



State of Louisiana

**Coastal Protection and Restoration
Authority of Louisiana (CPRA)**

**2025/2026 Annual Inspection
Report**

for

**FRESHWATER BAYOU
WETLANDS PROJECT
(ME-04)**

State Project Number ME-04
Priority Project List 3

February 2, 2026
Vermilion Parish



Prepared by:

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I. Introduction

The Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Project (State Project No. ME-04) is in the Mermentau Basin on the western bank of the Freshwater Bayou Canal in Vermilion Parish just south of the town of Intracoastal City. Structural components of the project extend from the North Prong/Belle Isle Canal south to the Humble/Acadiana Marina Canal. (See Appendix A).

The Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Project was authorized by Section 303(a) of Title III Public Law 101-646, the Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) enacted on November 29, 1990, as amended and approved on the second Priority Project List. The Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Project was approved with an original twenty-year (20 year) project life, which began in March 1995. In 2016, the CWPPRA Task Force approved a project extension for an additional 20 years.

II. Inspection Purpose and Procedures

The purpose of the annual inspection of the Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Project (ME-04) is to evaluate the constructed project features to identify any deficiencies and prepare a report detailing the condition of project features and recommended corrective actions needed. Should it be determined that corrective actions are needed, CPRA shall provide, in the report, a detailed cost estimate for engineering, design, supervision, inspection, and construction contingencies, and an assessment of the urgency of such repairs (O&M Plan, 2003). The annual inspection report also contains a summary of maintenance projects which were completed since completion of constructed project features and an estimated projected budget for the upcoming three (3) years for operation, maintenance and rehabilitation. The three (3) year projected operation and maintenance budget is shown in Appendix C. A summary of past operation and maintenance projects completed since completion of the Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Project are outlined in Section IV.

An inspection of the Freshwater Bayou Canal Bank Stabilization Project (ME-13) was held on December 18, 2025, under partly cloudy skies and mild temperatures. In attendance were Brent Bouy, Kimberly Hamm, and Stuart Hebert from CPRA, along with Eric Whitney representing NRCS. The inspection began at the northern end of the rock dike alignment at 9:30 am.

The field inspection included a complete visual inspection of the entire foreshore rock dike.

III. Project Description and History

The Freshwater Bayou Wetlands (ME-04) project encompasses approximately 37,000 acres of fresh to intermediate wetlands located between La. Hwy. 82 and Freshwater Bayou Canal, approximately 5 mi east of White Lake, Louisiana (figure 1). Boat wake-induced shoreline erosion, which averaged 12.5 ft/yr along each bank of Freshwater Bayou Canal between 1968 and 1992 (Brown & Root 1992), has deteriorated the spoil banks along the channel, allowing multiple breaches to form, and tidal scour of the organic soils in the adjacent wetlands to ensue. Between 1968 and 1990, the bank width of this navigation canal increased almost fourfold, resulting in the loss of 768 acres of coastal wetlands (Good et al. 1995).

The project plan (USDA/SCS 1994) divides the project area into three Conservation Treatment Units (CTU's), with CTU 1 and 3 benefiting directly from the shoreline protection work implemented under Phase 1 of the project. The objective of Phase 1 of this project is to prevent further widening of the Freshwater Bayou Canal channel into the project area, thereby protecting existing emergent wetlands along the west bank of the canal from further deterioration caused by shoreline erosion and tidal scour. The specific goal of the project is to decrease the rate of erosion and wetland loss along the west bank of Freshwater Bayou Canal using a rock dike. Construction of approximately 28,000 linear ft of free-standing, continuous rock dike along the west bank of the canal was completed in March 1995 by using existing rock that was salvaged from a weir at Wax Lake Outlet. The USACE provided manpower and equipment to facilitate removal of the rock from the weir and transport to the FWB Wetlands location for initial construction of this project.

Phase 2 of this CWPPRA project authorized the installation of eight (8) box-type water control structures with a single flapgate, a variable-crest weir, and two fixed-crest weirs (one with a 4-inch vertical slot) in the project area. Three structures are in CTU 1, three in CTU 2, and two in CTU 3. A few water control structures were already in place prior to the project. Additional structures were installed by the landowner at the landowner's expense, to enhance the operation of the eight CWPPRA structures. Phase 2 construction of the water control structures and weirs was completed in October 1998 and is maintained by the landowner. Phase 1 is the only feature that is maintained by CPRA.

