



# Governor's Advisory Commission

## On Coastal Protection, Restoration, and Conservation

June 4, 2024

9:30AM

Center for Coastal & Deltaic Solutions (Estuary Room)

1110 River Road S.

Baton Rouge, LA 70802

The following constitute minutes of the Governor's Advisory Commission on Coastal Protection, Restoration, and Conservation 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 in Baton Rouge, LA.

## AGENDA

### I. Welcome and Call to Order (*Pledge & Prayer*)—Chair Alford

### II. Roll Call

Mr. Tony Alford (Chair) ✓  
Ms. Angela Hidalgo ✓  
Mr. Alfred Sunseri (absent)  
Mr. Arthur Johnson ✓  
Sen. Bob Hengens (absent)  
Rep. Brett Geymann (absent)  
Capt. Michael Bopp ✓  
Mr. Chad Courville ✓  
Mr. Chett Chiasson ✓  
Mr. Chris Macaluso ✓  
Ms. Cynthia Duet ✓  
Mr. David Cresson ✓  
Mr. H. Dale Hall ✓  
Ms. Jeannette Dubinin (absent)  
Ms. Jessica Dandridge ✓  
Ms. Joni Tuck ✓  
Rep. Joe Orgeron ✓  
Ms. Karen Gautreaux ✓  
Ms. Katie Armentor ✓  
Ms. Kelli Chandler ✓  
Ms. Kristi Trail ✓  
Sen. Mike Fesi ✓  
Rep. Patrick Connick (absent)  
Mr. Paul Matthews (absent)  
Mr. Ralph Babin (resigned)  
Rep. Ryan Bourriaque (absent)  
Ms. Simone Maloz (absent)

Ms. Stephanie Ferry (absent)  
Mr. Stephen Cochran ✓  
Mr. William O'neal (absent)

### III. Approval of Agenda

Motion to adopt: Ms. Karen Gautreaux  
2<sup>nd</sup>: Mr. Chett Chiasson

### IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion to adopt: Ms. Angela Hidalgo (Mr. Cochran requested an edit regarding the Hypoxia resolution; edit was made after the 2023 Commission meeting and confirmed). 2<sup>nd</sup>: Ms. Joni Tuck

### V. Old Business/ Announcements—Office of the Governor

### VI. Recent Progress and A Look Ahead—Glenn Ledet, Jr., and Bren Haase, CPRA

- a. Mr. Ledet and Mr. Haase presented to the commission CPRA's latest accomplishments, highlighting that some of the dedicated revenues from all of sorts of revenues and how those resources have allotted CPRA to build transformative projects across our coast (Queen Bess, Rabbit Island; great for bird nesting habitat and community resilience; Spanish Pass etc.). Since 2007, Louisiana's Coastal Program has secured \$21.6B in funding; 67, 200 acres of land benefited, 214M cubic yards of fill utilized; 71.6 miles of Barrier Island & Berms constructed; and 383 miles of Levee Improved. Mr. Ledet also announced that the Master Plan & FY 2025 Annual Plan (\$1.71 Billion Investment In our Coast) unanimously passed the 2024 Regular Legislative Session. Mr. Haase provided an overview of the good work CPRA has produced over the past two decades. Mr. Haase stated that over the decades, CPRA has had some very technically sound processes to plan, evaluate and drive forward our coastal program that have really been the result of Louisiana's comprehensive master plan for a sustainable coast (it's a living document). Mr. Haase stated that with a resource limited environment (finances), the program has to figure out a way to try and make the best decisions, marrying the master plan projects with the funding sources. Almost \$1.4B is going toward constructing projects so that's close to 80% of those revenues expecting to put projects on the ground over the next year. If you include planning, and engineering related cost that number rises above 90%... that's where they want to be. The funding sources that make up the \$1.7B are: State Mineral Revenue; NFWF, CWPRA; NRDA; GOMESA, and RESTORE.

