



Land Marks

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CWPPRA TASK FORCE APPROVES PATH FORWARD FOR THREE COASTAL RESTORATION PROJECTS NEARING THEIR 20 YEAR COMPLETION ANNIVERSARY

The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) Task Force, comprised of representatives from five federal agencies and the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, voted to approve the path forward for three coastal restoration projects approaching the end of their 20-year life. The projects were approved to develop a close-out plan, in which their coastal restoration and protection features will remain in place with no cost increase. The project sponsors will develop a close-out package including a report of features, costs, and effectiveness. Close-out will be finalized by the Task Force once the final package is completed. The Task Force is charged by CWPPRA to make final decisions concerning issues, policies, and procedures necessary to execute the program and its projects.

According to Task Force member Christopher Doley of the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, "There are obviously a lot of projects that are coming into their 20 year life...they are sometimes complex projects and

it requires due diligence to close these out properly."
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CWPPRA Task Force members included (L to R) Jeffrey Weller of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Christopher Doley of the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Colonel Michael Clancy of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Johnny Bradberry of the Louisiana Coastal Restoration and Protection Authority, Britt Paul of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (acting), and David Garcia of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (acting).

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 2	BTNEP Management Conference #84	Thibodaux, LA
Aug 5-10	Ecological Society of America Conference	New Orleans, LA
May 30 - June 1	CPRA Board Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA
Aug 27-30	National Conference on Ecosystem Restoration	New Orleans, LA
Sept 13	CWPPRA Technical Committee Meeting	Baton Rouge, LA

Find out more details about these events and other events at:
www.lacoast.gov/calendar



Randy Moertle addresses the CWPPRA Task Force during the public comment period

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The CWPPRA program is the longest-running funding stream for coastal restoration and protection projects in Louisiana. The program allows anyone from the public, the State, or federal agencies to propose a project. Once selected, projects undergo a rigorous process of planning, engineering and design, construction, and operations, maintenance, and monitoring.

With over 27 years since the legislation's enactment, several projects completed under the program are approaching the end of their life cycle, which is defined by the program as 20 years from the completion of construction of the project. After the 20 year period, they may take one of four defined paths: 1) project close-out with no feature removal, 2) project close-out with partial or complete feature removal, 3) project transfer to another entity, or 4) project extension.

The following projects located in three parishes were approved to proceed to close-out:

- Brady Canal Hydrologic Restoration, Terrebonne Parish
- Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to Clovelly Hydrologic Restoration, Lafourche Parish
- Marsh Island Hydrologic Restoration, Iberia Parish

The Brady Canal Hydrologic Restoration project, 21 miles south of Houma, sought to maintain and enhance 297 acres of marsh in the project area by reducing tidal exchange. At a cost of \$7.35M, project features include replaced weirs, a rock plug, stabilized channels, and restored and maintained channel banks. The Task Force recommended that the project, which is co-sponsored by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the State, retain its features with no cost increase. The project completes its 20 year life on May 22nd, 2020.



For the Brady Canal Hydrologic Restoration project, the narrow, eroding shoreline of Bayou DeCade was reinforced with rock in order to help restore the hydrology of the Brady Canal area.

The Marsh Island Hydrologic Restoration project, benefiting 408 net acres of marsh at a cost of \$5.14M, is located in the eastern portion of the Marsh Island

Wildlife Refuge. The project stabilized the northeastern shoreline of Marsh Island and helped restore historic hydrology. The project also closed seven oil and gas canals at the northeast end of Marsh Island. The Task Force recommended that the project, which is co-sponsored by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the State, retain its features with no cost increase. The project completes its 20 year life on October 31st, 2020.



The Marsh Island Hydrologic Restoration project's features include shoreline protection, canal closures, and isolation of Lake Sand from Vermilion Bay with a rock dike on the northeastern edge of Marsh Island. View is looking west.

Located five miles southeast of Cut Off, LA, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to Clovelly Hydrologic Restoration project benefits 175 net acres of marsh in the Barataria estuary, which was losing approximately 450 acres per year when the project was implemented. The project features include three rock weirs, four canal plugs, a flap-gated culvert, a variable crest weir, and a weir with a barge. The shoreline was also reestablished along 5,000 ft. of canals and 6,000 ft. of lake-rim along Bay L'Ours. At a cost of \$12.78M, the goals of the project were to restore the area's hydrology and reduce high rates of erosion. The Task Force recommended that the project, which is co-sponsored by NRCS and the State, retain its features with no cost increase. The project completes its 20 year life on December 12th, 2021.

The CWPPRA program has constructed 113 coastal restoration and protection projects, of which 13 have been approved for close-out.



