

BREAUX ACT
Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

TASK FORCE MEETING
April 14, 2004

FINAL Minutes

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonel Peter J. Rowan convened the 54th meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Act Task Force. The meeting began at 9:35 a.m. on April 14, 2004, at the Estuarine Fisheries and Habitat Center, 646 Cajundome Blvd., Lafayette, Louisiana. The agenda is shown as enclosure 1. The Task Force was created by the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA, commonly known as the Breaux Act), which was signed into law (PL 101-646, Title III) by President George Bush on November 29, 1990.

II. ATTENDEES

The attendance record for the Task Force meeting is presented as enclosure 2. Listed below are the six Task Force members:

Donald Gohmert, Department of Agriculture
Miguel Flores, Environmental Protection Agency
Colonel Peter J. Rowan, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Sidney Coffee, State of Louisiana, Governor's Office (substituting for Ms. Karen Gautreaux)
Rolland Schmitten, National Marine Fisheries Service
Sam Hamilton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

III. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 2004 TASK FORCE MEETING

Colonel Rowan called for a motion to adopt the minutes from the 28 January 2004 Task Force Meeting.

Mr. Rolland Schmitten moved to accept the minutes. Mr. Donald Gohmert seconded, and the motion was passed by the Task Force.

IV. TASK FORCE DECISIONS

A. Decision: Presentation of Financial Status of the CWPPRA Program, Public Comment, and Task Force Decision Regarding the Future of CWPPRA Funding and Program Management

Mr. John Saia reported that the Technical Committee asked for public comment regarding the future funding situation for CWPPRA at the March 19, 2004 meeting. All comments received at the Regional Planning Team (RPT) meetings in February, the Technical Committee meeting in March, and comments received prior to this meeting were provided to the Task Force. In FY04, there are \$184 million in unobligated funds and an anticipated \$100 million remaining unobligated by the end of the fiscal year. There are a limited amount of funds that are unencumbered and will be used for contingencies and additional design work. Mr. Saia stated that Ms. Julie LeBlanc would present 2 presentations to the Task Force. The first presentation is a duplicate of what was presented at the February RPT meetings. The second is a more detailed presentation of the current and historic funding status of the program.

Ms. Julie LeBlanc re-presented the presentation that was given at the RPT meetings that reviewed the history of the Breaux Act and presented the financial status of the CWPPRA program. The cumulative funds into the program for FY92-09 are approximately \$1.14 billion (including \$5 million/year for planning). The fully funded term estimate is \$1.7 billion for PPL's 1-13. There is a projected shortfall of \$560 million if all PPL 1-13 projects are "fully funded". The PPL 13 recommendation by the Task Force in January was for \$90.5 million if all projects move to construction. She said that attendees at the RPT meetings were told that the Task Force was seeking public input regarding future funding options. New project options could be to suspend or limit new projects on PPL 15 and future lists or suspend or limit demonstration projects. Options for existing approved projects could be to suspend Phase II construction approvals or investigate approved but slowly progressing projects for suspension and return of funds. Other funding options are to find alternative sources of funding for CWPPRA-initiated projects. All oral and written public comments received to date were provided to the Task Force.

Ms. LeBlanc made a second presentation that outlined the current and historic funding situation from various perspectives, for use by the Task Force in making decisions in this agenda item. The cumulative funding anticipated (under the construction program only) from FY92-09 is \$1,048.2 million. This represents a threshold that the program cannot exceed without additional authorization beyond FY09. The 20-year funding required to operate and maintain projects that have started construction is \$720.9 million. There is still \$327.3 million available before the overall threshold of funds for 2009 is exceeded.

Mr. Randy Hanchey asked how much was for actual construction and how much was for operation and maintenance (O&M) and monitoring. Ms. Gay Browning said that approximately \$78-80 million was for O&M and monitoring. Ms. Julie LeBlanc added that the 20-year cost of 17 projects that are currently scheduled to request Phase II funds in August '04 totals \$332.7 million. Hypothetically, if the Task Force were to approve these projects, then the total funding threshold of the program would be exceeded.

