



Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority



Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority Board Meeting

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

9:30 AM

The Water Institute- Estuary Room-3rd Floor

1110 River Road S, Baton Rouge, LA 70802

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 Gordon Dove	Present
Sec. Tyler Gray, DENR	Present
Edward Knight for Sec. Donahue, DOTD	Present
Tyler Bosworth for Sec. Shehan, LDWF	Present
Justin Crossie for Sec. Giacometto, DEQ	Present
Pat Witty for Sec. Bourgeois, LED	Present
Joey Breaux for Comm. Strain, LDAF	Present
Gina Campo for Comm. Barras, DOA	Present
Comm. Temple, LDI	Present
Dir. Jacques Thibodaux, GOHSEP	Absent
Tony Alford, Gov's Advisory Comm	Present
Scott Burke, Barataria Basin	Present
Monica Gorman, Pontchartrain Basin	Present
Bill Bubrig, Plaquemines Parish Coastal Zone/ Mississippi Delta Basin	Present
Dwayne Bourgeois, Terrebonne Basin	Present
Bill Hidalgo, Atchafalaya Basin	Present
Laurie Cormier, Calcasieu/Sabine Basin	Present
Stephen Sagrera, Teche/Vermillion Parish	Present
Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser	Present
Guy 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	Present

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion by: Mr. Bourgeois

Second by: Mr. Hidalgo

Unanimously Approved

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion by: Ms. Cormier

Second by: Mr. Hidalgo

Unanimously Approved

V. Old Business/Announcements

- Schedule of Upcoming Meetings
- Commissioner Temple gave remarks



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VI. **CPRA Implementation Update — Glenn Ledet, CPRA (video: 00:15:45)** Mr. Ledet provided an update to the board on stating that CPRA has 110 active projects • 43 of them are in construction, 62 are in E&D, with 5 more in the planning stage. • Of the projects now being constructed, 34 are hurricane protection projects and 38 are creating marsh. Marsh creation leads the way in E&D with 28 projects moving toward the construction phase. **The Rockefeller Shoreline Protection** features two o RESTORE Parish Matching projects. These projects were selected through a competitive process that required the parish to match a portion of their RESTORE funding to CPRA’s RESTORE funding. The project will be constructed along the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge and Gulf of Mexico shoreline. The structure is a 1.14 mile continuation of the CWPPRA ME-18 and STATE ME-0037 projects. Protecting the Rockefeller Shoreline has only been possible due to the great partnerships between CPRA/the state and Cameron Parish. In total, these projects combined equate to over 7 miles of shoreline protection and an over \$28 million dollar investment in Southwest LA/The Rockefeller Refuge. **The Manchac Landbridge (Rock Breakwater) Shoreline Protection Project** is another RESTORE Parish Matching project. The main purpose of the Manchac project is to continue efforts of the Coastal Impact Assistance Program with the construction of rock breakwater on the Lake Pontchartrain shoreline southwest of the Tangipahoa River and east of Pass Manchac. This project will preserve shoreline integrity and reduce wetland degradation from wave erosion along the shoreline of Lake Pontchartrain, benefitting surrounding shoreline habitat. Construction on this project is set to begin in the very near future; just waiting for the contractor to mobilize to the site. **The Storm Surge Risk Reduction for Section E-North** project: The portion of the work that CPRA is providing funding for the Phase 1 where material is being borrowed and stockpiled adjacent to the levee for future work where it will be placed on the crown of the levee to raise the elevation. SLLD is moving some of the material on the slope (protected side) of the levee to allow space for additional material to be stockpiled behind the levee. At this time SLLD will pay to construct the levee lift in a future construction event. Mr. Ledet also provided an update on the NFWF Resilience Fund: CPRA - \$7.7 Million- Restore marsh habitat on the south rim of Grand Lake to create and nourish tidal marshes that provide important habitat for fish and wildlife and provide natural storm buffers for communities. This project will re-establish a more robust landmass between River aux Chenes and Lake Lery as part of a long-range restoration plan for enhancing the resilience of communities and ecosystems in coastal Louisiana.; National Audubon Society - \$489k; Ducks Unlimited - \$650k.






CPRA - \$1.1 Million • Perform data inventory and needs assessment, land ownership investigation, survey and geotechnical investigations, cultural resources investigation, alternatives analysis and preliminary design of living shoreline features. Project will, once implemented, protect shoreline from wind-induced wave erosion, sustain and augment fisheries habitat, buffer against storms and limit wave fetch to reduce vegetation loss. The Ponchartrain Conservancy received \$450k; Lowlander Center- \$885k; Grand Isle Independent Levee District - \$607k and Ducks Unlimited granted \$6.2 million. In Mr. Ledet’s update on the Annual Plan, he stated that the sooner public comments are submitted, the better.



