



Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority

Working to establish a safe and sustainable coast that will protect our communities, the nation's critical energy infrastructure and our bountiful natural resources for generations to come

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Chuck Perrodin
CPRA Public Information Director
Chuck.Perrodin@la.gov

Governor and legislators praise Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan

BATON ROUGE – May 2, 2017 – La. Gov. John Bel Edwards today joined with members of the House and Senate to acknowledge the state's coastal accomplishments since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and outlined additional measures—including his emergency declaration—to deliver master plan projects more quickly and with less red tape.

“Today is a day that we're here as advocates to show interest and passion for the coast and to show support for the master plan and annual plan, which is a tremendous investment”, said Scott Kirkpatrick, of the Coast Builders Coalition and co-sponsor of Coastal Day at the Legislature.

Johnny Bradberry, Executive Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Activities and Chairman, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board talked about the state's opportunity to adopt the 2017 Master Plan: “We are in a position to implement large scale restoration and hurricane protection along our coast. We have the ability to monitor complex interactions that are occurring in our environment, forecast future conditions, and plan interventions that will make a difference for future generations.”

Senator Dan “Blade” Morrish and Representative Jerome Zeringue each gave comments acknowledging coastal day and the importance of supporting the 2017 Master Plan and Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Plan.

Following the devastation of 2005, the legislature created the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) Board to be the single entity to articulate the state's policies and priorities for coastal projects and programs. The CPRA established a science and engineering-based Coastal Master Plan for a systematic approach to one of the most complex environmental, social, and economic problems faced anywhere in the country. That plan is, by law, updated every five years. The 2017 update is currently before the legislature.

Referencing the 2017 Master Plan, Governor Edwards stated, “We have the plan, we have the expertise, and we have identified more than \$10 billion dollars of the \$50 billion that we need.” “In order to make the most of this opportunity, to be able to make the biggest impact on our landscape in the fight against land loss, we are going to need to be able to get projects on the ground as quickly as possible.”

Governor Edwards added, “We're in a race against time. And the projects that we need aren't getting less expensive either. The sooner we can get them on the ground and working for us, the better off

we're going to be. It's going to take some nimble financing and project delivery methods, and it going to take thinking out of the box".

Governor Edwards also talked about the Master Plan and how it afforded Louisiana a distinct advantage over other states during the BP negotiations. "Because of our plan the feds had confidence that Louisiana could be entrusted to use those dollars appropriately and effectively; our delegation was able to help get the RESTORE Act passed which insured that the civil fines from the oil spill went to the Gulf Coast and not to some bank account in Washington."

"Last month I issued an emergency declaration for coastal Louisiana. It was transmitted to the president and to Congress," Edwards said, "so that we could forcefully communicate to the rest of the country and to our leadership in Washington and all of our federal partners, the seriousness of the coastal crisis, and our request for updates to laws, rules and regulations or procedures that will help us get these projects on the ground as quickly as we can."

Governor Edwards closed by asking for support of the master plan in the coming weeks. He also challenged that "we have to communicate to folks that we have the discipline, under very tight budgetary constraints, to make sure that that dollars that are there for coastal protection and restoration are spent on coastal protection and restoration, and are not swept to other areas of the budget." "I am fighting for that. Coastal dollars need to stay with the coast; that is my commitment."

"This is an exciting time, this is an opportunity for us to get it right, and to be the best in the country and in the world when it comes to managing water," Governor Edwards said in closing. "This is our plan, take ownership, buy into it and let's move forward".

###

Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority is the single state entity with authority to develop, articulate, implement, and enforce a comprehensive coastal restoration and protection *Master Plan* of unified vision to reduce hurricane storm surge flood impact, to restore our bountiful natural resources, to build land to protect our nation's critical energy infrastructure, and to secure Louisiana's coast now and for future generations.