Ms. Julie LeBlanc then outlined the annual cumulative obligations for FY92-09 compared to the cumulative work allowances. The cumulative work allowance into the program through FY03 is \$576.6 million. The cumulative obligations for FY92-03 were \$368.0 million, leaving an unobligated carryover of \$208.6 million at the end of FY03. The

cumulative work allowance into the program through FY04 is expected to be \$635.6 million. The cumulative obligations for FY92-04 are projected to be \$535.6 million, which leaves a projected \$100 million in unobligated funds at the close of FY04. The lag between funding approval and when agencies request funding causes the unobligated balance to be higher than the "unprogrammed" funds. For FY04, the cumulative "programmed" or set aside funds is \$634.7 million, leaving available "unprogrammed" funds of approximately \$900,000, as of March 27, 2004. The potential exists for requests to be submitted directly to the Corps that may not need Task Force approval (e.g. requests for increases up to 125% of baseline cost) that will deplete the remaining "unprogrammed" funds balance but not go over the available fund balance. The Corps asked the Task Force for guidance in this scenario.

Mr. Sam Hamilton noted that for FY04-to-date compared to the FY04 projections, the unobligated balance fell from \$184 million to \$100 million and asked Ms. Julie LeBlanc to explain this drop. Ms. Julie LeBlanc said that there are additional obligations for 20 years of O&M and monitoring for PPL's 1-8 of approximately \$66.3 million. An additional obligation exists for O&M and monitoring for the first three years for projects on PPL's 9 and above which is at least \$6.9 million. Also, there is an additional \$10 million for construction of one or several projects on PPLs 9 or above that have not yet been obligated.

Mr. Randy Hanchey asked if the money for 20 years of OM&M is just being transferred to another federal agency. Ms. Gay Browning said that obligating the money refers to when an obligation is put on a government order or MIPR, and it is shown as an obligation on the Corps' books. Mr. Hanchey asked if the obligated money could be de-obligated and used for other projects and find another way to fund the 10 percent O&M and monitoring at a later time. Colonel Peter Rowan said that fiscal law doesn't allow us to make that gamble. There needs to be a process that accounts and audits money that is set aside for O&M. He said that as more of the 127 projects are completed, the banking process needs to be refined and it then becomes a Task Force decision on whether or not to move on additional projects within the funding authority. He said that the bottom line is that the 20-year commitment for O&M has been made and that commitment is part of the trust that CWPPRA has with stakeholders and must be maintained.

Mr. Donald Gohmert said that Ms. Julie LeBlanc gave an excellent presentation in a way that everyone can understand. Mr. Rollie Schmitten added that he also thought it was an excellent presentation. He said that there is a broad audience when discussing the status of program funds and suggested including a definitions section to help give the public a basic understanding.

The floor was opened up to the public:

Mr. Randy Moertle, M.O. Miller Estates, said that the River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp, the Barataria Barrier Island Complex, and the Mississippi River Sediment Trap projects are all in excess of \$50 million. He feels that these projects should be covered under another funding source such as Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) program. He said that he sees CWPPRA as the program that will hold the marsh together while LCA gains momentum. He realizes that CWPPRA and LCA are two separate programs, but he feels the

two should work concurrently. He said that by FY06, when the \$56 million River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp project is set to begin construction, other funding sources will be known. He recommends putting the high-end projects on hold and keeping the CWPPRA process moving forward. He feels that certain areas of the State, such as Iberia and Vermilion Parishes, will be left out of the LCA process and that CWPPRA is their only hope.

Ms. Jenneke Visser, LSU, said that the Task Force should not be under the assumption that funding will end in FY09, and that having all these projects in line waiting for construction shows the need to have the Breaux Act reauthorized. For the short-term, she believes that projects ready for construction should be funded and suggested having one construction funding meeting each year in January when funding money arrives. She said that the restoration toolbox is incomplete and that demonstration projects can provide new tools. She added that in order to keep a good list of potential projects, new projects should be added each year so there is a good pool from which to select.

Mr. Charles Broussard, Vermilion Parish Coastal Advisory Committee, said he agrees with Mr. Randy Moertle that CWPPRA is important to Vermilion Parish. He said that Vermilion Parish has set aside a minimal amount of funds for a project at the Leland Bowman Locks. He said that a levee is needed there to prevent saltwater intrusion and that it only takes a small gale wind to push water around the Leland Bowman Locks and into the Mermentau Basin. He said that the Leland Bowman Locks project is critical to the agriculture, rice farmers, wildlife, and economy of Vermilion Parish. Marsh Island is their barrier island. He stated that he was involved in making the new Governor aware of the past dredging of the reefs south of Marsh Island. Governor Edwards issued an executive order to stop all shell dredging on the coast of Louisiana, which was enforced until Governor Treen took office. He asked the Task Force to consider extending the Marsh Island Protection Project to include the south side of the island.