PERMANENT CANAL CLOSURES AND PUMPS
PHASE II: DELIVER THE PROJECT AS DESIGNED

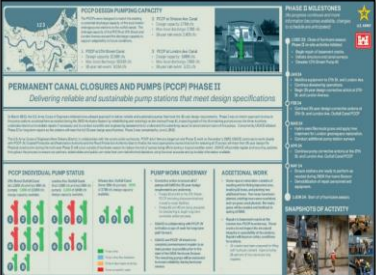
Mission: Multi-year effort to ensure all 17 pumps are sustainable, reliable and fulfill the 35-year design requirements.

- ONGOING:** Finalizing the path forward.
- MOVING OUT:** Pumps Disassembled and Applying Recoating.

To prevent increased risk during hurricane season, onsite work that impacts interior drainage will be limited to outside of hurricane season (Dec 1 to May 31).

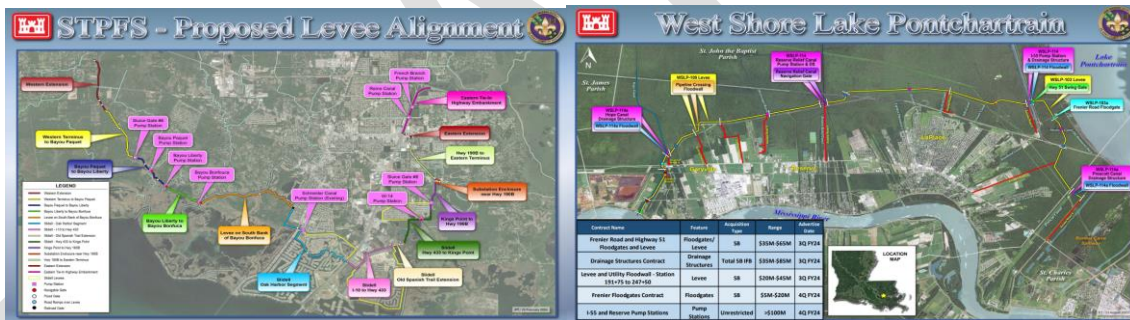
PERMANENT CANAL CLOSURES AND PUMPS
Cooperation, Collaboration and Communication



Our Commitment

- Ensure open and transparent communication throughout the process
- Provide regular and recurring updates to partners, stakeholders and the public

Colonel Jones also provided updates on the STPFS-Proposed Levee Alignment as well as the West Shore Lake Ponchartrain Projects (slides below). With the STPFS, the USACE has been able to give a recommended plan but they're going to look at construction of a west south side of an 18.5 miles of revenues, flood walls, drainage structures, new pump stations, and then complementing that with the ability to provide non structural solutions for about 6,500 residents in St. Tammany parish. The Colonel stated that about 60,000 residents are going to see a deduction of storm risk in that area where they have not seen it in the near future. In regards to the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain project, there is continued momentum on this project. Another 18.5 mile of levee system of flood walls, drainage structures, and rink lakes are currently supporting St. James Parish. Once again, another 60,000 residents in south Louisiana across those three parishes. In closing, the Colonel stated that last year, they received a record amount of awards; there were \$330 million dollars across eight contracts and five ongoing.



VIII. Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board Presentation- Samantha Carroll, LSP& MB (video: 01:08:23)

Ms. Carroll presented a video on behalf of the LA Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board and other seafood industry members who have voiced their concerns regarding the diversion project. In her introduction, Ms. Carroll stated that she is not only the Exec. Dir of the Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board, but that she is also a restaurant owner and as an owner here in Louisiana, she strives to represent the Louisiana culture in their cuisine. Ms. Carroll stated that there are adverse impacts to oyster fisheries, shrimp industry, estuaries, and to take into consideration the human aspect. Mr. Malone former board member of the seafood marketing board stated that his family isn't in favor of the project and feels that it will cost the industry millions of dollars.

IX. Conservation and Restoration Partnership Fund – Brandon Champagne, CPRA (video: 02:04:33)

Mr. Champagne updated the board on the Conservation and Restoration Partnership Fund Program and it's FY24 Awards. Since 2008, CPRA has contributed over \$13 million in funding to 23 non-federal partners and their projects through the Partnership Fund program. Mr. Champagne indicated that through the FY24 Conservation and Restoration Partnership Fund, CPRA is providing \$1,000,000 in matching funds for projects aimed at coastal conservation and restoration. CPRA uses this program funding to further leverage its funds to achieve its coastal restoration goals. He



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stated that the proposals were evaluated with the following criteria and considerations: Consistent with the goals and objectives of 2023 Master Plan, acreage conserved or restored, synergy with other conservation and restoration efforts, project constructability and matching funds.