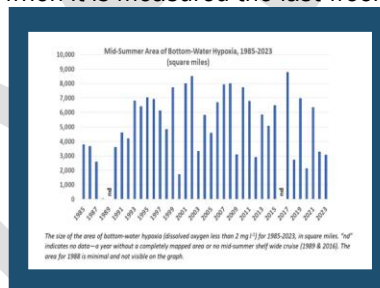


- b. Recent Project Success: Mr. Ledet provided the following information regarding projects that CPRA are either building or looking forward to building FY 25. In the Master Plan they identify projects across the coast and through the process \$25B in restoration and, also \$25B in risk reduction. Mr. Ledet stated that CPRA along with their Federal partners now have projects across the coast from SW Coastal (which is a nonstructural flood risk reduction program as well as an ecosystem restoration program-four upcoming meetings in Cameron Parish to start working towards home elevations, with USACE leading the implementation) all the way to St. Tammany, Texas and Mississippi. In addition to that, in the west part of the state one of the projects CPRA will be finishing this FY is the Long Point Bayou Marsh Creation project in Southwest Louisiana (beneficial use dredge project). Moving to South Central Louisiana, The Morganza to the Gulf System is a 98-mile levee system that protects two parishes and three Levee Districts, and over 200,000 residents. The Humble Canal project is a part of the overall final federal

system so it's the first to get preloaded site ready for the floodgate (complete). The Reach A contract went to advertisement in May 2024 (Fed Funds Appropriated: \$469M). The HNC Lock Complex (one of the largest restore grants that has ever been received). West Belle Headland Project (FEMA Grant used to restore); Mr. Ledet also updated on the Upper Barataria Risk Reduction project (35-mile levee segment that goes from St. Martin to the Gulf; collaboration w/ USACE and progress will be made over the next couple of years); West Shore Lake Ponchartrain (number of segments that are under construction and being advertised and awarded right now). River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp is (working time credit for Maurepas as well as the mitigation system. The project is being advertised and expecting to be awarded this summer). Funding Updates: WRDA 2024 (working with Mr. McMillin to get key projects access the coast authorized); working with Congress/ USACE to get appropriations for some of CPRA's key projects (Water Resources Projects). Rep. Orgeron made a brief update on HB's 300 & HB 305 that passed this legislative session.

**VII. Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan Update—Doug Daigle, Louisiana Hypoxia Working Group**

- a. Mr. Daigle provided the commission with a brief background on the Hypoxia Working Group which was established in 2003. The group's responsibilities are to organize, and implement the action plan Louisiana now operates (LSU).
- b. The Gulf Hypoxia Action Plan (2000-2035) is analogous to a treaty, with commitments and obligations for signing parties. Core commitment: to help reach the Plan's Goals Baseline requirement for reaching Plan's Goals – adequate if not full funding. 2025 Target not a priority for the Hypoxia Task Force from 2015 to present – no attempt by HTF or LA to raise implementation funds from Congress.
- c. Louisiana has a large area of low oxygen that forms off the coast every year and it's fueled by loading of nutrients out of the Mississippi River Basin which includes Ohio and it's mainly nitrogen and phosphorus. It affects marine life and can pose a threat to our commercial and recreational fisheries and seafood industries. The warmer temperatures are causing the plant and animal organisms living in the lower waters of the Gulf shelf to use up less oxygen.
- d. The hypoxia committee set the target for 2025 of achieving a 20% reduction of nitrogen. LSU scientists shows the dead zone could be a record low size of only 1,972 square miles. A more definitive answer will be provided when it is measured the last week of July.



**VIII. CPRA Dredging Update—Rudy Simoneaux, CPRA**

- a. Mr. Simoneaux provided an update to the Commission on dredging indicating that since 2007, CPRA has constructed hydraulic dredging projects with 18 Barrier Island/Headland Projects; 38 Marsh Creation Projects; Nearly 30,000 acres marsh/beach/dune/ridge habitat created with a total investment = \$2.6B.
- b. The Mississippi River Long Distance Sediment Pipeline in Plaquemines Parish and the Bayou DeCade Ridge and Marsh Creation in Terrebonne Parish were done with a Hydraulic Dredging-Cutter Suction. The Cameron Parish Shoreline Restoration project was done with a Trailing Suction Hopper.
- c. Mr. Simoneaux presented on Barrier Island Restoration and Marsh Creation using the examples of The West Grand Terre Beach Nourishment in Jefferson Parish, Barataria Basin Ridge & Marsh Creation at Spanish Pass in Plaquemines Parish, and Lake Borgne Marsh Creation in St. Bernard Parish. In the FY 2025 Annual Plan, in the Southeast Region. The Mississippi River Dredging- Alliance/LDSP Marsh Creation: 6 Marsh Creation Projects; 3 Construction Contracts; Nearly 3000 acres created; Construction Cost- \$332 Million.