Mr. Ted Beaulieu, Acadiana Bay Association, said that for the past 12 years, the Association has attended meetings and presented projects, especially the rebuilding of Point Chevreuil Reef and Weeks Bay. He told the Task Force of an incident where a drilling rig, guided by a tug owned by Delta Towing Company ran aground trying to enter West Cote Blanche Bay. He told the Task Force that something has to be done to protect the 475,512 acres of Louisiana water bottoms in Acadiana Bay, which represent 15 percent of the State's total estuary system. He said that the economic value of Acadiana Bay and Cypremort Point is \$134 million in real estate, commercial fisheries, and recreational fishing, not including oil and gas income. In regards to Mr. Broussard's comment about shell dredging on the historic reef, Mr. Beaulieu said that the Acadiana Bay Association asked Governor Foster to protect the reefs from dredging. He said that Governor Foster did protect the reefs, and the dredging companies ceased dredging this area. He said that the legalities of the matter have since been worked out, and there is no more shell dredging allowed. Mr. Beaulieu said that Hurricane Lili caused a tidal surge of 10-12 feet at Point Chevreuil where there are no reefs or barrier islands. He said that at Cypremort Point, where Marsh Island's elevation is one foot above mean tide, the storm surge was reduced to 4.5-5 feet. He said that it is important to get this historic reef rebuilt.

Ms. Marnie Winter, Jefferson Parish, touched on the highlights of the letter Jefferson Parish submitted to the Task Force. In the early years, CWPPRA was criticized for not coming up with enough projects. Now, there are a lot of projects ready to go which is good to show the rest of the nation and Congress the needs in Louisiana. She would like to see the PPL process continue. She said it is a good idea to keep the public involved. She agreed with what Mr. Randy Moertle said about using CWPPRA for funding small projects and the LCA for funding larger, more complex projects. She asked the Task Force to consider identifying alternative funding for some of the larger, more complex projects.

Mr. James Miller, representing Terrebonne Parish, said that he would hate to see the PPL process end. He said that with the high rate of erosion, some projects on the lists might become obsolete, allowing more money to be available for other projects.

Mr. Andrew MacInnes, Plaquemines Parish Coastal Zone Administrator, said that in regards to figuring out the best way to handle cash flow management and O&M, he would defer this decision to the Task Force. He said that deferring larger scale projects to the LCA program is like counting chickens before they hatch. He said that it is not known if the multi-billion dollar LCA proposal will happen, and that large scale projects like the barrier islands should not be sacrificed in the hopes that future funding will be available. Mr. MacInnes referred to the letter submitted to the Task Force. He believes that increased coordination between different departments of the Corps is critical to the infrastructure, economy, and wetland restoration. At a public meeting in Boothville recently, a member of the Corps of Engineers reported that hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of material is routinely dredged. He said that sediment pumps could be used to transport dredged material to areas in need.

Mr. Jess Curole, Lafourche Parish Coastal Zone Manager, said he would like to see the PPL process continue. He spoke on behalf of Madame President Charlotte Randolph and the Lafourche Parish Government.

Colonel Peter Rowan welcomed Mr. Scott Angelle. Mr. Angelle is the newly appointed Secretary of the DNR. Mr. Angelle said that he echoed the comments by other Task Force members about the presentation Ms. Julie LeBlanc gave. He said that DNR will work together with the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities and the Corps of Engineers as partners.

Additional discussion by the Task Force:

Mr. Rollie Schmitten said that it is important not to weaken CWPPRA. His personal view is that CWPPRA is the current and perhaps future workhorse of Louisiana coastal wetlands restoration and it must be protected. He supports the consensus from public comments that the PPL process should continue. He said that the PPL process keeps the public involved, informed, and focused on CWPPRA. He believes funding authorization should take place on an annual basis, which would allow the Task Force more fiscal control.

He also said that it is worthwhile to continue demonstration projects because there is only a small amount of cash involved and this is where research and development is performed.

