**
    - Shell Canal Floodgate
    - Minors Canal Floodgate
    - GIWW West Floodgate
    - GIWW East Floodgate
    - Humble Canal Floodgate
- Features funded for Design** (Dates are estimated design initiation)
  - Levee Features**
    - Reach F
    - Reach J-2
    - Reach L
    - Reach K
  - Structure Features**
    - Bayou Terrebonne Floodgate
  - Environmental Efforts**
    - Reach A Environmental Assessment (EA)
    - Reach F EA
    - Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)—Entire project
    - Survey and Borings EA

**Morganza to the Gulf—Priorities**

- Programs to be closing (and in various scale of RFP) to reduce risk to a total of 200,000+ structures
- Initial infrastructure “pre-work” work of 200+ specified Environmental Assessment (EA)
- Award construction contracts in 2024
- State prepared to award 11,000+ RMA through the Regulatory Process

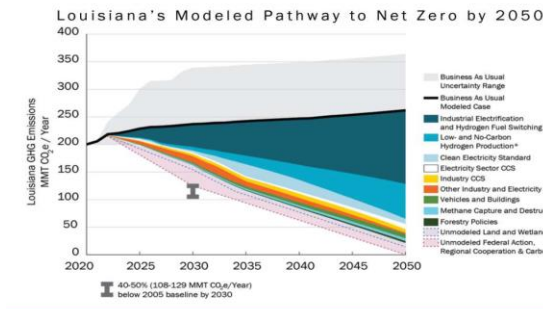
**SOUTH CENTRAL COAST, LOUISIANA**

- CPRA serves as the NFS
- Chief’s Report signed on 23 June 2022
- Coastal storm risk management for St. Mary, St. Martin, and Iberia Parishes
- Voluntary flood-proofing or elevation of 2,240 structures within the 25-year storm surge floodplain
  - 1,790 residential structures
  - 233 commercial structures
  - 32 public structures
  - 185 warehouses
- Total project cost estimated at \$1.7B
- Benefit-to-Cost Ratio of 1.45
- Project authorized in WRDA 2022
  - USACE positioned to initiate Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED) pending receipt of funds

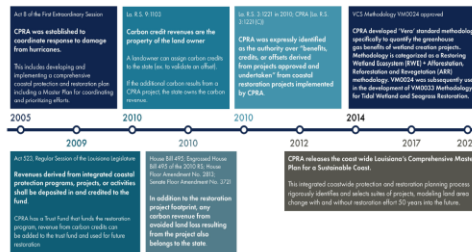
**IX. Blue Carbon Market Discussion– Harry Vorhoff, Governor’s Office & Beaux Jones, The Water Institute of the Gulf (video: 1:33:06)** Mr. Vorhoff provided a brief update on the blue carbon market stating that the state has a tremendous opportunity to start earning carbon credits on our coastal restoration projects, sell those credits, get revenue and re-invest that revenue back into the coastal program. This will require a lot of different partners to make this happen with The Water Institute as serving as the collaboration hub on this effort. Mr. Vorhoff walked the members through Louisiana’s Modeled pathway to net zero by



2050. This work will be funded with \$3M from this upcoming years Annual Plan. **Mr. Jones** provided the board a brief update on carbon capture. The carbon capture in coastal wetlands presents opportunity for restoration and infrastructure protection projects to generate greenhouse gas offset credits and incentivize private investments through the revenue that can be generated from carbon credit markets. Mr. Jones stated that LA Wetlands capture carbon at high rates: For every 1 acre of Louisiana marsh, it accumulates 1,466kg of carbon per year. Meaning, 1 acre of Louisiana marsh accumulates the same carbon as 80 acres of average forest. The state of Louisiana since at least 2005 has been leading in this effort (the state of Louisiana stands alone in the United States and probably internationally with the opportunity to capitalize on volunteer carbon markets, and to better quantify and understand blue carbon and it's role. Mr. Jones concluded with Louisiana's Carbon Program Goals: Market for Coastal Master Plan, State's Net Zero Goal, and the Comprehensive Quantification of Coastal Carbon Benefit.