- d. Recenet Cost/Bid Trends (see slides below):

### Cost/Bid Trends – All Projects

#### CPRA Bidding Summary (Q1 2022– Present):

- Bids Opened:	20 Projects
- Total of Project Bid Costs (low bid):	\$319,219,099
- Total of Engineers' Estimates:	\$268,295,857
- % Difference:	19%
- Total Deficit:	\$50,923,242
- Un-awarded Bids:	2 Projects

### Cost/Bid Trends – Hydraulic Dredging Only

#### CPRA Bidding Summary (Q1 2022 – Present):

- Bids Opened:	6 Projects
- Total of Project Bid Costs (low bid):	\$188,634,932
- Total of Engineers' Estimates:	\$168,556,704
- % Difference:	12%
- Total Deficit:	\$20,078,228
- Un-awarded Bids:	0 Projects

## IX. Houma Navigation Canal Complex Update—Reggie Dupre, Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District

- Mr. Dupre provided the Commission with an update regarding the HNC Lock Complex project. TLCD awarded the construction contract, valued at more than \$300 million, to Sea Level Construction, Inc., a Louisiana-based company headquartered in Thibodaux. The HNC Lock Complex is a large-scale hydrologic restoration project that will help limit saltwater intrusion and distribute freshwater within the Terrebonne Basin, allowing for the maintenance of thousands of acres of wetlands, which serve as critical wildlife habitat and nurseries for fisheries. Once constructed, the HNC Lock Complex will span 110 feet across and stand 800 feet high with gates on either side, directly adjacent to the existing 250-foot-wide Bubba Dove barge floodgate.
- This effort is being funded through a grant using funds from the Spill Impact Component of the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE Act) administered by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council). This is the largest grant awarded by the RESTORE Council for any project to date.
- Highlighted in both Louisiana's 2023 Coastal Master Plan and 2023 Annual Plan, the HNC Lock Complex is a key component of the Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection system and will offer ecological protection and economic benefits. It will have huge environmental benefits as well as providing a major safe harbor for mariners during tropics emergencies throughout South Central Louisiana. This project protects people, property, culture, economy, and the coast.



## X. Port Fourchon Partner Update—Chett Chiasson, Exec. Director, Greater Lafourche Port Commission

- Mr. Chiasson presented to the commission and stated that it's critically important for us to continue to utilize our navigation channels as sources of sediment where we can use \$1 for mutual benefits of both environmental benefits and economic benefits so continuing that momentum is a greatly appreciated.
- The Port is just along the Gulf of Mexico. IT's at the mouth of Bayou Lafourche and Belle Pass and everyday (other than a hurricane) it's the best place to be both recreationally and when it comes to daily servicing of offshore energy as well as a jumping off point for a lot of recreational and commercial fishing.

- c. Mr. Chiasson informed the commission that The Greater Lafourche Port Commission announced it was a recipient of \$1.5 million in funds under the Federal Aviation Administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Airport Terminals Program (ATP) earlier this year.
- d. Mr. Chiasson stated that the Ports Holistic Resiliency: Resilient by design, Port Fourchon's facilities and developed properties are designed to a higher standard. Green Infrastructure=Resiliency: The vibrant marsh and chenier ridge platform had once degraded into open water. Through mitigation works completed in conjunction with the expansion of Port Fourchon, 1,200+ acres of wetlands have been restored to the landscape. Those wetlands now help protect the port. Mitigation and Restoration at Port Fourchon is done in a way which restores the historic landscape.
- e. The Maritime Forest Ridge: Beyond Mitigation-Port Fourchon worked in conjunction with several public and private partners to complete this innovative restoration project.
- f. Mr. Chiasson also highlighted Coastal Wetlands Park-Port Fourchon development is planned purposefully for both industry and environment, with the intent to use every grain of sediment in a beneficial manner. For Slip D construction, dredged material was used to create a park area with over 100 acres of purpose-built wetlands, including a manmade tidal creek and a kayak launch.
- g. In closing, Mr. Chiasson updated on the Fourchon Beach Repair Project: ~\$17M project, with majority of funding coming from FEMA, to include: \$2 million Greater Lafourche Port Commission Funds; \$2 million Lafourche Parish Government (GOMESA); and \$2 million from CPRA Annual Plan (Surplus funds).



## XI. Adjourn

Motion: Ms. Gautreaux/ 2<sup>nd</sup>:Mr. Courville

Unanimously approved: members