



Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority



Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority Board Meeting

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 at 9:30 AM

State Capitol Building

House Committee Room 1

Baton Rouge, LA 708002

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
Dustin Davidson for Sec. Tyler Gray, DENR	Present
Cole Garrett for Sec. Shehan, LDWF	Present
Sec. Giacometto & Mr. Lang, DEQ	Present
Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser	Absent
Tony Alford, Gov's Advisory Comm	Present
Pres. Matthew Jewell, Barataria Basin	Present
Cong. Joseph Cao, Pontchartrain Basin	Absent
Chad Courville Teche/Vermillion	Present
Dwayne Bourgeois, Terrebonne Basin	Present
Bill Hidalgo, Atchafalaya Basin	Present
Laurie Cormier, Calcasieu/Sabine Basin	Present
Robert Jordan Teche/Vermillion Parish	Present
John Lane, Breton Sound Basin	Present
Rep. Zeringue, Ex-officio, Designee of the Speaker of the House	Absent
Sen. Hensgens, Ex-officio, Designee of the President of the Senate	Present

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion by: Mr. Mr. Hidalgo

Seconded by: Mr. Jordan

Unanimously Approved

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion by: Mr. Bourgeois

Seconded by: Mr. Hidalgo

Unanimously Approved

V. Old Business/Announcements

- **CPRA Implementation Update — Glenn Ledet, Jr., CPRA (video: 00:31:19)** Mr. Ledet updated the board on the latest progress of various projects around the coast. CPRA has 107 Active Projects with 43 of them are in construction, 59 in engineering and design, with 5 more in the planning stage. Of the projects now being constructed 33 are hurricane protection projects and 36 are creating marsh. Marsh creation leads the way in E&D with 26 projects moving toward the construction phase. Mr. Ledet announced that CPRA Awarded the Construction Contract for the First Increment of River Reintroduction Into Maurepas Swamp to



South-Louisiana-based Phylway Construction, LLC who will complete “Reach 6” of the project, which includes clearing, excavating, and building guide levees through approximately three miles of Hope Canal between U.S. 61, Airline Highway, and Interstate 10. The MSP is a 2,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) freshwater diversion located on the East Bank of the Mississippi River in St. John the Baptist Parish. The project will reconnect the Mississippi River to the Maurepas Swamp and revitalize over 45,000 acres with freshwater, sediment and nutrients to nourish the area, one of the largest and last remaining coastal freshwater swamps in Louisiana. Mr. Ledet also highlighted and provided **Construction Updates** on the following projects: **Southwest Coastal: Coastal Storm Risk Management-** This project is headed to construction, and has an estimated cost of \$4.998M; **No Name Bayou Marsh Creation:** Now in construction with an estimated cost of \$14.7M. **Cameron Gulf Shoreline (to be bid in the next 6 months)** -This project involves the construction of 5,294 linear feet of breakwater structures along the Gulf of Mexico shoreline in Cameron Parish to reduce erosion at Rutherford, Long, and Little Florida beaches. The project will provide a benefited value to 24 acres of marsh and prevent/minimize shoreline retreat.; **Ludevine Pump Station:** This project is now in construction with an estimated cost of \$7M.; **Bayou Pigeon Boat Launch:** To be bid in the next 2 months. He also provided an **Engineering & Design Update on the Bird’s Foot Delta Hydrologic Restoration:** Project is undergoing alternative analysis at this time. The project team is meeting with stakeholders to receive input on the alternatives before a preferred alternative is selected (this includes the USACE and MS River Navigation interests). **Restoration Update- Grand Isle Dune and Beach Construction:** Dredging is currently ongoing in Grand Isle to restore the beach and dune...they started from the west end and are moving eastward, at the western end of the beach and moving eastward. Overall, the Grand Isle project includes installation of 20,000LF of clay filled geotextile dune core, repairs to the existing sand-filled geo-tube core, and dredged placement of sand to restore the dune and beach in Grand Isle. **Grand Isle Segemented Breakwaters Update:** Breakwater report went to USACE last week with deadline of 26th, ahead of schedule on CPRA side. Breakwaters had neutral results in terms of sediment trapping. **Lake Borgne Marsh Creation:** Lake Borgne is a critical first line of defense from hurricanes and other storms in the Gulf of Mexico that threaten the southeast part of the state. The large-scale marsh creation was outlined in the Final Restoration Plan prepared by the Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group and is funded by dollars resulting from the aftermath of the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill allocated by the NRDA program. The historic Lake Borgne Marsh Creation project is Louisiana’s largest marsh creation effort by acreage to date. The Project is approximately 63% complete (by fill volume), 3 Marsh Creation Areas (MCA) fully completed at the moment including the largest at 855 acres. Overall approximately 1,305 acres complete. **Mississippi River Reintroduction Into Bayou LaFourche:** The MRRBL Program was the outcome of a comprehensive study completed in 2005, which recommended improvements to ensure a long term supply of fresh water to the Bayou Region. The program is included in CPRA’s 2023 Master Plan as a measure to combat saltwater intrusion in the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins. The program cost: \$230,000,000 total with \$155M (65%) with 35% work remaining (\$75M). **Bayou Lafourche: Pumping Capacity Improvements:** Installing 24” piles for pump station foundation, to be followed in July with installation of sheetpile walls for the temporary restraining structure. Filling/grading permanent ramp on protected side of MSR Levee. Mr. Ledet by providing additional CPRA Updates: CPRA had the pleasure of hosting the Mandela Washington Fellowship Program for Young African Leaders and the Louisiana Governor’s Fellows Program at the LSU Center for River Studies.