COASTAL CARBON TIMELINE



X. **Louisiana Flood ID Update – Hugh Roberts, The Water Institute of the Gulf (video: 01:50:14)** Mr. Roberts updated the board on the Louisiana Flood ID Path Forward. Mr. Roberts stated that this has been a multiple agency involvement in developing the FloodID. He provided the board with the Goals of FloodID Development, and the FloodID Components (see charts):

GOALS OF FloodID DEVELOPMENT



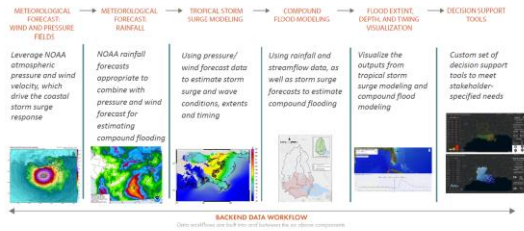
LOUISIANA FloodID PATH FORWARD



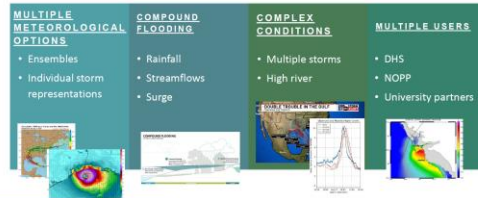




### FloodID COMPONENTS



### FloodID EXTENSIBLE DESIGN



**XI. Legislative Update– Charles Sutcliffe, Governor’s Office (video: 2:00:16)** Mr. Sutcliffe updated the members on CPRA’s 2023 Legislative Session Final Report in Ms. Ledet’s absence:

**Budget Bills** [SCR 3](#) (Spending Expenditure): SCR 3 by President Cortez passed the House and Senate raising the spending cap by \$1.65 billion allowing CPRA’s appropriations in HB 2 in HB 550 to be allocated.

[HB 2](#) (Capital Outlay): CPRA received \$107 million in surplus funding and the appropriation for the \$40 million included in HB 550.

[HB 550](#) (Funds): CPRA received \$40 million directed from the State General Fund to the Coastal Protection and Restoration Fund.

**Priority Bills**

[SCR 6](#) by Sen. Hensgens: the Fiscal Year 24 Annual Plan for CPRA which passed the legislature unanimously and effective upon passage

[SCR 17](#) by Sen. Hensgens and Rep. Zeringue: the 2023 Coastal Master Plan which passed the legislature unanimously and effective upon passage

[HB 526](#) by Rep. Zeringue: establishes the Chief Resilience Officer in statute and has been sent to the Governor. We have prepared a press release in anticipation of his signature.

[HB 99](#) by Rep. Orgeron: Unfortunately, the offshore alternative energy constitutional amendment did not make it through for the second year. This was a result of the larger budget debates and not having enough time to get it scheduled for Senate Finance Committee after passing the House.

[HB 116](#) by Rep. Orgeron: The companion and statutory dedication bill to HB 99 also did make it through the Senate.

**Other Topics/ Bills**

**Atchafalaya Conservation Fund:** The Atchafalaya Conservation Fund is repealed through [HB 254](#) by Rep. Thomas. This bill is sent to the Governor and cleans up constitutional funds that do not have any money in their account. The two bills connected to this were HB 277 and HB 278 which could have potentially put funding towards the Atchafalaya Conservation Fund, but they did not make it out of Senate Revenue and Fiscal Affairs committee.

**Carbon Capture:** CCS was a very popular topic this session with many anti-CCS bills filed in the beginning, but ultimately the only CCS related bill that made it through was [HB 571](#) by Speaker Schexnayder. This bill sets up a regulatory framework for CCS, including notification requirements, environmental analysis for projects, and revenue sharing for parish governments.

[HB 47/ Act 107](#) by Rep. Nelson: This bill requires the legislature to appropriate no less than twenty-five percent of nonrecurring state revenues for application to certain state retirement system unfunded accrued liability. This constitutional amendment will be on the ballot this fall and if passes the amount of Surplus going to UAL will increase from 10% to 25% and in return, we could see less surplus funding.

[HCR 72](#) by Rep. Kerner: The resolution for MBSD mitigation for Lafitte passed both chambers.

[SB 42](#) by Senator Mills: This bill creates the Louisiana Watershed Initiative. It was held on the calendar and do not make it through.

**XII. Federal Update- Neal McMillin, Governor’s Office (video: 02:27:48)** Mr. McMillin provided the board with a brief update on the NEPA Reform Rides the Debt Ceiling Lift: Plus, NOAA Funding E.O. on Environmental Justice. He stated that the Fiscal Responsibility Act: Passage averts debt-ceiling crisis by



removing debt limit until January 1, 2025. Louisianans Half of "Big 4" Debt Ceiling Negotiators was represented by Congressman Garret Graves.

## Fiscal Responsibility Act – Big Picture

**Debt Limit**

- Lifted through January 1, 2025.