The Phase 1 principal project features include:

- Site 1 - Foreshore Rock Dike (approximately 28,000 linear feet)

IV. Summary of Past Operation and Maintenance Projects

General Maintenance: Below is a summary of completed maintenance projects and operation tasks performed since March 1995, the construction completion date of the Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Project (ME-04).

2002 - Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Maintenance Project – LDNR: This maintenance project included the installation of approximately 26,750 tons of 1000 lb gradation stone to repair fifteen thousand, two hundred and sixty-three linear feet of bank. Quantity limitations prevented the repair of all sections required. Construction was completed on 4/22/2002. The cost associated with the engineering, design and construction of the Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Maintenance Project is as follows:

Construction:	\$615,900.00
Engineering & Design:	\$ 46,882.86
Construction Administration:	\$ 36,954.00
Construction Oversight/As-builts:	<u>\$ 17,311.06</u>
Project Total:	\$717,047.92

2005 - Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Maintenance Project – LDNR (Luhr Bros. Contractor): This maintenance project included the installation of approximately 21,370 tons of 1,250 lb gradation stone to repair 11,426 linear feet of bank. Quantity limitations prevented the repair of all sections required. Construction was completed on 12/15/2005. The cost associated with the engineering, design and construction of the Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Maintenance Project is as follows:

Construction:	\$472,660.50
Engineering & Design:	\$ 1,282.84
Construction Administration:	\$ 5,625.00
Construction Oversight/As-builts:	<u>\$ 4,419.68</u>
Project Total:	\$483,988.02

2014 - Transcontinental Pipeline Breach in Foreshore Rock Dike – Vermilion Parish Police Jury (Luhr Bros. Contractor): During the original construction of ME-04 in 1995, the rock dike around the Transcontinental Pipeline was gapped and tied into the marsh. Hurricane Rita caused marsh loss and increased the exchange behind the rock dike. The VPPJ obtained \$360,000 from the Interim Emergency Board to address a 300-foot section of rock dike which was originally gapped. This project was completed in June 2014.

2015 - Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Maintenance Project – CPRA (Luhr Bros. Contractor): This maintenance project included the installation of approximately 45,345 tons of 250 Lbs. Class Rock to repair the entire 28,000 linear feet of bank. Construction was completed on 3/4/2016. The cost associated with the engineering, design and construction of the Freshwater Bayou Wetlands Maintenance Project is as follows:

Construction:	\$1,998,736.00
Engineering & Design:	\$ 75,523.23
Construction Admin., Oversight, As-builts	<u>\$ 46,300.93</u>
Project Total:	\$2,120,560.16

2021 - Freshwater Bayou Breakwater Enhancement Project – Ducks Unlimited (Patriot Construction and Industrial, LLC): These enhancement projects included the installation of approximately 3445 cubic yards of rock to recap approximately 3350 linear feet of breakwater.

TABLE 1 - Ducks Unlimited Breakwater Recapping

Constructed Date	Name	Begin Point (LAT, LONG)	End Point (LAT, LONG)	Capped Elevation	Length of Capping	CY of Rock
Feb-21	CO1-BW1	29.6257795, -92.2721562	29.6245133, -92.2729727	+4	540.2	579.42
Feb-21	CO1-BW3	29.6357039, -92.2678075	29.6376708, -92.2670972	+4	771.7	790.64
Feb-21	CO1-BW4	29.6492992, -92.2629191	29.6507365, -92.2623801	+4	569.4	378.14
Jun-21	CO3-BW1	39.4458663, -92.3983371	29.5984424, -92.2926648	+4	177	202.23
Jun-21	CO3-BW2	29.6087185, -92.2850487	29.6090342, -92.2848203	+4	136	178.22
Jun-21	CO3-BW3	29.6096892, -92.2843228	29.6099225, -92.2841564	+4	100	148.51
Jun-21	CO3-BW4	29.6114176, -92.2831049	29.6117142, -92.2828771	+4	130	120.44
Jun-21	CO3-BW5	29.6118651, -92.2827558	29.6122886, -92.2824295	+4	186	282.59
Jun-21	CO3-BW6	29.6128264, -92.2820312	29.6132536, -92.2817041	+4	187	216.79
Jun-21	CO3-BW7	29.6218515, -92.2750410	29.6231117, -92.2740603	+4	554	546.46

Structure Operations: There are no active operations associated with this project.

