



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 4, 2021

Contact: [coastal@la.gov](mailto:coastal@la.gov)

## **CPRA Announces Start of \$32 Million Marsh Restoration Project in Southwest Cameron Parish**

**CAMERON, LA** – The Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) today announced construction activity is underway on the Cameron Meadows Marsh Creation and Terracing project located in Cameron Parish northwest of Holly Beach. This restoration project will address a large area of marsh that has degraded into open water due to subsidence, saltwater surge from Hurricane Rita and other storms, excessive drought, and salt water retention as a result of silted-in canals which prohibited adequate drainage.

Containment dikes are currently being constructed to hold approximately 1.9 million cubic yards of sediment dredged from the Gulf of Mexico and pumped five miles inland to build more than 308 acres of marsh. An additional 11 acres will be added with the construction of 2.8 miles of terrace structures which will reduce wave erosion and allow sediment deposition for land building. Additionally, several water control structures and protection measures will reduce saltwater intrusion on adjacent properties.

The \$32 million project is funded by the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) and is a joint effort by CPRA and the federal sponsor, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Great Lakes Dredge and Dock was awarded the competitively-bid contract for construction, which is expected to be complete by the end of this year.

“One of our top priorities is to reinforce the natural buffer that exists in Southwest Louisiana,” said CPRA Chairman Chip Kline. “These large marsh creation projects not only increase protection for the parishes immediately along the coast, but they add acreage between the land and the sea, pushing it further away from heavily populated areas further inland such as Lake Charles. And the 2020 hurricane season further cemented this goal and our sense of urgency to increase protection for residents across Southwest Louisiana.”

State Senator Mark Abraham agreed the project is important to more than just Cameron Parish.

“The Cameron Meadows project is strategically important to Southwest Louisiana,” Abraham said. “Also, we must continue to educate our state and nation on the fact that our wetlands are one of the most productive ecosystems in our country.”

Growing up in Cameron Parish, State Representative Ryan Bourriaque has witnessed land loss and the opportunities lost with it. But he also appreciates how Louisiana and its people are fighting back.

“Since Hurricane Rita in 2005, Louisiana has invested incredible amounts of time, energy, and money to protect what we have and restore much of what has been lost,” said Bourriaque. “That isn’t easy in the face of relentless storms like we experienced in 2020. But CPRA is relentless, too, and continues to work with local officials to put projects on the ground in places where they are needed, like Cameron Parish.”

Laurie Cormier sits on the boards of CPRA and the Chenier Plain Coastal Restoration and Protection Authority, and is a passionate advocate for projects in Southwest Louisiana. She has described Cameron Parish as the equivalent of a barrier island protecting Lake Charles, the sixth-largest city in Louisiana and an important hub for energy exports.

“The Cameron Meadows Marsh Creation and Terracing Project is important in our multiple line of defense strategy for the Southwest Louisiana region,” said Cormier. “This

project will help the area by implementing projects that strengthen and protect us from future storms. Anytime we create marsh and add terracing projects in Cameron Parish we create additional protection for Calcasieu Parish residents.”

NOAA Project Manager Jennifer Smith says this is the latest of 30 Louisiana wetland restoration projects NOAA has funded through the CWPPRA Program since 1990, restoring more than 12,500 acres of vulnerable coastline and helping to rebuild the resilience of coastal communities.

“We are always pleased to partner with CPRA because the success of these projects is making a real difference for the people of Louisiana,” Smith said.

###