Reggio Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration (BS-43)

Project Status
Approved Date: 2021  Project Area: 484 acres
Approved Funds: $3.64 M  Total Est. Cost: $33.6 M
Net Benefit After 20 Years: 283 acres
Status: Engineering and Design
Project Type: Marsh Creation
PPL #: 30

Location
This project is located in Region 2, Breton Sound Basin, St. Bernard Parish.

Problems
St. Bernard Parish may experience some of the highest rates of wetland loss over the next 50 years of any coastal parish and with no further action, it could lose an additional 237 sq. miles (72% of the parish land area; 2017 Master Plan Appx A). Locations outside the levees could experience increased storm surge flood risk. This project area has experienced wetland loss due to a variety of factors including subsidence, saltwater intrusion, and storm damage. Hurricane Katrina devastated the area resulting in substantial marsh loss which has exposed infrastructure to open water conditions. Most recently, the area experienced impacts due to Tropical Storm Barry in 2019. Canals in the area have increased the effects of saltwater pulses in the fall which subsequently cause the vegetation to die off and decay to the W and N of the canals (identified in red on the map).

Restoration Strategy
The project goal is to create and nourish approximately 484 acres of marsh east of the Reggio community, and plug 2 canals to help counteract saltwater intrusion to the north and west of Reggio. This project will create 291 acres and nourish 193 acres of wetlands with sediment hydraulically dredged from a borrow source in Lake Lery. Temporary containment dikes will be constructed and gapped within three years of construction to allow greater tidal exchange and estuarine organism access. In addition, two canals are proposed to be plugged to counteract saltwater intrusion. Restoration in this area would build the area’s defenses against hurricanes and flooding. The project would result in 283 net acres over the 20-year project life.

Progress to Date
This project was approved for Phase I Engineering and Design in January 2021.

This project is on Priority Project List (PPL) 30.