REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING
HELD BY ZOOM
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
FEBRUARY 23, 2021

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Certified Court Reporter
IN ATTENDANCE:

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REPRESENTING BRIDGE THE GULF PROJECT:
MICHAEL TRITICO

REPRESENTING THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COASTAL ACTIVITIES:
MORGAN CRUTCHER
RUSSELL CAFFERY
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

REPRESENTING THE COALITION - MOVE THE MINDSET:
KIM GOODELL

Michelle S. Abadie, CCR
Certified Court Reporter
REPRESENTING ADVOCACY COMMITTEE OF THE PONCHARTRAIN CONVERVANCY:

PHILLIP CLINTON

OTHERS PRESENT:

COREY MILLER
SARAH MUNOZ
GREG LINSCOMBE

Gueydan, Louisiana
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PRESENTATION OF 2022 COASTAL PLAN BY BREN HAASE

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Michelle S. Abadie, CCR
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Well, hello everybody who's logged onto the virtual meeting here this evening so far. We have just a -- a minute or two and then we'll get started, but I wanted to let you know that we're here and ready to go. So give us a minute or two, and we will get things kicked off.

(BRIEF RECESS.)

All right. Well, good evening, everybody. My name is Bren Haase. I'm the Executive Director of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority. We appreciate you being with us this evening in this most unusual of circumstances to -- to hear some information about the Draft Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Plan.

I'm going to turn this over to Rachel Haney here in just a minute to go over kind of the -- the ground rules or the ways in which you can make public comment, both here this evening, but also via mail or -- or email at a subsequent time period, so -- and then I'll come back and we'll run through a
presentation. And, certainly, we're interested to hear from you and your comments on the Draft Plan.

I will say that we do not intend to answer questions this evening, so if you can phrase your comment in the form of a statement or a comment, that would -- that would be helpful.

So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to Rachel, and then I'll be back with you shortly.

MS. HANEY:

Okay. Good evening, everyone. I'm going to quickly go over some virtual meeting guidelines before we get started with Bren's presentation.

So, in accordance with State law and the Governor's Emergency Proclamation -- Proclamations related to COVID-19, we're holding this meeting virtually using Webex, and, because we're using Webex, public comments will be accepted a little bit differently than in years past. To submit a public comment, you'll go down to the bottom right-hand corner of the page and click -- click the chat box. Enter your name, mailing address, and your comment, and all your comments will be read into the record at the end of this presentation.

You can also email us a comment if you prefer to do it that way to coastal@la.gov, and all of those
comments that we receive before the end of this presentation will also be read into the record following Bren's presentation.

You can also mail us a comment after tonight's meetings to the address that was on the screen a minute ago, but it's CPRA 2022 Annual Plan, 150 Terrace Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 70802. And all of our public comments, either written or emailed, need to be received no later than March 27th.

So I'll go ahead and turn it back over to Bren.

MR. HAASE:

Thank you, Rachel, and I pulled that slide down momentarily. She was going through that information, so I'm going to let it -- let it sit for a beat in case anybody needs to -- to take that information down, so we -- both written and email addresses you see are posted here, coastal@la.gov, and written comments, as Rachel mentioned, can be sent to CPRA 2022 Annual Plan, 150 Terrace Avenue, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 70802.

All right. Well, we'll move on with the presentation.

So, again, we're here to talk with you tonight about our Draft Fiscal Year '22 -- 2022 Annual Plan. We generally start off with what is it? It's a

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request for authorization to spend revenues, should they -- should they be received by CPRA. So it's a projection of those revenues that we think will come to the State over the next fiscal year and then how we intend to expend those revenues over that same period of time. It's a three-year outlook. Again, it's that projection of revenues and expenditures, and it also includes project activity, project schedules, in terms of how we intend to implement those -- those projects.

And why we do it, we do it to comply with Act 523 of the 2009 Regular Session and to comply with Act 570 of the 2018 Regular Session of the Louisiana legislature.