**Discretionary Spending & Appropriations:**

- Reduces spending by an estimated \$1.3 trillion over ten years.
- Reduces overall discretionary spending by \$12 billion from FY23, so \$886 billion defense, \$704 billion non defense. Totals \$109 billion below the FY24 President's Budget.
- Limits federal discretionary spending growth to 1% annually for next 6 years.
- Enacts an automatic continuing resolution that provides a temporary 1% cut to discretionary federal spending if all 12 appropriations bills are not passed on time.

**Mandatory Spending**

- No changes to mandatory spending or entitlements (Social Security, Medicare, etc.).

**Taxes**

- No new taxes, despite White House proposal.

**Specific Cuts**

- Largest rescission package in history (\$28 billion), as many funds spent to address the covid-19 pandemic were no longer needed.
- No funding for year 1 of the proposed IRS expansion.

**Policy Changes**

- Statutory Administrative Pay-Go to limit costly regulations, through end of 2024.
- Reinstatement of work requirements for certain age classes in social safety net programs.
- Permitting reform making the first major changes to the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) since 1982.
- End of student loan repayment freeze.
- No changes to revenue sharing as BREEZE Act was not included, despite being in House Republicans opening offer.

## Language of Key NEPA Reforms for Coastal Louisiana

- Changes NEPA to consider the "reasonably foreseeable environment effects", instead of impacts. The wording change should allow more consideration of project benefits, as well as contain the scope of review.
- Alternatives considered under NEPA can include "an analysis of any negative environmental impacts of not implementing the proposed agency action in the case of a no action alternative."
- Alternatives considered must also be "technically and economically feasible", as well as "meeting the purpose and need" of the proposal.
- NEPA analysis can make use of reliable data and resources, without having to gather data just for covering perceived legal liability. Data can be gathered if it is "essential to a reasoned choice among alternatives and the overall costs and time frame of obtaining it are not unreasonable."
- Issuing funds like GOMESA funds are excluded from the definition of "major Federal action" per the following language: "Funding assistance solely in the form of general revenue sharing funds which do not provide Federal agency compliance or enforcement responsibility over the subsequent use of such funds."



## Keen Interest in Additional Permitting Reform

Senate poised to move next

**S. 1456: Spur Permitting of Underdeveloped Resources (SPUR) Act:**  
Led by Senate Energy & Natural Resources Ranking Member John Barrasso (R-WY) and sponsored by all 11 Republicans on the committee.

**S. 1449: Revitalizing the Economy by Simplifying Timelines and Assuring Regulatory Transparency (RESTART) Act:**  
Led by Senate Environment and Public Works Ranking Member Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and sponsored by all 11 Republicans on the committee.

**S. 1399: Building American Energy Security Act of 2023:**  
Led by Senate Energy & Natural Resources Chairman Joe Manchin (D-WV).

**Discussion Draft: Promoting Efficient and Engaged Reviews (PEER) Act:**  
Led by Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman Tom Carper (D-DE) and 5 other Senate Democrats.

**S. 1804: Facilitating America's Siting of Transmission and Electric Reliability (FASTER) Act:**  
Led by Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM).

## NOAA's \$3.3 Billion Plan from the Inflation Reduction Act

From the IRA, \$2.6 billion, for the conservation, restoration, and protection of coastal and marine habitats and resources, including fisheries, to enable coastal communities to prepare for extreme storms and other changing climate conditions, and for projects that support natural resources that sustain coastal and marine resource dependent communities

Climate-Ready Coasts and Communities Initiative	\$2.6 Billion
Climate Resilience Regional Challenge	\$575 million
Tribal Priorities	\$390 million
Climate-Ready Fisheries	\$349 million
Climate Resilience Accelerators	\$100 million
Climate-Ready Workforce	\$60 million
Remaining funds for high-quality projects through the IJA, NOFO, Integrated Ocean Observing System, or technical assistance	\$1.1 billion

**Other designated NOAA IRA Funds \$700 million:**

Climate Data and Services	\$200 million
NOAA Facilities	\$200 million
High-performance computing	\$190 million
2nd Hurricane Hunter Aircraft	\$100 million
NOAA Permitting	\$20 million

- XIII. **Briefing on Impact of Sackett v. EPA on Coastal Louisiana - Harry Vorhoff, Gov's Office & David Peterson, CPRA (video: 0:00:00) *\*\*This presentation was postponed until the July board meeting.\*\****
- XIV. **Farewell Remarks- Chip Kline, CPRA Board Chairman *\*\* (Mr. Kline made his remarks immediately following the Implementation presentation.)\*\****
- XV. **Public Comment**
- XVI. **Adjourn**  
Motion by: unanimously motioned by the board  
Second by: Unanimously approved by the board