Mr. Sam Hamilton said that he agrees with what Mr. Rollie Schmitten said about the importance of the PPL process. He said that one downside is the public expectation that all of the projects will be built and right away. He said that as the PPL process moves forward, people must be continually reminded of the fiscal restraints in CWPPRA. He said that the success in the CWPPRA program and LCA is going to be from the ground up. He said he does not like the idea of deferring big projects because some of them need to move forward if they are high priority. He supports the continuation of the PPL process with the caveat that an update on the fiscal situation is given at every meeting, so people are reminded of the limitations to CWPPRA.

Ms. Sidney Coffee said that the PPL process should be continued. She said that everyone is preparing for a 2004 Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), even though it is unsure whether or not there will be one. She feels that the annual process should continue because it is important for worthy projects to be able to compete for continued funding. She said that the main thing to do is keep the overall goal in mind throughout the process.

Mr. Randy Hanchey said that he agrees with Mr. Rollie Schmitten on everything except the annual approval process. He said that it did not make any sense to hold a project that is ready for construction until the annual meeting, which may be several months away. He said that up until this point, the Task Force has not had to make any serious priority adjustments and have for the most part taken projects on a first come, first serve basis. He said that the time has come to take a look at projects that are not approved for construction and develop a sense of priority among these projects. He does not think that it is significant whether project funds are approved quarterly or annually. He thinks that there should be an opportunity to spend available money on a project when it is ready to go and not just at the annual funding meeting.

Mr. Donald Gohmert said that he agrees with everything said about the priority lists and that the public should be involved in the process. He said that the risks involved by not addressing important issues to coastal communities emphasize the need to engage the public. He said that the Task Force needs the flexibility to direct projects to other resources that come along. Mr. Gohmert said that he agreed with Mr. Randy Hanchey that the Task Force cannot afford to delay making a decision and wait a year to approve construction on a priority project if funds are available. Mr. Gohmert said that if funding is available and a project is ready, the Task Force should act then and not wait a year because the conditions could change in the marsh such that the project may have to be redesigned or reformulated.

Mr. Miguel Flores said he supports public participation and the need for local communities to come up with local solutions necessary to deal with coastal land loss. He agrees with Mr. Sam Hamilton about the expectations placed on the public with continuing the PPL process. He said that he would have difficulty moving lower priority projects forward. He agrees with Mr. Rollie Schmitten that there is a need to continue the

demonstration projects. Mr. Flores said that more is gained than lost with demonstration projects. He said that he is in favor of annual approvals because even though there may be a project that comes up during the year, there is no money available to fund it and the Task Force should wait to approve projects until the money is in hand. He said that the Task Force needs to be more deliberate in how projects are funded, needs to look at all projects at one time, and then go with the highest priorities that are consistent with LCA.

Mr. Rollie Schmitten said that Mr. Randy Hanchey identified a potential weakness with the annual approach. He said that the Task Force should accommodate rare situations where projects are ready before the annual funding decision meeting. He said that the Task Force could have a special meeting or emergency meeting via phone conference to handle special projects. He said that he is leaning towards the annual basis.

Colonel Peter Rowan said that CWPPRA has contributed to the long-term coastal restoration program in terms of the overall plan, the Coast 2050 plan, and the LCA process. He said that WRDA is not a done deal. He said that CWPPRA is flexible, and there are provisions for emergency meetings. He wants the meetings to be open, and does not want the perception that the Task Force went behind closed doors and advanced a project without public debate. He added that demonstration projects are worthwhile and add to the body of knowledge on coastal restoration. He thinks that the Task Force can decide annually, but should be aware that there will be exceptions to the rules and they can act accordingly when need arises.

Mr. Miguel Flores asked how many planning dollars would continue to be invested in lieu of using money for construction of projects ready to advance. He thinks there will be a point in time when the Task Force must reassess how long planning should continue and forgo some money that could be used for construction of projects that are ready to go.

Mr. Sam Hamilton asked if the Task Force needed a motion to continue PPL15 and beyond. Colonel Peter Rowan stated that a motion was only needed if the Task Force diverged from the norm. Mr. Hamilton reiterated that the annual PPL meetings are a good opportunity to make fiscal presentation and remind everyone where we are financially with the program.

