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Contact: coastal@la.gov

CPRA Releases Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Plan

BATON ROUGE, LA – The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) has released a draft version of the agency's annual spending plan for Fiscal Year 2021, which runs from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. The *Integrated Ecosystem Restoration & Hurricane Protection in Coastal Louisiana: Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Plan* anticipates investing $958 million in Louisiana's coast. This is the largest spending plan in the history of the State's coastal program, including a record $718 million allocated toward construction.

"This investment represents 75% of the overall anticipated expenditures of $958 million in the coming fiscal year," said CPRA Board Chairman Chip Kline, "and the percentage of on-the-ground construction is projected to increase to 81% in FY 2022 and to 89% in FY 2023." Kline said the increasing number of projects going to construction is due to the culmination of planning, engineering, and design that must be completed before construction funding can be obtained.

Key takeaways from the Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Plan include:

- 91.6% of total expenditures will go toward project implementation and maintenance.
- 106 projects are listed as active: 60 in construction, 38 in engineering and design, and eight in planning.
- 14 active projects are in Southwest Louisiana, 29 in South Central Louisiana, and 63 in Southeast Louisiana.
- 16 dredging projects are slated for construction, including 76.8 million cubic yards to create or nourish more than 13,000 acres.

"This will also be our biggest year yet for dredging," said CPRA Executive Director Bren Haase, referring to the method of suctioning sediment from river, lake, or offshore water bottoms and pumping it via pipelines to create or nourish coastal wetlands. "The 2021 annual plan continues a trend in the right direction for our coast and demonstrates what can be accomplished when the science, funding, and political will align."

Fiscal years 2021-2023 will also see the first major Deepwater Horizon oil spill settlement projects move into construction including the Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline, Golden Triangle Marsh Creation, Lake Borgne Marsh Creation, Large-Scale Barataria Marsh Creation, Rabbit Island Restoration, Grande Cheniere Ridge and Marsh Creation, Barataria Basin Ridge and Marsh Restoration - Spanish Pass Increment, and Terrebonne Basin Barrier Island projects.

Included in the FY2021 spending plan is $75 million in state Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) funds to build a permanent 400-foot barge flood gate across Bayou Chene south of Morgan City to prevent backwater flooding from the Atchafalaya Basin and storm surge from the Gulf of Mexico. Temporary barges were requisitioned and sunk in 1973, 2011, 2016 and again during the extended flood fight this year.

FY2021 will also see the advancement to construction of the $760 million West Shore-Lake Pontchartrain project which will better protect nearly 60,0000 residents from tropical storm surge impacting the west shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Construction will entail 18.5 miles of earthen levees and floodwalls, as well as floodgates, drainage structures, and pump stations. Project completion is expected in 2024.

The spending plan will now undergo a period of public comment and public hearings. Public hearings on the Draft Fiscal Year 2021 CPRA Annual Plan will be held in the following locations:

New Orleans – Monday, January 6, 2020

Lakefront Airport

601 Stars and Stripes Blvd

5:30 p.m. - Open House; 6:00 p.m. Presentation

Houma – Tuesday, January 7, 2020

Houma Terrebonne Civic Center

346 Civic Center Boulevard

Meeting Room 1

Lake Charles – Wednesday, January 8, 2020

Lake Charles Civic Center

Jean Lafitte Room

900 Lakeshore Drive

Written comments will be accepted until February 15, 2020 by emailing coastal@la.gov, or by regular mail to CPRA 2021 Annual Plan, 150 Terrace Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA 70802. For more information, call 225-342-7308.

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