Federal Update

Legislative Action, Disaster Supplemental Funding, and IIJA Information

NEAL MCMILLIN, DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL AFFAIRS
GOMESA Revenue Sharing Coalition DC Fly-In

Fly-in supported legislation to increase revenue sharing from offshore energy development with affected states through increasing GOMESA payments and setting up a system for offshore wind.

65 participants conducted 41 in-person Congressional meetings. An additional 11 virtual meetings are being scheduled.

Participants were from LA, TX, MS, and AL.

WRDA 2022 (HR 7776) passed the House of Representatives on June 9th with a 384 to 37 vote. Louisiana’s delegation voted Yes.

The Senate version of WRDA 2022 (S. 4137) passed the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on May 4th with a unanimous 20 to 0 vote.

Each bill awaits consideration by the Senate.

**Notable WRDA 2022 Provisions Under Consideration**

- Authorize Upper Barataria Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction ($1.5 billion total)
- Authorize modification of Lake Pontchartrain and Vicinity ($1.2 billion total)
- Authorize modification West Bank and vicinity ($663 million total)
- Provisions to allow state projects to count for crediting for HSDRRS payback
- Affirming cost share of MRGO Ecosystem Restoration as full federal
- Cost share for Lower Mississippi River Comprehensive Study as full federal
- Cost share of Algiers Canal Levees OMRRR as full federal
- Elevate priority of coastal restoration within the Army Corps’ mission
- Allow emergency funds to be used to increase resilience, instead of just to previous condition
- Extends authority for USACE to adjust LPV and WBV for settlement, subsidence, and sea level rise
- Use the beneficial use of dredged material plan for Port Fourchon
$122 million for Grand Isle

USACE, in partnership with CPRA, will undertake $122 million in work to address Hurricane-Ida related damage to the Grand Isle Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction Project.

Repairs will begin in August 2022 by installing interim measures such as placing supersack sandbags at 12 locations.

A 2,200 foot stone dune core, repairs to existing breakwaters, and repairs to the western jetty will commence in 2023. Additionally, a geotextile clay tube will be installed in the west, the eastern geotextile sand will be repaired, and the 7-miles dune and beach will be restored.
In partnership with NOAA, NFWF announced 16 projects totaling $25.2 million in grants to coastal communities affected by hurricanes or wildfires.

Louisiana received 3 projects totaling $15.4 million, approximately 61% of the distributed funds.

CPRA received $5 million for the Bayou Grand Cheniere Marsh Creation Project.

ECRF funding provided through the 2021 federal disaster supplemental law (P.L. 117-43).
Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Rural Playbook

Rural Playbook aims to help rural communities understand available funding from IIJA.

• Identifies programs and sources of funds with rural set asides.

• Provides overview of flexibilities and waivers related to cost sharing, as well as other benefits for rural communities.

• Includes rural fact sheets from 7 key agencies, including Dept. of Commerce, EPA, Dept. of Interior, FEMA, and USDA.

Links to Rural Playbook homepage and PDF.
The Technical Assistance (TA) Guide provides direction on programs, processes, and resources that would provide targeted support to an entity to help the potential beneficiary access and deploy federal funding.

TA ranges from hands-on, intensive planning to self-directed resources such as webinars and websites.

Some available TA focuses on securing funds; other TA focuses on effectively deploying funds.

TA Guide has sections on Water Programs, Resilience Programs, and Place-based/General Initiatives.
Biden-Harris Permitting Action Plan

Released on May 11th, the action plan is largely led by the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (known as FPISC or the Permitting Council). The plan is focused on clean energy and infrastructure.

5 Key Elements
• Accelerating permitting through early cross-agency coordination
• Establishing clear timeline goals & tracking progress
• Engaging in early, meaningful outreach
• Improving agency responsiveness and technical assistance
• Adequately resourcing (funding & staffing) federal agencies

Priority Areas
Offshore wind, renewable energy, broadband, critical minerals, transportation, and climate-smart infrastructure.
The IIJA included the bipartisan “Build America, Buy America Act” which applies “Buy America” to all taxpayer-funded infrastructure and public works projects.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) released guidance to implement the act and align it with President Biden’s “Made in America” executive order (EO 14005).

Requirements went into effect May 14, 2022.

OMB has an active Request for Information on affects.

Many federal entities are seeking 6 month waiver (delay) to assess potential impacts.
America the Beautiful Challenge RFP

On May 4th, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) announced a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the America the Beautiful Challenge for 2022 to support locally led, voluntary ecosystem restoration projects.

The streamlined application process provides a one-stop-shop for applicants to get funding from Dept. of Interior, USDA, Dept. of Defense, as well as private philanthropy.

Conserving rivers, coasts, wetlands, and watersheds is a top priority.

$85 million is available for this year. Proposals are due July 21, 2022. The RFP can be found here.
ASACW Visit Louisiana from April 20 - 21

Governor Edwards and CPRA leadership discussed key Louisiana coastal priorities with Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Michael Connor, Major General William “Butch” Graham, and Colonel Stephen Murphy.

In addition to meeting with stakeholders, the Army Corps leadership took flyovers along the Mississippi River and across the coastal area.