



Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority



Coastal Protection & Restoration Authority Board Meeting
Wednesday, February 19, 2025

9:30 AM

State Capitol-900 N. Third Street- House Committee Room 5
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

The following constitute minutes of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board Meeting and are not a verbatim transcript of the proceedings. Audio and video recordings of the meetings are available for viewing and kept at the Office of the Governor-Coastal Activities Office in Baton Rouge, LA.

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Chairman Gordon Dove	Present
Mr. Dustin Davidson for Sec. Tyler Gray, DENR	Present
Mr. Tyler Bosworth for Sec. Sheahan, LDWF	Present
Mr. Jerry Lang for Sec. Giacometto, DEQ	Present
Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser	Absent
Tony Alford, Gov's Advisory Comm	Present
Pres. Matthew Jewell, Barataria Basin	Present
Cong. Joseph Cao, Pontchartrain Basin	Present
Chad Courville Teche/Vermillion	Present
Dwayne Bourgeois, Terrebonne Basin	Present
Bill Hidalgo, Atchafalaya Basin	Present
Laurie Cormier, Calcasieu/Sabine Basin	Present
Robert Jordan Teche/Vermillion Parish	Absent
John Lane, Breton Sound Basin	Present
Rep. Zeringue, Ex-officio, Designee of the Speaker of the House	Present
Sen. Hensgens, Ex-officio, Designee of the President of the Senate	Absent

III. Approval of Agenda

Motion by: Mr. Bourgeois
Seconded by: Mr. Hidalgo
Unanimously Approved

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion by: Mr. Bourgeois
Second by: Mr. Alford
Unanimously Approved

v. Old Business/Announcements

vi. Implementation Update– Glenn Ledet, Jr., CPRA (video:0:02:50)

Mr. Ledet updated the Board on the latest progress of various projects around the coast. CPRA has 109 active projects with 37 of them are in construction, 68 in engineering and design, with 4 more in the planning stage. Of the projects now being constructed 34 are hurricane protection projects and 36 are creating marsh. Mr. Ledet also provided updates on E&D, Construction, Restoration, and Hurricane Protection & Flood Risk Reduction (specific projects outlined below).



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- **Construction Update** – Mr. Ledet highlighted 2 construction projects: **Labranche Shoreline Protection Project**: This project involves the design and construction of approximately 13,000 linear feet of rock breakwaters along the last remaining unprotected segment of St. Charles Parish's Lake Pontchartrain shoreline. This project's budget is approximately \$24.5 million. **Grand Bayou Ridge and Marsh Creation**: This project involves the creation or nourishment of approximately 356 acres of marsh along Grand Bayou in Plaquemines Parish using sediment from the Mississippi River. Estimated cost \$62.4 million funded through CWPPRA.
- **Restoration Update – Terrebonne Island Restoration**: Mr. Ledet stated that this is a bird island projected funded by NRDA. However, Weeks Marine would not be able to complete the island restoration work before bird nesting season began on Feb. 15. Therefore, Weeks opted to demobilize from the island on January 20 and then return to the island after bird nesting season ends in September 2025 to finish restoration of the island. Weeks' schedule shows **all work will be completed by December 21, 2025**. Mr. Ledet stated that this will be a change order for extra contract days, but no increase in cost. The next project Mr. Ledet provided an restoration update on was the **River Introduction Into Bayou Lafourche Pumping Capacity Improvements**. This project involves construction of a pump station on the Mississippi River at Donaldsonville in Ascension Parish with a minimum pumping capacity of 1,000 cfs alongside the existing 500-cfs pump station, thereby tripling the capacity for fresh water entering Bayou Lafourche to combat saltwater intrusion and provide fresh drinking water to over 300,000 residents in Assumption, Ascension, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes. The funding partners for this project are CPRA, LA Dept. of Environmental Quality and the Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District. Construction is ongoing with an estimated completion date of August 2026.
- **Recreational Use Improvements Update**: CPRA joined its partners from Iberville Parish in Plaquemine on January 29, 2025 to break ground on the Bayou Pigeon Boat Launch Project. This project will add five new boat launches, increase available lanes from two to seven and add new floating piers to facilitate easier launching and retrieval of boats, along with upgrading ADA-compliant parking spaces. This project is state funded.