Mr. Randy Hanchey said that since there was a strong consensus to go to an annual process, he would be fine with that as long as there was a way to take care of special circumstances. He asked that the Task Force consider having the annual project approval meetings in sync with the construction season. He also agreed with the strong consensus to continue with demonstration projects. He said that in the past, there have been some demonstration projects that were simply a shortcut to get a project approved and funded without going through the full process. He said that discipline is needed from the Task Force to fully justify demonstration projects. Mr. Rollie Schmitten asked Mr. Hanchey if the October would be the best time for the annual project approval meeting giving consideration to the construction season. Mr. Hanchey said that he agrees with Mr. Schmitten because of the limited number of dredges available and the need to schedule work early. Ms. Sidney Coffee said that October would work best with the State's fiscal year.

Mr. Rollie Schmitten reaffirmed that the Task Force supports an annual PPL process and demonstration projects and moved that the Task Force institute an annual funding approval in October of each year with the recognition that unusual situations be handled.

Mr. Gary Rauber asked if the next priority list would be approved at the same October meeting with annual approvals of Phase II activities or if it would occur in January as scheduled. Mr. Randy Hanchey and Mr. John Saia both said that approval of the next PPL would take place at the January meeting.

Colonel Peter Rowan said that the projects that come up for approval this October will be funded based on an assumed FY05 budget, that is if the funding has not been received by that time. Ms. Julie LeBlanc raised the question about available funds to fund PPL14 Phase I efforts if all "unprogrammed" funds were used in October for Phase II approvals. Colonel Rowan said that the anticipated needs for engineering and design (Phase I) should be addressed and set aside in October. Mr. Donald Gohmert said that if the Task Force is going to look at the available monies for Phases I and II then it should be done at the same time. Mr. Randy Hanchey suggested changing the PPL14 process to approve projects for Phase I in October 2004 instead of January 2005. Mr. John Saia said that proceeding through the PPL 14 process with the intention of completing it in October instead of January would present problems and substantial change. He said that the Technical Committee would need to review the idea before giving the Task Force an answer on whether or not this is feasible. Mr. Donald Gohmert suggested continuing the process this year as before but with the understanding that the annual approval meeting for PPL15 will move to October of next year.

Mr. Rollie Schmitten made a motion recommending that the Task Force go to an annual cycle for Phase II funding approval in October. Mr. Sam Hamilton seconded, and the motion was passed by the Task Force.

Mr. Rollie Schmitten made a motion that, for this year only, the Task Force approve Phase I for PPL14 in January 2005, as scheduled, and set aside necessary funds in October 2004. The Technical Committee is asked to evaluate whether Phase I approval for PPL15 could be done in October 2005, concurrent with the annual Phase II approval cycle. Mr. Donald Gohmert seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Ms. Gay Browning asked when guidance would be received for the over programming of funds. Colonel Peter Rowan said that the Task Force should be alerted of a potential over programming problem as the need arises and that the Task Force would make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Ms. Julie LeBlanc added that Task Force approval is not required for every instance where additional funds are sought for existing projects.

V. INFORMATION

A. Report: Status of Breaux Act Program Funds and Projects

Ms. Gay Browning discussed the construction program and status of the CWPPRA accounts. The planning budget was approved for \$5.2 million in November 2003. All

agencies had until March 2004 to clean up older obligations that were in place. There are 127 active projects in the construction program, and the total program funding is \$580 million. There are \$387 million in obligations and \$210 million in expenditures. Estimated federal funding for FY04 construction is \$59 million. The FY04 federal work allowance has not yet been received resulting in a negative \$53 million unobligated balance. Future funding through FY09, including two complex projects awaiting approval, is estimated at \$1.6 billion with a shortfall of \$500 million. Seventeen projects are scheduled for approval of \$266 million by August. Currently there is a surplus of approximately \$900,000. If everything were approved in August, including the FY04 work allowance, there would still be a negative balance of \$225 million. Construction began this fiscal year for two projects, the Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection (Phase 3) and the Hopedale Hydrologic Restoration. The Barataria Barrier Island and Little Lake Shoreline Protection projects are scheduled to begin construction this month. Obligations for the construction of the Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection (Phase 4) project will begin soon.