V. Inspection Results

Site 1—Foreshore rock dike

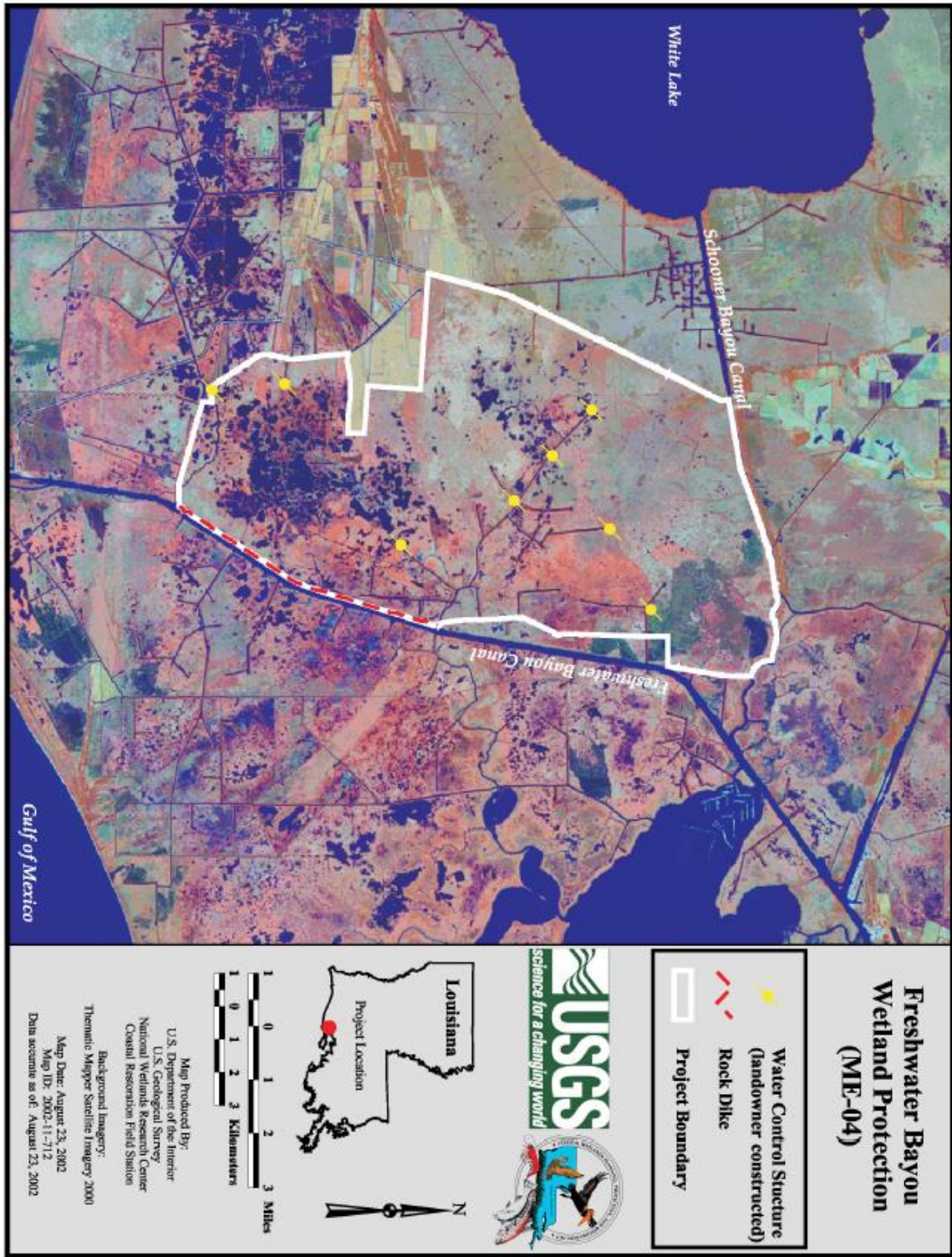
The inspection determined that the majority of the 28,000 linear feet of foreshore rock dike is in good condition; however, several localized areas may require attention in the future. (Appendix B)

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations




Based on observations, several areas were identified where the rock dike elevation was lower than the surrounding sections. These areas will require continued monitoring over the next few years, and if the conditions continue to worsen, a maintenance event will be required.