Mr. Ledet also provided an update on the FY 2026 Annual Plan, stating that CPRA has had four meetings with 200 attendees across those meetings-- 43 public comments. The final plan will be brought back before the board at the April 16th board meeting. He also highlighted a Parish Project: **Lake Pontchartrain Shoreline Protection** (CPRA is not involved) the project is being led by the St. John Baptist Parish to provide protection for that area. In closing, Mr. Ledet announced the awarding of the Chandeleur Island Restoration Project of \$5,000,000 to CPRA from NFWF (America the Beautiful Grant) and the dates for Coastal Day (May 12th) and State of the Coast (May 20th-22nd) and that SHORES is being rescheduled for a later date.



TIMELINE

Draft Annual Plan Presented to CPRA Board – January 15, 2025
 Public Comment Period Ends – **March 22, 2025**
 Final Annual Plan Presented to CPRA Board – April 16, 2025
 Final Annual Plan Submitted to Legislature – TBD



PUBLIC COMMENTS

200 ATTENDEES ACROSS 4 MEETINGS – 43 PUBLIC COMMENTS

Lake Charles Houma Jefferson

EMAIL
 Public comments will be accepted via email to:
coastal@la.gov

ONLINE
 Comment portal available online at AP26.COASTAL.LA.GOV

MAIL
 Written comments will be accepted via mail to:
 Annual Plan Comment
 150 Terrace Avenue
 Baton Rouge, LA 70802

CPRA must receive all comments by March 22, 2025



vii. **Lower Mississippi River Comprehensive Management Study– Col. Cullen Jones and Ann Hijuelos, Senior Project Manager, USACE (video: 0:26:39)** Col. Jones provided to the board an update on the LMRCMS. He stated that this is a high priority for the USACE and that bottom line up front working alongside state and federal and local teammates are exercising a generational opportunity on the Lower Mississippi River. This will give them the opportunity to examine the comprehensive management of the Lower Mississippi with the goals of increasing the resiliency of the river and tributaries project to be adaptable for future use and flood risk for the next 50 to 100 years. The Colonel stated that the massive scale of this project is going to require, across all 7 states, public and stakeholder engagement. The USACE is also looking at how they are partnering with CPRA in complimenting their 50 year, \$50B coastal master plan to ensure the resiliency of south Louisiana now and into the future. The Colonel also pointed out a few problems and opportunities along the MS River (see slide below). He stated that they have operated the Bonnet Carre Spillway 5 times since 2016 (executed it twice in 2019) and have had to construct the Saltwater Sills three years in a row (2022, 2023 & 2024) due to low flows. He also emphasized that under the WRDA 2020 Act, Sec 213- they were authorized to execute a comprehensive study of the Lower MS River basin from Cape Girardeau, Missouri, to the Gulf of Mexico (Officially known as Gulf of America per “Restoring Names that Honor American Greatness” Exec. Order by President Trump) across a \$25M, 5-year program. This study will identify recommendations for actions to be undertaken by the Secretary, under existing authorities or after congressional authorization, for the comprehensive management of the basin. The Colonel highlighted a few accomplishments that the USACE has made to date: They’ve executed Phase 0 within the agency which allowed them to create inventory of existing data and models, and establish initial problems, opportunities, objectives, and constraints for the study. They’ve also hosted 32 public meetings, held quarterly meetings, 40+ stakeholder meetings, and are working with



Governor's designees from 7 states, federal representatives from 10 agencies, work with 6 USACE districts, and 44 federally recognized Tribes.

PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Project Design Flood: Shows a cross-section of a flood barrier with water levels and structural details.

Sunset Core Gateway openings: A bar chart showing the number of openings from 2010 to 2025, with a projected increase.

Saltwater Sill construction in 2022, 2023 & 2024: A cross-section diagram of a sill structure.

The 2011 flood was a result of precipitation that was approximately 60% of the project design storm, yet measured discharges were within 78% to 91% of PDF flows.