So this is the timeline you see at the top of the slide here. The plan was -- Draft Plan was presented to our board and released to the public last week. It was presented to the board on Friday morning of last year. The public comment time period is now open, that's why we're here speaking with y'all today. That period -- public comment period ends March 27th of this year, so you have a little over a month now -- or a little under a month now to provide those comments. The Final Plan will be presented to our board on April 21st, that will, of course, incorporate the public comment that we receive through this process and

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through the email and mail avenues, as well. That will be presented, again, on April 21st of this year, and, ultimately, that Final Plan will be submitted to the legislature for review and the -- their approval.

So this is the second of three meetings that we're planning specific to the Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Plan. We are -- had intended to concentrate on the southcentral Louisiana. We had a little bit of a -- of a mix up last night with folks logging on, so we'll also cover some of the material that was presented last night for southwest coastal Louisiana, as well. Those materials will also be presented again tomorrow evening for the last -- the last presentation of this material. So each of these meetings will start at 6:00, which you know if you're on right now. Tomorrow, we'll start at 6:00 as well, and you can access the link to participate in the meetings at coastal.la.gov/calendar.

So just a very high-level view of our funding and the funding sources that we have at CPRA that we anticipate receiving funds -- or the programs through which we intend to receive funds over the upcoming fiscal year.

There are several bullets here. You see State Mineral Revenues, so there are some -- some mineral...
revenue sharing that occurs within the State. We do
not receive any State general funds, but we do receive
some of the -- a share of the mineral revenues
collected by the State each year.

There's some recurring federal revenues that we
receive, as well. Many of us are familiar with the
Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration
Act. That's a -- a restoration program that we've
partnered in for 30-plus years now, and money is
provided through the federal government to wetlands of
coastal Louisiana for restoration purposes.

The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act or GOMESA
funds are additional federal funds that are also
associated with federal mineral revenue sharing.
Those are shared, of course, with the State of
Louisiana for restoration and protection purposes.

There are three large pots of funding -- or three
main categories of funding associated with the
Deepwater Horizon oil spill settlement, that's the
Natural Resources Damage Assessment funds, the
National Fish Wildlife Foundation funds, or NFWF, and
the RESTORE Act funds.

We also receive some one-time funds associated
with the Community Development Block Grant Program,
and coastal restoration and protection is also an

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eligible expenditure of State surplus dollars, and
while that doesn't -- certainly, we don't have a
surplus every year, and, certainly -- but, you know,
that doesn't happen as often as -- as we would hope.
When we do realize a surplus, Coastal Protection and
Restoration and CPRA has benefit from receiving --
benefitted from receiving some of those surplus
dollars.

So you see the -- the projections listed here for
FY '22 by program that I mentioned just now, and
you'll note that all of that rolls up to $887 million
of expected revenues and expected expenditures into
the next fiscal year.

So you see how that's broken down on the pie
chart to the right of that or at the center of your
screen there. If we start kind of in the middle of
the slide at the -- about the 3 o'clock position, you
see about one percent associated with planning, 11
percent associated with engineering and design, 71
percent for construction, seven percent for
operations, maintenance, and monitoring of our
projects, another seven percent for ongoing programs
and initiatives, and three percent toward our
operating costs.

So, if you think about the -- the pieces of the
pie that are associated with project expenditures alone, you can see those broken down here, so that's planning, construction, engineering and design, and then operations, maintenance, and monitoring.

So we anticipate having seven projects in planning in FY '22, 66 projects in construction in that same time period. Those projects will benefit a little less than 60,000 acres of coastal wetlands and construct or improve 122 miles of levees along our coast.

We anticipate having 37 projects in engineering and design. Those will benefit a little over 60,000 acres of our coastal wetlands. And as our program matures and we build more and more projects, more projects fall into this last category, operations, maintenance, and monitoring, and so that will be 161 projects in that category in FY '22. And you can see the associated dollar amounts next to each of those within each of those categories.

So, we'll talk a little bit about the regions of the coast now, and this is the region that we were discussing last night, the southwest region of the coast. So there are 11 active projects in this portion of the coast, six of those are in construction and five in engineering and design. You'll see those
projects listed there to the right of the map. They include a number of projects, and I'll get into that in this next slide.

So the first one I'll highlight is the Cameron Meadows Marsh Creation and Terracing Project. This is a project that's being constructed under one of the Programs and funding streams that I mentioned earlier, the Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act or CWPPRA. This is a project that is being sponsored by CPRA and by our federal partner, the National Marine Fisheries Service, in this case.

This project will create about 319 acres of marsh and terraces in the Cameron Meadows area. It has a construction budget of roughly $32 million. And interestingly, the sediment for this project is being dredged from the Gulf of Mexico, pumped onshore to help rebuild the marshes in Cameron Parish there.

The next project I'll mention is actually the one on the far right of this slide that you see here. It's the Calcasieu Ship Channel Salinity Control Measures. If you were listening in on the board meeting on Friday, you'll note that there's been a little bit of a shift in this project, and it will be renamed the Calcasieu-Sabine Large Scale Marsh and Hydrologic Restoration Project. And it's going to
focus primarily on restoring the hydrology of kind of the lake rim marshes you see outlined here to the left of Big Lake or Calcasieu Lake, and also a large amount of marsh creation in the areas to the east and to the southeast of Calcasieu Lake.

Then the one in the middle that you see there is a -- is a photograph of the Rockefeller Shoreline Protection Project. This particular project that's in the FY '22 Annual Plan actually builds on two previous projects that constructed about four miles of this shoreline protection. This is a RESTORE Parish Matching project that we're working with the parish to implement, and it will add a little over -- an additional mile to those previous two projects, to bring the total up to about -- about five miles along the -- the Cameron shoreline there.

So we'll move farther east into the southcentral region. In this region, we've got 33 active projects, 22 of those are in construction; nine of those are in E&D or will be in E&D, and -- and two projects in planning. So there are a number of projects here. I'll highlight a few of those for you here. Some of these, these projects will run the gambit from some of the largest projects that we've ever built, like the Houma Navigation Canal Lock Project to some -- some

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smaller projects, but, nonetheless, very important
projects, like the Cypremort Point State Park
Improvements Project.

So this is a project associated with the B.P. oil
spill settlement dollars, about a $4.5 million project
that will restore the shoreline along the -- along the
State Park there, adding rocks and parking areas and
helping to refurbish some of the roads in the area,
build a new marsh boardwalk, and also replenish and
replace some fishing piers that have been lost due to
storms and -- and normal wear and tear.

I mentioned the Houma Navigation Canal Lock
Project. This is the largest civil works project in
the history of Terrebonne Parish and is an integral
part of the overall -- overall Morganza to the Gulf
Hurricane Risk Reduction System. And so this project
has risk reduction benefits, as I just mentioned,
being part of Morganza to the Gulf, but it also shares
benefits in terms of redistributing freshwater that
flows from the Atchafalaya River into the Intracoastal
Canal and then down the Houma Navigation Canal.
Without the lock and these gates in place, that water
would be (unintelligible) straight out into Terrebonne
Bay. The lock will help to distribute that water both
east and west into some of the marshes in Terrebonne

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Parish that need -- need those waters.

The Bayou Chene Floodgate is another one that's under construction now. It will be -- continue to be under construction in Fiscal Year '22. This is building a permanent barge gate and a floodgate in Bayou Chene just south of Morgan City that will provide storm surge risk reduction and backwater flooding protection for about six parishes in the area, so a very impactful project.

And then the last project I'll mention in this region is the Grand Bayou Floodgate. This project is -- would be another barge gate-type structure, about 147-foot-long barge gate, with 276 feet of flanking sheet pile on either side of it. It's about an $18.5 million project. This project will be funded through GOMESA, or the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act.

So the last region I'll mention is really more than one region, it's really two regions when you think about sort of a west-of-the-river and east-of-the-river portion of the -- but the southeast region, if you -- if you lump those two -- two portions together include 66 active projects, 38 that will be in construction, 23 in engineering and design, and five in planning. But I'll just note that some of the -- some of the projects of note here include the

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Spanish Pass, the Barataria Bay Marsh and Ridge Creation Project. The Spanish Pass Increment is going to be the largest ridge and marsh creation project that we would have built in our history. Central Wetlands Project, New Orleans Landbridge Project, and, our, you know, continued work on the New Orleans to Venice levees and the (unintelligible) levees, as well.

So a tradition that is part of our annual cycle, we are -- also prepare and produce an Atchafalaya Basin Program Annual Plan. So, while I'll not delve in the details -- or in great detail, I guess, here this evening, know that on Thursday evening of this week and then on Monday evening of next week, we'll have two Atchafalaya Basin Program-specific meetings for this Program and these projects, as well.

But you can see some of the projects listed here, the Henderson Lake Water Management Unit Spoil Bank Gapping Project, East Grand Lake Upper Region Project, Flat Lake Study, Murphy Lake Depth Restoration Project, and some of the other recreation and access-type projects as part of the Atchafalaya Basin Program.

So I mentioned the three-year outlook as part of our Annual Plan. You can see that really depicted
here, so that FY '22 is kind of the larger pie that you see on the left-hand side of the screen. But if you'll look out into the future to FY '23 and FY '24, we anticipate revenues and expenditures to equal $930 million in the following fiscal year, and in FY '24, we anticipate coverage (phonetic) of roughly $1 billion.

So really the kind of thing to note here is sort of the change in percentages, in addition to the change in total dollar figure, so the piece of the pie that represents construction increases over the next couple of years, and we are always glad to see that. Of course, the reason we're here is to get projects on the ground to help our citizens and to help our ecosystem. So, when we can increase that percentage, that is a good thing.

So this is my last slide this evening, and then we'll -- we'll take a little bit of a beat and accept any comments that you all might have. But the public comment period, as I mentioned, is open through March 27th, so anything received through the end of the day March 27th will be accepted as comment. Those comments will be incorporated into a Final Plan, as I mentioned, that will be presented to our board and then ultimately to the legislature.

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To read of any of the information in the Draft Plans for the Annual Plan, you find more at coastal.la.gov/OurPlan/AnnualPlan, and then for the Atchafalaya Basin Annual Plan, you can find that information and -- and review those materials at coastal.la.gov/OurPlan/AtchafalayaBasinProgram.

So, with that, I am going to scroll back to the first slide so that folks can see the email address, and we will -- I'm going to go on mute here and allow folks to have a minute to provide comment. We'll be monitoring the email address, as well, so if you prefer to email us a comment, we will read that into the record. If you would like to provide a comment via the chat box, certainly, we will accept that and we will read that -- read that into the record, as well.

So I'm going to go on mute for a moment, and we'll wait and see what we get in terms of comments. So I appreciate your time this evening, certainly appreciate your interest in our coastal program, and we look forward to seeing some comments.

Thank you.

(BRIEF RECESS.)

MR. HAASE:

All right. So I see we've got our first comment,

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and it says it's from owner, but I believe I recognize that that was Tim Matte with the St. Mary Levee District. And I'll read this into the record now.

**WRITTEN STATEMENT/COMMENT BY TIM MATTE**

**READ BY MR. HAASE**

I would like to submit a project for your consideration. The Morgan City Backwater Protection Project was included in the Annual Plan for 2020 as a submission under the capital outlay request for CPRA. This project is included in the State's Master Plan and has been the recipient of previous funding by CPRA or State funds to facilitate phases of this construction.

The City of Morgan City is nearly surrounded by 100-year-sized levees. In order to complete this effort and get the newly-constructed levees included in our NFIP maps, a gap needs to be closed along the front of Lake Palourde. The State has thus far provided $8.87 million to a project that totaled $23 million. The last increment will cost approximately $29 million. The State -- excuse me -- the St. Mary Levee District has contracted for its design, and that effort is nearing completion. The funding stream for this project can be phased to match anticipated construction.
Thank you for that comment. We appreciate that, and we will take it under consideration.

All right. We've got -- there we go. We've got another couple of comments, and I will read them into record.

The first one is from Leslie Suazo.

Hello, Bren. Great presentation. It really is exciting to see so much great work going on all over our coast.

And, Leslie, hello to you, and I certainly thank you for that -- that comment, as well.

The next one I see here is from Michael Tritico.

Part of every fiscal year plan should be a precise account of which projects suffered setbacks or destruction during the previous year and how that is being taken into account in ongoing and new plans. Substance (sic) -- sustainability -- excuse me -- of projects is simple fiscal prudence.
Thank you, Mr. Tritico. I appreciate that comment, as well.

All right. We've got another comment that has come in from Phillip Clinton, and I'll read it into the record now.

WRITTEN STATEMENT/COMMENT BY PHILLIP CLINTON
READ BY MR. HAAS

I would like to commend the authority on its work. The Advocacy Committee of the Ponchartrain Conservancy, formerly the Lake Ponchartrain Basin Authority, fully supports the Draft Coastal Plan. Your science-based approach is crucial in this sector.

MR. HAASE:

Thank you, Phillip. We appreciate that -- that comment.

All right, folks. We are monitoring the email account, as well, and so far we have not received anything via email, but certainly encourage you to -- to use that tool if you're more comfortable commenting via email. Obviously, the chat seems to working pretty well, and we encourage anybody to make a comment in that way, as well. So we'll stick around for a little while. If we go for some period of time and don't receive any additional comments, we'll -- we'll sign off, but, for the time being, we're going...
to be here and wait on -- wait on comments for -- for several minutes, for, you know, five or ten minutes or so, at least, and we'll kind of monitor the situation and let you know when we're -- when we're -- when it will be time to sign off. So thank you.

(BRIEF RECESS.)

MR. HAASE:

All right, everybody. We've gotten another comment. This one comes to us from Amanda Voisin. Amanda says:

WRITTEN STATEMENT/COMMENT BY AMANDA VOISIN

READ BY MR. HAASE

Thanks to CPRA for the effort to put into the Annual Plan -- excuse me -- let me start that over.

Thanks to CPRA for the effort put into the Annual Plan and the inclusion of key projects important to our region. We'll be following up with further written comment. We would like to especially thank CPRA for the including of the Grand Bayou Freshwater Reintroduction Project, and we look forward to advancing this project within the next few years.

MR. HAASE:

Thanks, Amanda, for that comment. We appreciate that.

We're going to stand by here for at least another
five minutes or so and see if we get any comment either via chat or via the email, and -- and we'll be back with you. So bear with us, there may be some silence if we don't get a comment up here in the next five minutes or so, but we are here. We're listening and monitoring the chat and email, and we'll read into the record any comment that we receive.

(BRIEF RECESS.)

MR. HAASE:

All right, folks. We have not received any additional comment via the chat or -- or email-wise. We're going to give it a last call here, and we're going to give another three to five minutes. If we don't receive anything within that time, we'll go ahead and -- and shut the hearing down for this evening.

So, again, we certainly appreciate all of your participation and the comments we have received, and certainly anticipate that we're receive much more comment from this region and other parts of the state via -- via email and via regular mail, as well.

So we'll go back on mute and give it another few minutes, and then, again, if we don't receive any additional comments, we -- we will sign off. So I'll be back with you here in just a few minutes.

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(BRIEF RECESS.)

MR. HAASE:
Okay. So we've got another comment in the chat box I think everyone can see. This one is from Cynthia Duet.

WRITTEN STATEMENT/COMMENT BY CYNTHIA DUET
READ BY MR. HAASE

Hi, Bren. Thanks for the presentation and the work y'all are doing. The groups I work with will definitely be submitting written comments on the plan for your consideration.

Before we break for the evening, could you talk a bit about what will happen between the Draft and Final Plans and that correlating schedule.

Thank you.

MR. HAASE:
Yes. Thanks, Cynthia, for the comment. I will -- will address that.

We -- all right. We will review all the public comment, of course, that we receive between now and the presentation to the board in April, so I think the 19th -- 21st -- excuse me -- the date was slipping my mind there. And so -- again, that public comment will be -- be reviewed. It will be considered. We will certainly make -- you know, whenever we make some
changes to the Draft Plan that you see before you here. We'll also include some additional information in the Final Plan, just some front-end material that will be similar to what you had seen in annual plans past. It's difficult to get that information included in the draft each year, and so, typically, we'll -- we'll include that in the Final Plan. None of that is, quite frankly, substantive in terms of the numbers or revenues and expenditures, so what you see is really what's before you today, and the Draft Plan is really the meat and potatoes and the -- and the important information that's part of the Draft Annual Plan that folks would need to comment on.

So once that plan -- the Final Plan is submitted to the board, it will then be submitted to the legislature in late April, not long after the legislature convenes. And in terms of schedule beyond that, we really don't have any control of that. It really depends on the legislature's schedule. But we do present the plan before four legislative committees, before both the House and the Senate, both Natural Resources and Transportation Committees.

A resolution, either approving or not approving the plan then goes then goes before the full Senate and the full House for passage or -- or disapproval.

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And that's the typical process. And, again, beyond that, that's for the last April timeframe, I think it's the 26th when we have to present the plan to the legislature. The schedule beyond that date is beyond our control, so we have to follow that -- the legislative calendar to determine when we'll be in front of those committees and then the -- when the plan will be considered by the full House and the full Senate.

So I hope that -- that answered your -- your comment. Thank you, Cynthia, for that.

So, again, we'll give it another few minutes. Let's see if we get any additional comments. If we don't we'll come back and sign off. But, again, we'll continue to monitor the chat box and our email address, so, please, provide any comments that you might have. We'll -- we'll stand by for those, and I'll be back with you shortly.

(BRIEF RECESS.)

MR. HAASE:

Okay, folks. It's been a few minutes now. We have not -- we are not seeing any new comments in the chat or via email, so I don't want to make folks hold on longer than they need to.

But, again, we want to thank everybody for their
comments here this evening. We appreciate those that we've received, and I know we'll be receiving many more before the 27th of March, again, via email and through -- through regular mail, as well.

So I know this is not anybody's idea of an ideal way to conduct a public hearing. Unfortunately, such as life these days, and we all look forward to being able to be in your regions this time next year to be able to have some -- some face-to-face interaction, some more discussion, on some of these things that are presented in our Draft Annual -- or, yeah, Draft Annual Plans in the future.

So I'll sign off now. I want to thank everybody again for joining us, and we appreciate your participation and passion for our coast and your interest in the coastal program. So thanks everybody. We're going -- we're going to shut it down.

THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS ADJOURNED.

Michelle S. Abadie, CCR
Certified Court Reporter
CERTIFICATE

I, MICHELLE S. ABADIE, Certified Court Reporter in and for the State of Louisiana, do hereby certify that on February 23, 2021, conducted by Zoom videoconference at the offices of CPRA, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, that the matter of the 2022 Coastal Master Plan public hearing was reported by me in the stenomask reporting method, was prepared and transcribed by me or under my personal direction and supervision; that the foregoing pages, numbered 1 through 30, inclusive, is a true and correct transcript to the best of my ability and understanding; that I am not related any parties herein, nor am I otherwise interested in the outcome of this proceeding.

___________________________________
MICHELLE S. ABADIE, CCR #24032
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER

Michelle S. Abadie, CCR
Certified Court Reporter