The three-year budget amount, shown in Appendix C, is based on the O&M Plan and includes a scheduled rock-capping event during that period.

Appendix A
Project Features Map



**Freshwater Bayou
 Wetland Protection
 (ME-04)**

-  Water Control Structure (landowner constructed)
-  Rock Dike
-  Project Boundary



Map Produced By:
 U.S. Department of the Interior
 U.S. Geological Survey
 National Wetlands Research Center
 Coastal Resources Field Station

Background Imagery:
 Thematic Mapper Satellite Imagery 2000

Map Date: August 23, 2002
 Map ID: 2002-11-712
 Data accurate as of: August 23, 2002

Appendix B
Photographs



Appendix C
Three Year Budget Projection

FRESHWATER BAYOU CANAL BANK PROTECTION / ME04 / PPL2
Three-Year Operations & Maintenance Budgets 07/01/2026 - 06/30/2029

Project Manager	O & M Manager	Federal Sponsor	Prepared By	
	Brent Bouy	NRCS	Brent Bouy	
	2026/2027 (-31)	2027/2028 (-32)	2028/2029 (-33)	20-Yr Est
<i>Maintenance Inspection</i>	\$ 10,763.00	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>Structure Operation</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>State Administration</i>	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 5,382.00	\$ 46,382.00	
<i>Federal Administration</i>	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	

Maintenance/Rehabilitation

2026/2027 (-31) Description:

E&D	\$ -
Construction	\$ -
Construction Oversight	\$ -
Sub Total - Maint. And Rehab.	\$ -

2027/2028 (-32) Description:

E&D	\$ -
Construction	\$ -
Construction Oversight	\$ -
Sub Total - Maint. And Rehab.	\$ -

2028/2029 (-33) Description: Rock Capping Event

E&D	\$ 100,000.00
Construction	\$ 1,270,000.00
Construction Oversight	\$ -
Sub Total - Maint. And Rehab.	\$ 1,370,000.00

	2026/2027 (-31)	2027/2028 (-32)	2028/2029 (-33)
Total O&M Budgets	\$ 16,763.00	\$ 8,382.00	\$ 1,422,382.00

O & M Budget (3 yr Total)	\$ 1,447,527.00
Unexpended O & M Budget	\$ 3,783,770.57
Remaining O & M Budget (Projected)	\$ 2,336,243.57

based on LANA
unexpended &
incremental
request

Appendix D
Field Inspection Form

Annual Inspection Report
 FRESHWATER BAYOU WETLANDS
 State Project No. ME-04

Project No. - Name: ME-0004 - FRESHWATER BAYOU WETLAND PROTECTION		Date of Inspection: December 18, 2025 Time: 9:50 AM	
Structure No.:		Inspector(s): Brent Bouy, Kimberly Hamm, Stuart Hebert (CPRA -LAF) Eric Whitney (NRCS)	
Structure Description: Rock Dikes			
Type of Inspection: Annual		Water Level: Calm at low tide - ~ -0.8 NAVD88 Weather Conditions: Partly cloudy with mild temperatures.	
Item	Condition	Photo #	Observations and Remarks
Rock Dike	Fair		Based on observations, there were a few areas where the rock dike elevation was noted to be lower than the surrounding sections. These areas will need to be monitored over the next few years, and if the condition continues to worsen, a maintenance event will be required. Additionally, work performed by others to raise the elevation of certain rock dike segments was also noted.
What are the conditions of the existing levees?		N/A	
Are there any noticeable breaches?		N/A	
Settlement of rock plugs and rock weirs?		N/A	
Position of stoplogs at the time of the inspection?		N/A	
Are there any signs of vandalism?		N/A	