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FY24 Partnership Fund Selected Projects

Partner and Project Name	Award	Match
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana – Lake Boudreaux Marsh Restoration	\$50,483	\$27,940
Duck's Unlimited – At Airport Canal Wetlands Enhancement II and Port Fourchon Terracing II	\$413,242	\$5,332,227
Portchartrain Conservancy – Bucktown Marina Habitat Restoration	\$95,936	\$44,000
Restore or Retreat – West Cutoff Levee and West Grand Tote Shoreline Stabilization	\$30,887	\$19,983
The Nature Conservancy – West Cove Oyster Reef Restoration (Phase IV)	\$326,484	\$700,000
Tulane (in Partnership with ReCoast, Common Ground, CRCL, and CSED) – Mitigation of Land Loss by Strengthening Eroding Marsh	\$82,967	\$61,722
Total	\$1,000,000	\$6,185,872



Selected Projects Outcomes Cont.

- 60+ acres of vegetative plantings that will support earthen terraces and levees and enhance habitats including marsh, swamp, barrier islands, coastal forests
- Over 10,000 linear ft of terraces
- 1.5 miles of oyster reef

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X. Federal Update – Neal McMillin, DENR (video: 01:08:23) Mr. McMillin provided the board with an update on matters at the Federal level. He stated that as many know by now, Cong. Mike Johnson of Louisiana’s 4th District was elected as the first Speaker of the House from the Pelican State on Oct 25, 2023. He stated that with retirements and the expelling of a member, Speaker Johnson will now face an even tighter majority than the former speaker. With a full Congress, a majority must have 218 members. With three vacancies, Speaker Johnson can only lose up to two votes if everyone is present. FY24 Appropriations: While the border and foreign policy have been major issues during his Speakership, funding the government is the urgent issue. Currently, the federal government is scheduled to shut down partially on March 1 and fully on March 8. Earmarks such as those supporting Louisiana Army Corps projects or proposed funding to CPRA for monitoring equipment would not be passed through a CR. Mr. McMillin also provided the board with the outcome of his and former Chairman Bren Haase attending the Sen. Environment and Public Works Committee: On November 29, 2023, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing titled “WRDA 2024: Stakeholder Feedback on USACE Project Partnership Agreements.” Takeaways from CPRA Chairman Bren Haase Testimony--Louisiana’s Experience: Since 2007, CPRA has signed approximately 40 PPAs, Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreements, Design Agreements, and Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement. Activate Flexibilities: Congress should encourage USACE to use the flexibilities given to adapt agreements to the unique circumstances of a project. Beneficial for USACE to allow for a “deviation” from a model agreement to improve projects. Address Deficiencies: Agreements should provide recourse to the non-Federal sponsor when there are federally-led deficiencies that impact the success of the project, including related to liability. Increase Transparency: Non-Federal sponsors should receive better insight into federal expenses, since the sponsor must supply its cost share even when project costs escalate. Right-sizing Land Rights: Full fee title ownership of a project’s area is not a fit for many ecosystem restoration projects. Crediting: Agreements should have provisions to allow the non-Federal sponsor to easily receive all due credit. Empower District Commander: The USACE District should have the ability to make many of these judgements. Mr. McMillin also updated on CPRA’s request for WRDA 2024, Offshore Energy and the Increased Support for RISEE Act. On January 11, 2024, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing titled “Examining the Biden Administration’s Limits on Access to the OCS: Impacts on Consumers, States, and Operators.” Key hearing theme was the revenue impacts to states and localities from the reduced offshore oil and gas leasing scheduled through the Department of Interior’s 2024-2029 National Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program, which was finalized on December 14, 2023. (see slides below).



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Haase Testimony on CPRA's PPA Experience

Takeaways from CPRA Chairman Brian Haase Testimony

- **Louisiana's Experience:** Since 2007, CPRA has signed approximately 40 PPAs, Feasibility Cost Sharing Agreements, Design Agreements, and Memoranda of Understanding Agreements.
- **Activate Flexibilities:** Congress should encourage USACE to use the flexibilities given to adapt agreements to the unique circumstances of a project. Beneficial for USACE to allow for a "deviation" from a model agreement to improve projects.
- **Address Deficiencies:** Agreements should provide recourse to the non-Federal sponsor when there are federally-led deficiencies that impact the success of the project, including related to liability.
- **Increase Transparency:** Non-Federal sponsors should receive better insight into federal expenses, since the sponsor must supply its cost share even when project costs escalate.
- **Right-Strong Land Rights:** Full fee title ownership of a project's area is not a fit for many ecosystem restoration projects.
- **Cost-Share:** Agreements should have provisions to allow the non-Federal sponsor to easily receive all due credit.
- **Empower District Commander:** The USACE District should have the ability to make many of these judgments.