WAY AHEAD

Timeline milestones:

- 1 Dec 2022 - Study Start
- 28 Apr 24 - Alternatives Milestone Meeting
- 11 May 2023 - Phase 0 ends
- 24 Jul 24 - Publish Scoping Report
- 18 Feb 26 - Tentatively Selected Plan
- 08 June 26 - Public, Technical & Policy Review
- 22 Oct 26 - Agency Decision Milestone
- 17 June 27 - Final Feasibility Report
- 24 Aug 27 - MDC Commander Approval of Final Report
- 13 Sep 27 - State & Agency Review
- 27 December 27 - Chief's Report

Tasks to be completed:

- Develop Alternatives
- Execution of model runs
- Continue coordination on environmental model requirements
- Continue strategic engagements with partners and agencies
- Continue engagement with Tribal Nations
- Expand community outreach

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Implementing strategic engagement with agency partners, tribes, stakeholders, and the public demonstrates our commitment to long-term collaboration and cooperation throughout the Study process.

Activities include: Federal and State Agencies, Tribal Partners, Public meetings, and Stakeholder Engagement.

SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENTS WITH CPRA

USACE engages in the following CPRA-lead efforts:

- Atchafalaya Basin Master Plan
- Lower Mississippi River Management Program
- Upper Basin Diversion Program Study
- Coastal Master Plan

CPRA engages in the following LMR Comp-specific groups:

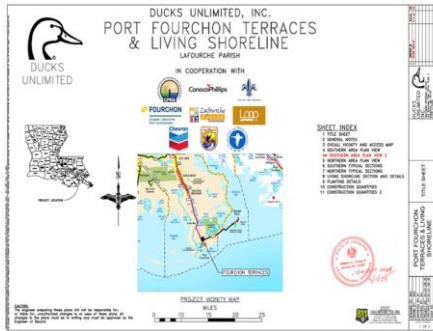
- State Partnering Group (meets in October and April)
- Quarterly Public Update (Next update scheduled for April/May 2025)
- Interagency Advisory Group (met in October 2024)

Chairman Dove, Glenn Ledet, Brian Lezina and others have been actively engaged with USACE

viii. **Restore and Retreat Update on West Grand Terre Plantings and Port Fourchon Terraces – Rep. Orgeron and Polly Glover, Restore or Retreat (video: 01:02:23)** Rep. Orgeron and Ms. Glover updated the board on their organization’s history and its work on West Grand Terre Plantings and Port Fourchon Terraces. Rep. Orgeron stated that the Restore or Retreat organization is a non-profit coastal advocacy group created by coastal Louisiana residents and stakeholders over 25 years ago with a membership of over 250 businesses and individuals. ROR seeks to identify and expedite the implementation of aggressive, large-scale restoration & resiliency projects to protect this irreplaceable region. Rep. Orgeron also stated that they are privately funded by donors and are currently located at SLEC Office on Nicholls Campus and will be relocating to the new coastal center later this year. The goals of ROR are to support CPRA’s Master/Annual Plan, levels of government, educate on coastal issues and promote educational project tours (Neptune Pass) and organize coastal volunteer projects (Earth Day, West Grand Terre etc...). Ms. Glover presented on a few projects that ROR has had ongoing efforts in regards to plant vegetation along the island. She stated that November 2022 was Phase 1 of planting which covered 10 acres of vegetation, using 2 species (vermillion smooth cord and black mangroves). Ms. Glover indicated that Phase 2 (October 2024) consisted of funding from 3 groups, CPRA Partnership Trust Fund Grant, Restore Americas Estuaries and Citgo (a private vegetation donation from Five S). This phase consisted of the engagement of 37 volunteers over the course of one day, just shy of 6hrs planting approximately 8200 plants (3 different species). Ms. Glover stated the goal of this planting project was for shoreline stabilization. She also highlighted some personal ties to the Grand Terre Island and facility that her father designed and built the marine laboratory. She provided a quick update after the recent historic 10 inches of snow that took place



across the state. The field assessment shows that about 80% of the planting survived and the mangroves are showing signs of stress but are expected to come back. Regarding Port Fourchon Terraces & Living Shoreline ROR has been in collaboration with Ducks Unlimited/Conoco Phillips, they led a volunteer event in December of planting mangroves. It's a \$4M Terrace Project covering 22 terraces, 8 miles of length and 87,000ft (both sides). Ms. Glover closed with sharing the tentative go date for planting of Phase 2 on April 2nd and encouraged the board and audience to join.



