## Proposed Atchafalaya National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) Nomination and Designation Process

## **Nomination Process**

2019

- Governor John Bel Edwards indicated interest to NOAA in hosting a NERR (July 2019)
- NOAA responded affirmatively (December 2019)

2020-2021

- Launched preliminary public outreach (December 2020)
- Evaulated candidate sites in accordance with NOAA guidelines (2021-2022)

2022

- Hosted site-specific stakeholder engagement (February and November 2022)
- Governor John Bel Edwards nominated Atchafalaya to NOAA (November 2022)

2023

- NOAA approved the site nomination and documentation of the process (March 2023)
- Launched the designation process (April 2023)

## **Designation Process**

- The designation process includes the development of a Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- The Management Plan contains the goals, objectives, and strategies for the reserve and provides the guiding framework for reserve implementation.
- The EIS describes and evaluates potential impacts of the reserve on the surrounding environment, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- Through this public scoping meeting and comment period, we are seeking public input on the geographic location of the reserve, lands and waters to include in the reserve boundary, potential alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS, and any other feedback, suggestions, or concerns that should be considered while developing the EIS.

Comment Waiting **Scoping** Notice of Period Record of Period Period **Draft EIS** Final EIS (Minimum (Minimum Decision Intent (40 days) 45 days) 30 days)

**EIS Development**