Part of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to Clovelly Hydrologic Restoration project, the constructed rock breakwater located in Bay L'Ours assists in reducing wave energies before they impact the shore.

LOUISIANA LAND LOSS AND WETLAND RESTORATION AT STATE OF THE COAST 2018

“We don’t have a day to waste”. — This was a main message heard from Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards and others at The Fifth Biennial State of the Coast Conference (SOC) which took place in New Orleans on May 30th—June 1st 2018 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in the Warehouse / Arts District of New Orleans.



State of the Coast brought together people from 31 states and several countries to look at the land loss crisis currently playing out in the northern Gulf of Mexico and what it means for the people with social, economic, and cultural ties to the area. With over 1000 attendees, oral and poster presentations, panel discussions, and a variety of exhibitors, State of the Coast was an opportunity to learn about restoration strategies; monitoring data; and efforts at local, state, and national levels to improve environmental, community, and economic resiliency [1].

Plenary speakers included Governor Edwards, New Orleans Mayor Latoya Cantrell, CPRA Board Chairman Johnny Bradberry, Houston CRO Marvin Odum, and WWF’s Jason Clay. Louisiana Senator Bill Cassidy also made an appearance. Presenters included community planners, engineers, scientists, communicators, and students. Attendees could visit sessions as diverse as “Recent Studies on Subsidence in Coastal Louisiana” and “Vanishing by the Minute: What Land-loss and Development Mean for Louisiana’s Cultural Heritage”.

Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) outreach staff were set up in the exhibit hall with information and materials for everyone who visited the booth. In addition to the most recent issues of WaterMarks, the Protect Our Coast poster series, and other publications, the CWPPRA booth debuted the new Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) Fact Sheet, stickers, and magnets. Attendees



could also use the #ProtectOurCoast photo booth to show their love for coastal wetlands. Other exhibitors included federal agencies like NRCS and private businesses like Industrial Fabric and Premier Concrete- both have a role to play in protecting and restoring the Gulf’s coast.

The urgency of the situation was a constant refrain at State of the Coast. To date Louisiana has lost land equal to the State of Delaware. At a panel discussion for Restoration on the Half Shelf, Captain Ryan Lambert said, “it’s time we stop comparing land loss in Louisiana to the state of Delaware, that makes the problem seem small, it’s not small. — Louisiana has lost land almost the size of the Grand Canyon. That’s what people need to know”. Analyses show that coastal Louisiana has a net change in land area of approximately 1,866 square miles between 1932 and 2016 [2]. This land loss is comparable the size of the Grand Canyon National Park (1,902 square miles). Under the CPRA Coastal Master Plan 2017 Medium Scenario, an additional 2254 square miles could be lost over the next 50 years if no action is taken.

The issues facing coastal Louisiana, and other coastlines around the world, are complex and urgent - State of the Coast 2018 provided an avenue for CWPPRA and others working for coastal restoration at environmental, economic, social, and cultural levels to share information, develop partnerships, and craft coordinated solutions to these challenges. Together, we can help create a more resilient coast.



OCEAN FEST 2018

In acknowledgment of World Oceans Day (June 8, 2018) Audubon Aquarium of the Americas (New Orleans) celebrated with their annual Ocean Fest event on Saturday, June 9th. World Oceans Day is an opportunity to recognize how healthy oceans impact our food, the air we breathe, our climate, and many other aspects of our lives. Unfortunately, our oceans face many challenges.

Families, couples, and individuals from across the state and around the world learned about ocean creatures, current ocean problems such as microplastics, and even a bit about Louisiana Wetlands. They had the chance to talk with people from the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program and LSU Sea Grant, learning both how the oceans support them and how they can better support the oceans.



CWPPRA Outreach staff were set up in the Mississippi River area and had a hands-on learning activity - the Mysterious Wetland Wonders. People of all ages had to guess which Louisiana wetland organism was inside the box only by feeling with their hands and reading clues

— Of course none of the items were alive! — but each represented an influential component of Louisiana wetlands, from invasive nutria which destroy marsh to bald cypress trees which are important economically and for wildlife habitat.

CWPPRA Outreach staff also had materials like the Protect Our Coast posters, stickers, and activity books available for the public, as well as literature about CWPPRA and recent issues of Watermarks. Citizens who had never heard of CWPPRA learned our mission in constructing projects that protect and restore wetlands and barrier islands in coastal Louisiana. CWPPRA projects may focus on land, but the connections between the Gulf of Mexico, the Mississippi and other rivers in Louisiana, coastal wetlands, and the communities that depend on those areas mean that each is an important part of what happens to the others.



COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION, AND RESTORATION ACT

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