Ducks Unlimited / Conoco Phillips



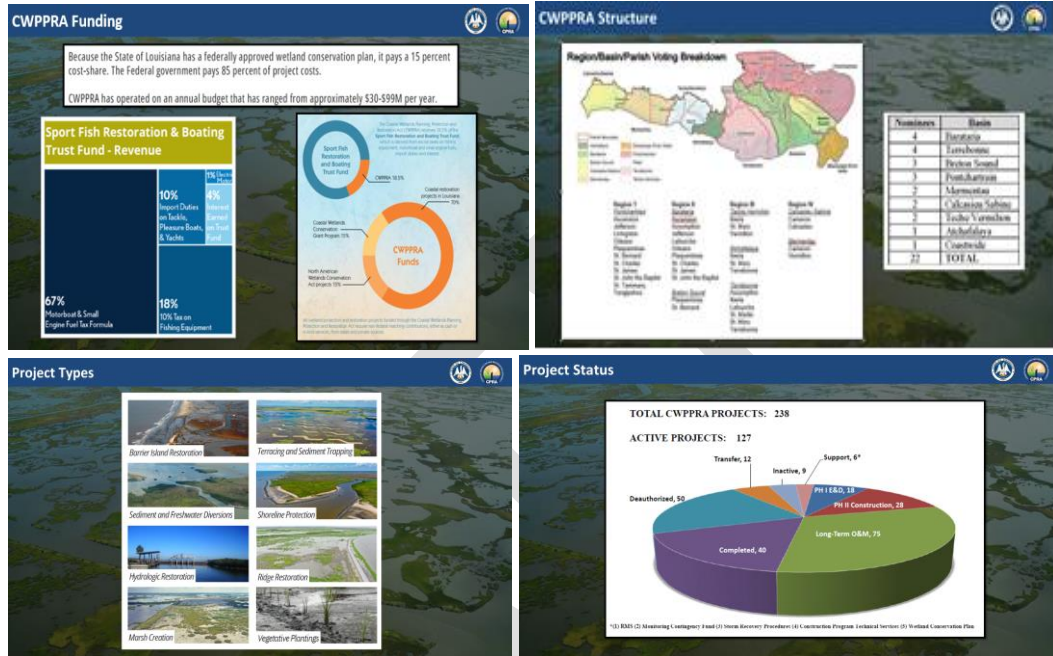
IX. **Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) Update– Brian Lezina, CPRA (video:01:31:37)** Mr. Lezina updated the board on the backbone of the state's coastal plan for the next 35yrs, CWPPRA. It is most familiarly known as the The Breaux Act (CWPPRA), was passed in 1990, championed by Sen. John Breaux, and signed into law under Pres. George Bush. This Act dedicated significant recurring federal funding to the national crisis in Louisiana loss of coastal wetlands. Not only that, but it brought the expertise and interest of the federal family as well. Mr. Lezina stated that the State of Louisiana has a federally approved wetland conservation plan, it pays 15% cost-share. The Federal government pays 85% of project costs. The funding for the program (CWPPRA) comes from Sport Fish Restoration and Boating trust revenue. Mr. Lezina explained by stating that 18.5% of those monies are then appropriated to Breaux Act programs with 70% of that 18.5% going to what we know is the Louisiana Program; what we associate with CWPPRA. He said that while this is a federal project, a non-federal match is required in this case a 15% cost share to the state either in all cash or with a percentage of in-kind match. Although fluctuations occur and there are inter-annual changes the annual budget is usually \$30 to \$99M based on recurring revenues; Most often lately in the \$70M-\$80M range. Mr. Lezina also indicated The Act provides that the oversight of the Louisiana program is composed of 5 federal, and 1 state entity Task Force to administer the program. Specifically, the law provides that the Chair position is held by the US Army Corps of Engineers New Orleans District Commander, currently Col Jones. Additionally, given the federal recognition of the coastal master plan and a requirement for state spending the plan also shapes the



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direction of the CWPPRA program. The program is organized with a basin approach, they are sectioned into four regions which allows the public to have input. Mr. Lezina stated that anyone can propose a project to be considered for a CWPPRA project and a compiled list is put into consideration and dwindled down through phases.



x. **Public Comment**

xi. **Adjourn**

Motion by: Mr. Alford
Seconded by: unanimous.