B. Report: Initial Discussion Regarding FY05 Budget Development (Process, Size, Funding, etc.)

Mr. John Saia said that the Technical Committee started discussions at their last meeting on developing the FY05 planning budget. The Technical Committee will proceed on the basis of developing a PPL 15 similar to PPL 14. The Technical Committee will also look at a yearly time frame for PPL 15 and will report findings to the Task Force at the next meeting.

C. Report: Public Outreach Committee Quarterly Report

Ms. Gabrielle Bodin, CWPPRA Outreach Coordinator, presented the quarterly report on the Breaux Act Outreach Program. She introduced Education Specialist Ms. Susan Bergeron who will educate Louisiana's teachers about CWPPRA and coastal land loss. Ms. Bodin said that a detailed report is provided in the Task Force binders, and that project fact sheets and issues of *Watermarks* were located in the lobby. She said that the "Protect the Purchase" exhibit that was at the Cabildo has been moved to the National Park Service Jean Lafitte Center in the French Quarter of New Orleans. She announced that Ms. Bergeron is working with a representative to the International Children's Conference on the Environment. Ms. Bergeron is educating a child about Louisiana's coastal wetland loss, restoration efforts, and the Breaux Act. This child will then share what he has learned with children from over 100 countries at the conference in July. Ms. Bergeron has also developed a web quest which encourages students to use the LA Coast website to do various activities and learn about CWPPRA in the process. Ms. Bodin said that there are now over 1,100 subscribers to the Breaux Act Newsflash. Exhibits from last quarter include the Louisiana Science Teacher's Association, Earthfest at the Audubon Zoo, the Environmental Education Symposium, Louisiana Wildlife Federation's annual meeting, the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana's inaugural conference, and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality's annual conference. The CWPPRA exhibit will be displayed at the upcoming Bayou Lafourche scoping meetings. Also, Rick Hartman's articles for the *Louisiana Sportsman* have included topics on restoration websites, terraces as a restoration tool, and the

importance of the Barataria Landbridge. She said that the dedication ceremony will be held on May 21st at Fort Jackson, and Senator Breaux will attend. Projects to be dedicated include West Bay Sediment Diversion, Channel Armor Gap Crevasse, and Dustpan Maintenance Dredging, Delta Wide Crevasses, Hopedale Hydrologic Restoration, and Chandeleur Islands Marsh Restoration. Ms. Bodin asked the Task Force and Technical Committee to review and provide comments for the new CWPPRA signs and brochures being developed. She said the signs will be displayed at National Wildlife Refuges and other places with high visibility, and the wetland loss map is inside the new brochure. She asked that the members provide comments by April 23, 2004 so that the signs and brochures could be printed before the dedication ceremony.

D. Report: Status of LCA Public Meetings

Mr. John Saia said that a preliminary draft feasibility report was prepared and furnished to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Budget guidance was received in early February and suggested that a near-term plan be considered. Five public scoping meetings will be held April 19-23, 2004 to acquire public comments for the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The draft EIS will be submitted to the EPA on July 2, 2004 for publishing. A 45-day comment period will follow, and the comments received will be addressed in the final report. The goal is to submit a signed Chief of Engineer's report to Congress by the end of this year and have LCA included on the 2004 WRDA. In 2005, the focus of LCA will be on science and technology activities. Mr. John Saia also reviewed the agenda for the April 2004 scoping meetings. The presentations will include a brief history, discussion of the FY05 budget guidance, near-term plan foundation and criteria, NEPA, scope of programmatic EIS, and the schedule moving forward. The intent is to receive comments from the public prior to producing a draft report.

Col. Peter Rowan asked about the critical elements being considered. Mr. John Saia said that the scoping meetings will provide comments about priorities, items that need further study, long-term activities to consider, and ideas for demonstration projects.