- vi. **Restoration of the Chandeleur Islands – Rudy Simoneaux, CPRA & Matt Weigel, LDWF (video: 00:30:14)**
Mr. Weigel provided the board with the Habitat Goals for P0-199 (Living Coastal Marine Resources Restoration) which are to Restore and Conserve Bird Nesting and Foraging Habitat (restore and enhance submerged aquatic vegetation; enhance sea turtle hatching productivity and restore and conserve nesting



beach habitat; and to create, restore,, and enhance barrier and coastal islands and headlands). The Chandeleur Island (13.5mi long) is located approximately 75mi off of the Louisiana coast and is Louisiana's largest barrier island which is the 1st line of defense for the New Orleans, St. Bernard, and Plaquemines Parish's areas. Mr Weigel also pointed out a few significances of the Chandeleur Islands: The "only Federal Wilderness Area" in Louisiana; has the largest and most diverse assemblage of seagrass in the Northern Gulf of Mexico (only true seagrass in Louisiana); home of 79 "Species of Greatest conservation need" including 7 "Species of Global Importance". There are over 250,000 birds annually that visit the island with the largest colonial bird nesting area in the Northern Gulf of Mexico. The Piping Plover & Red Knot are 2 Federally listed species. Mr. Weigel also shared that the island is popular for sea turtle nesting (only sea turtle nesting location in Louisiana) with 3 species (Kemp's Ridley, Loggerhead, and Green Sea Turtle) nesting. There have been 125 crawls documented (second highest sea turtle crawl density in Northern Gulf of Mexico) with the Kemp's Ridley turtles being the most endangered sea turtle in the world. Mr. Simoneaux gave a Design Update for Chandeleur Island, in Phase 1, they were able to start Q4 2021/Completed Q1 2023; conceptual design; design scoping; review of existing data/development of data collection plans; stakeholder engagement and partnerships. In Phase 2, Q2 2023 was started; data collection; alternatives development of analysis; permitting; preliminary/final design and construction is scheduled for Q4 2025. He also provided 4 Alternatives (no action; sand reservoirs; Big Island & Pocket Marshes and Feeder Beach). Mr. Simoneaux also walked the members through the CMAR Process and the CMAR Process Next Steps which are to Develop CMAR RFQ Package/Solicitation (complete); Advertise CMAR RFQ; Receive, Score, Rank Statements of Qualifications; Select CMAR Contractor/Pre-Construction Phase Contract; CMAR Contractor Integration with Project Team.

