

Action Summary

Acadiana Watershed District Technical Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



10am-12pm, Thursday, July 30th, 2026
Rosa Parks Transportation Center
101 Jefferson St.
Lafayette, LA 70501



AGENDA, NOTES AND DECISIONS

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION
CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME	The meeting was called to order at 10:06am by Kelia Bingham, Watershed Coordinator. Opening Statement: <i>" Welcome to public meeting of the Acadiana Watershed District's Technical Advisory Committee Meeting. I am Kelia Bingham, Watershed Coordinator of the District.</i> <i>Agendas are available at the room's entrance and were made available through the AWD email distribution list and online at planacadiana.org. For our records to reflect your attendance, please sign-in at the table and any Board or TAC members online, please add your name to the chat box.</i> <i>The purpose of this public meeting is to consider items established by the agenda. Public input is welcome on these matters. For those wishing to speak in-person, please complete a speaker card and present it to the APC staff. Comments/questions will be read aloud during the public comment period. To ensure an orderly meeting, members of the public will speak at the time designated. Each organization may be permitted one representative to speak for 3 minutes on its behalf and individual public members are permitted 3 minutes. This will be strictly enforced. Thank you."</i>
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE	Kelia Bingham led the Pledge of Allegiance, and all stood and recited the pledge.
ROLL CALL	Roll call was taken by Kelia Bingham. Eight out of ten members were present.
MEETING MINUTES REVIEW	The April 30th TAC meeting minutes were reviewed Jessica Corany motioned to approve the minutes, and Brent Domingue seconded. All were in favor. VOTE: YEA – 8

	NAY – 0 ABSENT – 2
WATERSHED PROJECTS MODELING CONSULTANT	Fenstermaker has been chosen as the watershed modeling consultant to model the following projects: • Bayou Blue Drainage Project • Bayou Amy Water Control Project • Vermilion Flood Gate & Pump Project The estimate date of completion is October.
STATUS OF DISTRICT FUNDING	Kelia Bingham provided a status update of parishes who plan to pay into the District, based on per capita fees, for 2027. Eight parishes out of 16 stated they would pay into the district, two parishes declined, and the remaining six are undecided on waiting on confirmation. The district faces a funding sustainability challenge, with LWI funds expiring December 31 and a parish fee-based model under consideration; a critical decision deadline is set for the August 27th board meeting. Committee members discussed whether non-paying parishes could still participate in board representation and access district services, with the general understanding that paying parishes would receive greater benefits.
PROJECT PRE- PRIORITIZATION	Review of conceptual projects in the district's project inventory to identify regional priorities for future funding pursuit. Kelia Bingham highlighted Avoyelles Parish projects — Bayou Choctaw and Mills Bayou — originally presented in September 2022 by Jacob Coco, Kevin Bordelon and Jacob Guillory with Pan American Engineers. Both were submitted for LWI Round 2 but were not funded, potentially due to cost-benefit ratio issues. Dr. Emad Habib confirmed that UL Louisiana Watershed Flood Center conducted preliminary studies on these projects including Spring Bayou. Kelia Bingham noted that Bayou Choctaw drains a 45-mile pattern affecting Rapides and St. Landry Parishes, and Mills Bayou drains north to south eventually reaching St. Landry Parish — both are multi-parish in nature. Committee members noted that obstruction removal may be classified as maintenance and therefore ineligible for most grant funding; channel widening would be a different matter.

	Kimberly Bingham spoke on the Agriculture Temporary Flood Storage conceptual project (Acadia/Jeff Davis Parishes), originally presented by Alex Guillory with Blue Wing Consulting. This project could potentially involve approximately 350,000 acres of retention in the Mermentau Basin using rice/crawfish agricultural fields. Dustin Farmer and Cassidy Lejeune cautioned that the agricultural retention concept faces practical challenges due to the rice-crawfish rotation cycle; producers have limited fallow periods and cannot easily hold water on fields during field preparation and planting seasons. Offered to connect relevant stakeholders for further discussion. Donald Sagrera noted that levied agricultural fields inherently provide some retention even with open pipes, as drainage is naturally slowed. Dr. Emad Habib indicated that UL is conducting research on distributed detention and would report findings at a future meeting. The Avoyelles Parish projects (Bayou Choctaw and Mills Bayou) were identified as front-runner candidates due to their multi-parish impact and prior presentation momentum. Agricultural retention concept is promising but requires coordination with the rice-crawfish farming community before advancing. The AWD project inventory will be included in the regional watershed plan submitted to the State.
MONITORING GAUGES	APC continues to wait for FEMA's approval of the transfer of funds for the Acadiana Regional Gauge Network project. Once approval is granted, an RFP can be advertised to get gauges in the ground. There was a total of 100 proposed gauges, but only 82 remain. The gauges are a mixture of stage and flow gauges. The Teche-Vermilion Freshwater District (TVFWD) is taking over four USGS gauges abandoned due to federal staffing cuts, demonstrating the value of local gauge networks during recent flooding events. 1. Bayou Teche at Port Barre 2. Bayou Fuselier above weir 3. Vermilion River at Milton 4. Vermilion River at Woodlawn Donald Sagrea with TVFWD provided an update on the district's storm preparation protocol involving pre-storm water level reduction in Bayou Courtableau in coordination with the USACE. TVFW adopted a policy to reduce pumping and lower Bayou Courtableau to a minimum threshold level before an approaching storm. After approximately six months of evaluation, USACE agreed with the district's operating plan and volunteered to assist by operating their flood control structures locally, without requiring coordination through the New Orleans district. The pre-storm drawdown protocol with the Corps of Engineers is now operational and was successfully tested.

