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## **CPRA Releases 2019 Year in Review Highlighting Agency Accomplishments in Coastal Protection and Restoration**

**BATON ROUGE, LA** – Today, the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority released its 2019 Year in Review outlining the agency’s accomplishments in coastal protection and restoration. The past year saw the advancement of 108 coastal projects including 33 projects either completed or in construction. 2019 also marked the first year of construction utilizing both major sources of coastal funding from the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act and the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill settlement.

“2019 was certainly a banner year for CPRA, and we anticipate another record-breaker for 2020,” said CPRA Executive Director Bren Haase. “In 2020 CPRA, alongside our partners, will undertake our largest commitment to dredging in the history of the coastal program, with a record 16 dredging projects in construction that will deliver approximately 73 million cubic yards of dredged material to create and nourish more than 11,000 acres of land, marsh, shorelines and barrier islands across the state.”

Haase said it takes extensive study, planning, engineering and design, permitting, and hard work to move projects to construction. He also noted historic interruptions in 2019 including the extended Mississippi River flood fight and Hurricane Barry.

“We were undoubtedly tested this year, but I feel this was a year where for every step we got knocked back, we took two steps forward,” said Haase.

Since its inception in 2007, CPRA and its partners have dredged and pumped more than 157 million cubic yards of sediment to benefit or build 47,341 acres of coastal habitat.

“CPRA has taken great steps forward over the past year, and I am optimistic for the future of our state as the Coastal Master Plan materializes year after year,” said CPRA Chairman Chip Kline. “Yet our success would not be possible without strong partnerships at the local, state, and federal levels as well as our coastal advocacy and academic champions. They work behind the scenes each and every day to advocate for our projects, restore our coast, and make our communities more resilient.”

In 2019, CPRA's accomplishments include:

## **PROTECTION**

- Gov. John Bel Edwards announced \$80 million for a permanent barge floodgate on Bayou Chene in St. Mary Parish below Morgan City to prevent backwater flooding.
- Category One Hurricane Barry came ashore in Vermilion Parish, but damage was minimal due in part to years of preparation.
  - In Terrebonne Parish, Barry's storm surge was equal to past storms that flooded more than 10,000 homes, but with the partially-completed Morganza to the Gulf levee system in place, only 12 homes were flooded.
  - For the first time ever the Greater New Orleans area saw the complete and successful closure of its Hurricane Storm Risk Reduction System of levees, levee walls, and floodgates.
- An agreement was signed with the Corps of Engineers to begin work on the \$760 million West Shore-Lake Pontchartrain project that will construct 18-and-a-half miles of earthen levees and floodwalls, as well as floodgates, drainage structures, and pump stations, giving better protection from tropical storm surge to about 60,000 people on the west shore of Lake Pontchartrain.
- Gov. John Bel Edwards announced \$41.7 million for storm protection projects in the North and South Lafourche Levee Districts.
- CPRA signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Corps of Engineers whereby past expenditures by CPRA and the Terrebonne Levee & Conservation District on the Morganza to the Gulf levee system can count toward the 35% local cost share match for future federally-funded construction on the system.
- In Terrebonne Parish, CPRA allocated more than \$21 million in GOMESA and State Capital Outlay funds to build the Falgout Canal Floodgate to close a gap in the Morganza to the Gulf system of levees and flood control structures.
- CPRA completed construction on the realignment of the levee along the Violet Canal in St. Bernard Parish.

## **RESTORATION**

- CPRA received approval from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to use \$160 million of post-BP oil spill funds for the Terrebonne Basin Barrier Island and Beach Nourishment project, a restoration of Trinity Island East, Timbalier and the West Belle Headland. CPRA received 2 sand leases from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to dredge nine million cubic yards of sediment to create 1,100 acres of land.
- CPRA in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service completed the Cameron Creole Watershed Grand Bayou Marsh Creation project that created and nourished more than 700 acres of degraded marsh on the eastern shore of Calcasieu Lake in Cameron Parish.
- CPRA in partnership with the National Marine Fisheries Service completed the Cole's Bayou Marsh Restoration Project in Vermilion Parish which used dredged sediment from Little Vermilion Bay to create and nourish more than 400 acres of marsh east of Freshwater Bayou Canal. The project also involved the construction of nine water control structures consisting of 22 culverts to improve the flow of freshwater and sediment within the area's interior wetlands.
- CPRA completed the Oyster Bayou Marsh Creation and Terracing Project which built or nourished 960 acres in Cameron Parish on its Gulf of Mexico shoreline.

- CPRA signed a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Louisiana DEQ and the Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District for the advancement of state GOMESA funds to construct new pumps that will triple the fresh water entering Bayou Lafourche from the Mississippi River.

## **EDUCATION**

- CPRA partnered with the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and Nicholls State University in Thibodaux to establish the Louisiana Coastal Technical Assistance Center, helping Louisiana companies qualify for work as contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers in the state's water management sector.
- In 2019, the LSU Center for River Studies hosted 8,850 total visitors including 4,733 students in fourth through 12th grade. Since opening in 2018, the CRS has hosted 14,810 visitors.

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