Earlier today, CPRA Chairman Brian Haase testified before the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works in order to provide the non-federal sponsor experience related to negotiating Project Partnership Agreements. See full testimony here: <https://bit.ly/3G17X3I>



CPRA's Requests for WRDA 2024

Request	Policy Goal
Address RESTORE Act Eligibility for Cost Sharing	Provide clarity that RESTORE's Council-Selected Restoration Component (bucket 2) funds can be used as a non-Federal cost share for USACE projects, such as the Maurepas Swamp Freshwater Diversion for West Shore Lake Pontchartrain project.
Include Pointe Celeste Pumping Station in NOV	Have USACE direct funding from the \$783 million allocated to New Orleans to Venice (NOV) project from 2021 Disaster Supplemental funding to revitalize/replace the Pointe Celeste Pumping Station in Plaquemines Parish.
Authorize Lake Pontchartrain Barrier Study	Have USACE take a fresh look at the Lake Pontchartrain Barrier project as envisioned in 2023 Coastal Master Plan.
Authorize St. Tammany Parish Study for Construction	Allow USACE to initiate construction on the St. Tammany project to construct a levee around Slidell and conduct nonstructural home elevations across the parish.
Allow Segmented Environmental Review for Hurricane Risk Reduction Projects	Provide USACE with the ability to expedite construction on discrete elements of major (\$500M+) hurricane and storm damage risk reduction projects, before the completion of the comprehensive environmental impact statements. All determined mitigation would still be required to be fulfilled. Morganza to the Gulf would be an example beneficiary.

CPRA's Requests for WRDA 2024

Request	Policy Goal
Continue Non-Federal Implementation Pilot Program (Section 1043)	Keep authority active, allow new entries into this pilot program, increase available funding, enable non-Federal sponsors to use this for separable elements, and set up process for Louisiana Coastal Area similar to the Everglades.
Clarify HSDRRS Payback Terms	Clean up the deferred payment agreement language to ensure that Louisiana actions have fulfilled the terms, as well ensure credits obtained endure and are able to be used flexibly.
Tie Upper Barataria Basin in to Morganza to the Gulf	Connect the two USACE projects to address the gap between the two levee systems.
Extend Rehabilitation of Existing Levees Authority	Allow the USACE to continue to lift levees such as LPV and WBV to the design elevation for decades to come.
Address Work in Kind related to O&M of Fuel Taxed Inland Waterways	Enable SLFRW to receive credit for Work in Kind conducted since 2014 on certain structures, that USACE has the obligation to conduct O&M.
Expand Alexandria to the Gulf Study Territory	Adjust the scope of this study to align with the 16-parish territory covered by Louisiana Watershed Initiative Region 5.

Increased Support for RISEE Act

Senate RISEE Act added the cosponsorship of Senators Gary Peters (D-MI) and Peter Welch (D-VT). There are now 25 Senators signed on (19 D and 6 R).

House RISEE Act added the cosponsorship of Representatives Jim Himes (D-CT), John Garamendi (D-CA), Mike Thompson (D-CA), Gerald Connolly (D-VA), Ted Lieu (D-CA), Pat Ryan (D-NY), Jerry Nadler (D-NY), Marcus Molinaro (R-NY), Hillary Scholten (D-MI), and Gregory Meeks (D-NY). A total of 31 House members have signed on (25 D and 6 R).



House Oversight Hearing on Offshore Energy

On January 11, 2024, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources held a hearing titled "Examining the Biden Administration's Limits on Access to the OCS: Impacts on Consensus, States, and Operations."

Key hearing theme was the revenue impacts to states and localities from the reduced offshore oil and gas leasing scheduled through the Department of Interior's 2024-2029 National Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Gas Leasing Program, which was finalized on December 14, 2023.

Notable Quotes

"This puts funding for initiatives like GOMESA and the Land and Water Conservation Fund at risk, undermining future coastal conservation and restoration efforts."
HNR EMR Subcommittee Chairman Pete Stauber (R-MN)

"Biden Administration policies are undermining goals like coastal conservation and hurricane protection, wildlife habitat enhancements, recreation, public lands access, and water resources management."
HNR Committee Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-AR)

"We expect GOMESA revenue sharing to be fully funded for the foreseeable future."
Dr. Walter Cruckshank, Deputy Director of Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.



XI. Public Comment

XII. Adjourn

Motion by: Ms. Gautreaux

Second by: Mr. Hidalgo

Meeting video: