

**A PROPOSED  
BASIN WIDE FLOODPLAIN PLANNING  
&  
MANAGEMENT PROCESS  
FOR THE  
AMITE RIVER BASIN  
BY THE  
AMITE RIVER DRAINAGE  
AND  
WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**In response to questionnaire pertaining HR-46. (2021)**

**(ATTACHMENT 1)**

## **Need of a Basin Wide Floodplain Planning and Management Process**

Since its creation in 1981, the ARBC has become increasingly complex. Whereas its original role was to serve as a local partner with the USACE and LADOTD for major flood control projects this responsibility has increased over time to include the whole field of flooding risk that includes traditional structural projects and non-structural projects and programs.

The whole philosophy of reducing losses caused by flooding has shifted from purely structural solutions towards an holistic systems management approach to formulate a basin wide basis. By coordinating structural non-structural project and programs we could achieve a higher level of benefits than by the individual projects by themselves. This requires a basin wide planning process on cooperation, coordination and continuity.

Under present state statutes, the ARBC is strategically positioned to provide a platform where federal, state and local interests could cooperate and coordinate projects and programs.

It is also important to **institutionalize** a basin wide planning process in order to allow continuity. This will allow for a rational process to set priorities through a cooperative and coordinate process.

### **Steps needed towards the development of a basin wide floodplain planning and management process**

There are 3 steps needed in order to achieve this:

1. Development of a strategic plan for the ARBC
2. Institutionalize a basin wide floodplain planning and management process
3. Funding sources

#### **1. Strategic Plan for ARBC**

In order for the ARBC to be able to move forward on this objective to coordinate a basin wide planning process it is necessary to develop a strategic plan to define goals and objectives, organizational framework and any additional legislation needed in order to institutionalize and carry out a basin wide floodplain planning and management plan in the Amite River Basin. The strategic plan will also identify funding sources and mechanisms beyond the traditional federal, state and local governments.

#### **2. Institutionalize a basin wide flood plain planning and management plan**

- The plan will define a planning process based on coordination process based on coordination, and cooperation among federal, state and local interests in formulating projects and programs
- It will include structural and non-structural projects and programs
- Form partnership with federal, state and local agencies and governments in carrying out projects and programs
- Surveillance and maintenance of major water bodies within the Amite River Basin
- Planning and budgeting of Capital Improvement Projects and Programs
- Planning Tools and Programs
  - Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
  - Hydrologic and Hydraulic Modeling
  - Analysis of basin wide population trends

- Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS)
- Community Rating System (CRS)
- NO-Adverse Impact (NAI)
- Floodplain Construction/Elevation and relocation
- Floodplain fill compensation
- Repetitive flood loss reduction
- Flood Preparedness
- Real Time Flood Stage Information
- Flood Warning System (stages)
- Flood Warning System (inundation)

### 3. Funding Sources

- **Historically flood control projects have been funded through federal, state and local partnerships. Federal through the USACE, state through Capital Outlay and local primarily through local taxes.**
  - a. **ARBC has a 3-mill ad-valorem tax authority within the Amite River jurisdictional basin. (portions of 6 parishes within the basin). ARBC has used this authority to tax property owners within the Comite River Diversion Canal Taxing District which is a sub-district of the Amite River Basin to provide the “cost share” for the Comite River Diversion Canal Project (CRDCP)**
  - b. **House Resolution #197. 2016 Regular Session of the Louisiana Legislature. House Resolution 197 provides that the state should consider establishing a multijurisdictional funding approach to fund flood protection projects and “would allow multiple local units of government to cooperate in the development of creative and strategic mechanisms for funding flood protection projects and serve to achieve an economy of scale and diversity flood protection reliability and sustainability.” It directed CPRA to study and make recommendations regarding multijurisdictional funding of flood protection projects. A report has been prepared by CPRA and recommends that**
    - 1. **Remove the obstacles to the regional flood protection authorities ability to levy taxes for districts created after 2006 and levy an authority-wide tax**
    - 2. **Explicitly authorize multijurisdictional spending**
    - 3. **Statutorily dedicate a percentage of the currently assessed millage to O&M.**

The proposed legislation based on these recommendations is being prepared by Representative Jerome Zeringue of District 52.

ARBC inclusion in this legislation would give us the authority for a basin wide ad-valorem tax that would allow the ARBC to implement a basin wide floodplain planning and management program.

- c. **Temporarily direct funding from the state. This can get accomplished by having the LADOTD include the ARBC in their budget. This would be a temporary funding source until a reliable funding source through local taxation can be done.**