- vii. **Basin Updates: Calcasieu-Sabine Basin Landloss – Leigh Anne Sharp, CPRA (video:01:13:50)** Ms. Sharp gave the board an overview of the Calcasieu Sabine Basin Landloss. Data Review shows Land Changes at CRMS Sites (2005-2021) is an emerging landloss hotspot. She stated that Potential Solutions are: Basin Scale hydrologic restoration (Calcasieu-Sabine Large-scale Marsh and Hydrologic Restoration. CPRA monitors land change and processes associated with land change in order to understand and prevent future land loss. By design, monitoring allows for assessment at multiple scales (Can assess trends at Site, Project, Marsh Type, Basin, and Coastwide scales). Ms. Sharp also updated that CRMS Land Change 2005 to 2021 has had ongoing land loss on lower Deltaic Plain with little change in swamps and most inland areas. Land gain in active deltas, recovering marshes and creation areas.
- viii. **Presentation on Fisheries Sampling (Electrofisher) – Christopher Schieble, LDWF (video:01:39:00)**
Electrofishing Mr. Schieble updated the board on Fisheries Sampling by way of Electrofishing. Electrofishing (fish shocking, pond shocking, shocking up fish) uses an electrical current to capture fish in your pond or lake. The current temporarily stuns the fish and makes them available for capture with a dip net. The process is safe and harmless to the fish. After capture, fish can be directly evaluated. This allows for collection of a larger sample, and a wider population sample than normal fishing would provide. Electrofishing also provides a unique opportunity to gather a volume of information about fish population, otherwise unavailable. This information allows our biologists to make professional recommendations.



Beginning in 2018, the LDWF Marine Fisheries Division began a comprehensive monthly electrofishing sampling survey in the Barataria Bay estuary utilizing standardized quantitative electrofishing gear at established seine stations. Standard seine samples were also collected at each station allowing monthly side-by-side comparisons of catch rates and variability in catches across these gears and stations through June 2023. When compared to the seine catch rates, the electrofishing samples had substantial increases in catch rates for all assessment species, with the exception of Black Drum and Gulf Menhaden. He stated that a Juvenile Sportfish Electrofishing Proposal has been prepared to inventory and monitor the relative abundance and distribution of young of the year and juvenile life states of stock assessment species (Spotted Seatrout, Red Drum, Sheepshead, Striped Mullet and Southern Flounder) for developing indices of relative abundance for use in stock assessment.

- ix. **Federal Update – Neal McMillin, DENR (video: 01:43:12)** Mr. McMillin provided a brief update the board on the Oversight Hearing on Protect Labor Agreements and Developments on Revenue Sharing. On June 27th, Glenn Ledet-Exec. Dir of CPRA testified before the House Committee on Oversight’s Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, IT, and Government Innovation Hearing and it’s impacts of Pres. Biden’s EO 14063 that mandates Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) on any federal construction contract over \$35M. Currently, the West Shore Lake Pontchartrain and SELA are at the stage where they are likely to be affected by this Executive Order. Other projects could be impacted should the PLA rule continue into the future. CPRA is concerned about the potential for cost escalation, reduced bid submissions, project delays, and reduced opportunities with the local workforce. Since CPRA is a non-federal sponsor for Army Corps Civil works projects, the State of Louisiana is affected by these requirements for major construction projects. Mr. McMillin also gave a brief update on the RISEE Act, the Act has been filed as amendment to Senate Defense bill. On July 11, Senator Shelton Whitehouse and Senator Bill Cassidy filed the RISEE Act as Senate Amendment 2263 to the FY2025 National Defense Authorization Act. The RISEE Act Amendment will still need to be offset to be accepted in NDAA, as well as have the good fortune of being accepted as a germane item. In closing, Mr. McMillin stated that Upcoming Offshore Wind Lease Sale-Central Atlantic has 101,443 acres to be offered for auction on August 14th. If offshore wind revenue sharing had been enacted states involved would include Maryland and Delaware, as well as potentially New Jersey and Virginia.

- x. **Public Comment**

- xi. **Adjourn**
Motion by: Mr. Courville
Seconded by: Mr. Bourgeois/unanimously approved