



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

May 25, 2017

The Honorable John Bel Edwards  
Governor of Louisiana  
State Capitol  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70802

Dear Governor Edwards:

Thank you for providing your April 18, 2017 proclamation declaring a state of emergency in the coastal area of Louisiana, due to ongoing loss of coastal land and wetlands.

We appreciate the national significance of Louisiana's coastal area for energy production, fisheries, recreation, and other resources. We also recognize that ongoing land loss in Louisiana negatively impacts these valuable resources. We are committed to efficient and effective environmental review and authorization processes for restoration projects through improved coordination between Federal and State agencies.

The Gulf Coast Interagency Environmental Restoration Working Group is the primary coordinating body for Federal agencies with regard to environmental review and permitting of restoration projects in the Gulf Coast region. These Federal agencies are working to ensure that appropriate and effective coordination is taking place in accordance with OMB and CEQ Memorandum M-17-01, *Federal Coordination, Permitting and Review of Gulf Ecosystem Restoration Projects*.

As you may be aware, the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project was also recently added to the Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard as a Covered Project under Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. We have been working closely with Federal agencies and the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council to identify ways to increase the efficiency of the environmental review and authorization processes for the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion project.

As noted in our letter of April 21, 2017, the Council on Environmental Quality is currently working with other agencies and Administration officials to align various permitting and infrastructure initiatives. As this interagency process moves forward, we will be able to provide more information with regard to your March 8, 2017 request to prioritize the Mid-Barataria project and four other restoration projects pursuant to Executive Order 13766.

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We look forward to working with you to advance solutions to respond to the coastal land and wetlands losses that impact your residents and the nation.

Sincerely,



Mary B. Neumayr  
Chief of Staff