LWI REGION 6 – FUTURE PROJECT, BAYOU SORRELL PUMP STATION	Kelia Bingham explained that Region 6's proposed Bayou Sorrel pump station (modeled by Moffatt and Nichol) could reduce flood depth in Iberville and Pointe Coupee Parishes but may increase water flow into the Atchafalaya Basin, affecting parts of Region 5 within the KBM Watershed District. The original LWI regional models assumed no flow across the Region 5/Region 6 boundary, so the impact has not been modeled. Region 6 has written letters to DOTD and OCD requesting funds to model the project's effects on Region 5. Inter-regional coordination is underway; additional modeling funds are being sought to assess Region 5 impacts before the project advances. These early communication between regions is a positive example of the "do no harm" principle in watershed planning.
WATER QUALITY MODELING TRAINING	Kelia Bingham announced that APC will receive a Clean Water Act pass-through grant from EPA/LDEQ for LAQUAL (Louisiana Quality) water quality model training. The LAQUAL model is used by LDEQ to calculate Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) reports. Three two-day workshops are planned for 2027 and three for 2028, targeting technical personnel.
MISCELLANEOUS UPDATES	Kelia Bingham attended the Bayou Nezpique Watershed Implementation Plan meeting on July 29th led by Ducks Unlimited under LDEQ's 319 nonpoint source funding program. The plan covers the Bayou Blue and Castor Creek watershed, which are a part of Evangeline, Allen, Jeff Davis, and Acadia Parishes. CURRENT is now the primary inland water infrastructure agency under DOTD; its relationship with the watershed district will mirror the existing coordination model with CPRA. Kelia Bingham clarified that the district's 16 parishes fall within either CPRA's zone or CURRENT's jurisdiction, and that areas in the "white zone" on the map may still qualify for CPRA funding, as confirmed by CPRA Executive Director Michael Hare. Brent Domingue confirmed that the statewide flood control program is expected to fall under CURRENT, though eligibility implications for CPRA-zone areas remain unclear. Committee members did have concern about potential unintended consequences of the statewide flood control program being moved under CURRENT, particularly for parishes in CPRA's zone.

	LWI watershed plans being developed by each region will serve as a data repository for CURRENT and the State. Sara Gary stated that federal reliance for flood disaster funding is not a viable strategy; local and state solutions are essential.
PUBLIC COMMENT	There was no public comment.
NEXT MEETING DATE	October 15 th at 10am
ADJOURNMENT	Jessica Cornay made a motion to adjourn the meeting, and Emad Habib seconded that motion. All were in favor. VOTE: YEA – 8 NAY – 0 ABSENT – 2
MEETING DETAILS	
CONTACT	Kelia Bingham, LWI Region 5 Watershed Coordinator kbingham@planacadiana.org or (337) 446-0807
ADA/TITLE VI NOTICE	The Acadiana Planning Commission (APC) convenes public meetings in accessible locations. Meeting materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English upon request. If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact the ADA/Title VI Coordinator via email at amoran@planacadiana.org; or by phone at 337-806-9364. If you wish to attend an APC function and require special accommodation, please provide at least 72 hours advanced notice.
ATTENDANCE RECORD	
ATTENDEES	<u>Delegates Present:</u> Donald Sagrera – Teche-Vermilion Freshwater District Dr. Emad Habib – UL Watershed Flood Center Dustin Farmer for Andrew Coombs – USDA/NRCS Brent Domingue – DOTD Isaac Mudge – USACE Jessica Cornay – At-Large Member Cassidy Lejeune – At-Large Member Richard Greig – At-Large Member
ABSENTEES	

Others Present

Kirby Vining - Atchafalaya BasinKeeper
Kim Culotta - Atchafalaya BasinKeeper
Raymond Bernard – St. Martin Parish
Michael Brocato – St. Mary Levee District
Carly Phillips - Fenstermaker
APC – Sara Gary
APC – Kelia Bingham
APC – Kade Jones
APC – Sean Reed

Delegates Absent:

Dion Broussard – CPRA
Chip Vosburg – LA Soil & Water Commission

Minutes approved on August 27, 2026 by the Acadiana Watershed District Board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roslyn White", written over a horizontal line.

Roslyn White, Secretary/Treasurer
Acadiana Watershed District