Medium Diversion at Myrtle Grove with Dedicated Dredging

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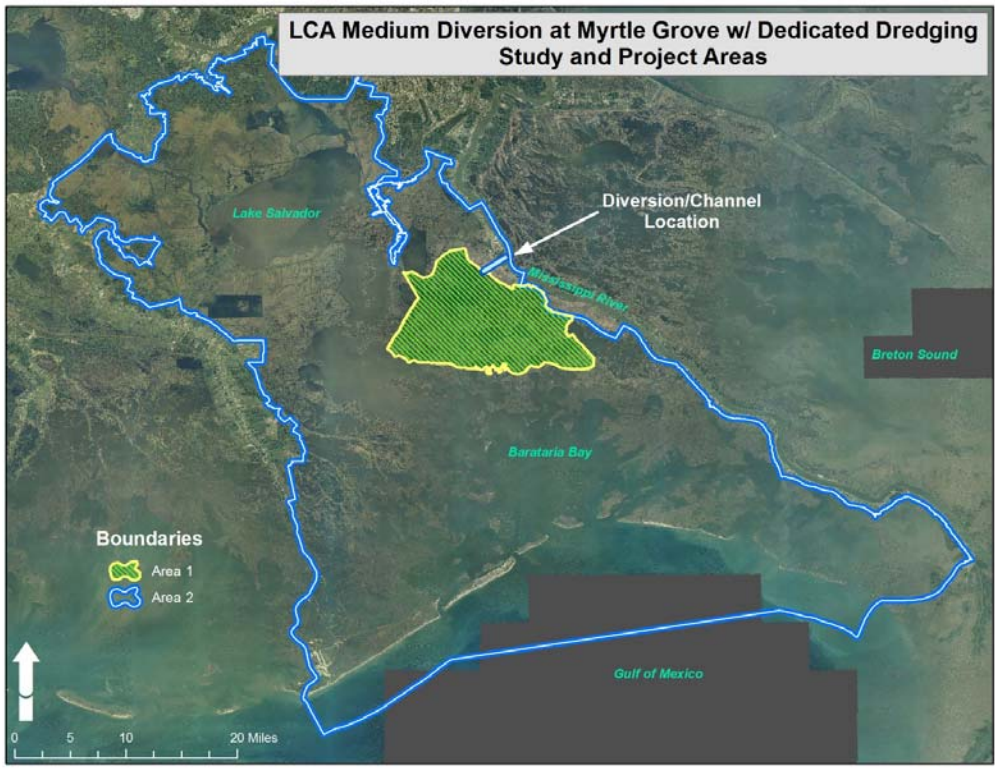

The Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) program focuses on critical, near-term ecosystem restoration projects and studies, as approved in the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The program goal is to slow the current trend of coast-wide wetland loss and resource degradation.

Several restoration techniques are employed in this program, including river diversions, marsh creation and barrier island restoration. Overall, the program is focused on a systematic approach to coastal restoration using larger projects to restore natural features and ecosystem processes.

The Medium Diversion at Myrtle Grove with Dedicated Dredging feasibility study (MDMG) is a Mississippi River diversion with dedicated dredging ecosystem restoration project identified in the LCA program. It was authorized under the Water Resources Development Act of 2007 - Section 7006(c)(1)(E) and Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana is the cost-share partner in the development and implementation of this project.

Project Location

The Medium Diversion at Myrtle Grove is located near the community of Myrtle Grove on the west bank of the Mississippi River in Plaquemines Parish, LA. The study area covers the Barataria Basin from north of Lake Cataouatche south to the Gulf of Mexico in Lafourche, Jefferson and Plaquemines parishes.

Project Goals

Construction of the Mississippi River levee has effectively stopped annual flooding that nourished surrounding wetlands with sediments, nutrients and freshwater. The diversion would provide additional sediment and nutrients to nourish highly degraded existing fresh to brackish wetlands in shallow open water areas of the mid- and lower Barataria basin. Dedicated dredging and sediment delivery from the Mississippi River to surrounding wetlands will quickly build new marsh that can be supplemented by the diversion. The planning goal is to utilize river resources to increase the quality and quantity of marsh habitat in Area 1(as shown in the map above).

Objectives

Project objectives for the Medium Diversion at Myrtle Grove are as follows:

- Establish geomorphic connection from the river to the estuary to introduce sediments to build and sustain Area 1 wetlands.

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- Deposit and retain riverine resources to maintain 33,880 marsh acres in Area 1 over the 50-year period of analysis.

Project Features

This restoration feature is evaluating a range of diversion sizes in addition to scales of dedicated dredging for marsh creation. Mississippi River water and sediments would be diverted through a new diversion structure installed in the Mississippi River levee. The operational scheme of the Myrtle Grove diversion will take the Davis Pond diversion structure into consideration.

Project Status

The Project Management Plan (PMP) and Feasibility Cost Share Agreement (FCSA) have been signed by the Corps and CPRA. The project is currently in the feasibility phase and will recommend a Tentatively Selected Plan in Jul 2013. Upon completion of the feasibility phase, the team will submit an Integrated Environmental Impact Statement and Director of Civil Works Report. A Director's Report is scheduled for December 2014.

Anyone seeking additional information on the Medium Diversion at Myrtle Grove project can visit the Louisiana Coastal Area program website at ***www.lca.gov*.**

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