Mr. Randy Hanchey said that the LCA plan was originally set up to include seven alternatives from 70 or 80 different projects from across the entire coast. He asked if there would be an open-ended discussion about the priorities and if the public would be able to see what some of the candidate projects are for early action. Mr. John Saia said that the seven alternatives from the original report have already been presented to the public. He added that the array of measures considered under the first seven alternatives would be reviewed as part of the discussion. Mr. Hanchey asked if they expected to receive specific project suggestions in addition to input on what the criteria should be for selecting early action items. Mr. Saia replied that this was possible and that any comments the public feels are critical will be considered in the EIS process. Mr. Hanchey asked why the State, and not the Corps, would discuss the master plan. Mr. Saia said that the State would like to look at an overall master plan as part of the scoping meetings, but that the federal government is currently proceeding on a near-term plan only. Mr. Hanchey said that from a State point of view, the public needs to be assured that there is a long-term comprehensive coast-wide plan and that the State intends to deal with it all. He would like to coordinate with the Corps before the meetings to

prevent damaging their partnership. Mr. Saia said that proceeding with master plan is not a problem from the State perspective. Ms. Sidney Coffee said that it has been made very clear at meetings with OMB that the State has a master plan and that it should be a guidance document that all agencies should look to. She added that the near-term report to Congress should state that this is the first phase of implementation. Mr. Hanchey said that there is a common understanding that a long-term plan exists. He would like to make sure that the context is maintained that the near-term plan is simply the first step of implementation. Mr. Saia said that the budget guidance recognizes that there will be a long-term plan to proceed with long-term studies or large, critical projects. Colonel Peter Rowan said that both near-term and long-term plans can be achieved as the State and the Corps prepares the report together. Mr. Hanchey said the State desires to create a principle group to include representatives of the agencies represented on the Task Force and need to make sure that the broad partnership is supported.

Ms. Sidney Coffee asked if the public meetings were going to just concentrate on the big array of projects or if the objectives of the near-term plan, such as the science and technology program, would also be discussed. Mr. John Saia said that the public would be provided with the near-term plan and given an update on the LCA process.

VI. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Donald Gohmert said that the nutria control project just finished its second year and asked Mr. Jeff Marx, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, to give a brief report on the project's success. Mr. Marx said that 332,596 nutria tails were collected this year, 25,000 more than last year. There were 346 participants in the program, 4 more than last year. Participants in the program receive \$4 per tail. Terrebonne Parish harvested 72,000 animals this year; this is a drop from 92,000 last year. Plaquemines Parish increased the number of animals harvested from 63,000 in the first year to 86,000 this year. The number of nutria harvested in Lafourche and Jefferson Parishes increased by about 20,000 and 4,000, respectively. St. Bernard Parish increased to 7,000 animals while the St. Mary Parish numbers decreased. The major harvest method did change during the program's two years. Last year 63 percent of the animals were harvested with a rifle compared to 50 percent this year. Thirty-four percent of the nutria were trapped last year compared to 48 percent this year. During previous coast-wide surveys, nutria damage in Plaquemines Parish increased from 800 acres in 2002 to 2,500 acres in 2003. Aerial surveys for this year will begin next week. Mr. Marx said that 3 to 4 years of sustained harvest is needed before any impact would be noticed. A full presentation on the nutria control program will be given to the Task Force in August. Mr. Gohmert added that 1.7 million nutria will be taken from the marsh over the life of the project of five years and that this project will have a tremendous impact. Mr. Marx said that nutria eat approximately 12 pounds of vegetation each day. Mr. Randy Hanchey asked if any opposition to the shooting and trapping of nutria had been received. Mr. Marx said that they have only received one or two letters from concerned people who were not from Louisiana.

VII. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Dan Arceneaux, St. Bernard Parish Coastal Zone Manager, asked if the MRGO would be included in the LCA program. Mr. John Saia replied that the MRGO, relative to restoration, would be discussed in the LCA program.

VII. CLOSING

A. Date and Location of Next Task Force Meeting

Colonel Rowan announced that the next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for 9:30 a.m., August 18, 2004 in New Orleans, LA. Mr. John Saia announced that the next Technical Committee meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m., July 14, 2004 in Baton Rouge.

B. Adjournment

Colonel Rowan adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:30 p.m.

BREAUX ACT
COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT
TASK FORCE MEETING
AGENDA

April 14, 2004, 9:30 a.m.

Estuarine Fisheries and Habitat Center
646 Cajundome Blvd.
Lafayette, Louisiana

Documentation of Task Force and Technical Committee meetings may be found at:
http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/pd/cwppra_mission.htm or
<http://lacoast.gov/reports/program/index.asp>

- | Tab Number | Agenda Item |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. | Meeting Initiation: 9:30 a.m. to 9:40 a.m.
a. Introduction of Task Force members or alternates.
b. Opening remarks of Task Force members. |
| 2. | Adoption of Minutes from January 28, 2004 Task Force Meeting: 9:40 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. |
| 3. | Status of Breaux Act Program Funds and Projects (Browning): 9:45 a.m. to 9:55 a.m.
Ms. Gay Browning will discuss the construction program and status of the CWPPRA accounts. |
| 4. | Report, Public Comment, and Decision: Presentation of Financial Status of the CWPPRA Program, Public Comment, and Task Force Decision Regarding the Future of CWPPRA Funding and Program Management (Saia) 9:55 a.m. to 10:55 a.m. The Task Force is seeking public input regarding future funding options for the program both in the near-term and long-term and will decide to proceed based in part on that input. |
| 5. | Discussion: Initial Discussion Regarding FY05 Budget Development (Process, Size, Funding, etc) (Saia) 10:55 a.m. to 11:05 a.m. The FY05 planning program budget discussion will be initiated. |
| 6. | Report: Public Outreach Committee Quarterly Report (Bodin) 11:05 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. Ms. Bodin will present the Public Outreach Committee's Quarterly Report. |
| 7. | Report: Status of LCA Public Meetings (Porthouse) 11:20 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. |
| 8. | Additional Agenda Items 11:30 a.m. to 11:40 a.m. |

9. **Request for Public Comments 11:40 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.**

10. **Announcement: Date and Location of the Next Task Force Meeting**

The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for 9:30 a.m., August 18, 2004 in New Orleans, Louisiana.

11. **Announcement: Dates and Locations of Upcoming CWPPRA Administrative Meetings (Saia):**

July 14, 2004	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	Baton Rouge
August 18, 2004	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans
<i>*September 9, 2004</i>	<i>9:30 a.m.</i>	<i>Technical Committee</i>	<i>Baton Rouge</i>
October 13, 2004	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	Baton Rouge
<i>*December 16, 2004</i>	<i>9:30 a.m.</i>	<i>Technical Committee</i>	<i>New Orleans</i>
January 26, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans
March 16, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	New Orleans
April 13, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	Lafayette
July 13, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	Baton Rouge
August 17, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans
September 14, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	Baton Rouge
October 19, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	Baton Rouge
December 7, 2005	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	New Orleans
January 25, 2006	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans

** Change from the previously scheduled date*

Adjourn



ATTENDANCE RECORD




1 of 4

DATE 14 April 2004	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT	LOCATION USACE Lafayette, LA
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PURPOSE

BREAUX ACT TASK FORCE MEETING

PARTICIPANT REGISTER*

NAME	JOB TITLE AND ORGANIZATION	E MAIL ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER
 Charles Broussard 23604 S La Hwy. 82 Kaplan, LA 70548-7304	WPLAL		337 6425287
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Key Brassieur	UL-Hat (Andrievsky)	brassieur@Louisiana.edu	337 482 1200



ATTENDANCE RECORD



2064

DATE 14 April 2004	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT	LOCATION USACE Lafayette, LA
-----------------------	--	------------------------------------

PURPOSE

BREAUX ACT TASK FORCE MEETING

PARTICIPANT REGISTER*

NAME	JOB TITLE AND ORGANIZATION	E MAIL ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER
ANDREW MACINNON	FLORISSANT MARSH CENTER		(504) 247-5322
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SPOTT AUBREY	SECRETARY LDNR		
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SEVEN PETRONNIN	CRCL	sevenp@crcl.org	225-344-6555
FRANK LASSITER	HDR, INC.	FLA@BELLSOUTH.NET	225-767-0600
Cathy Grandy	USFWS	Catherine.Grandy@fws.gov	(504) 862-2685

* If you wish to be furnished a copy of the attendance record, please indicate so next to your name.



ATTENDANCE RECORD



3 of 4

DATE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	LOCATION	
14 April 2004	COASTAL WETLANDS PLANNING, PROTECTION AND RESTORATION ACT	USACE Lafayette, LA	
PURPOSE			
BREAUX ACT TASK FORCE MEETING			
PARTICIPANT REGISTER*			
NAME	JOB TITLE AND ORGANIZATION	E MAIL ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER
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Jess Curate	Lafayette Parish CZM	czm@mobiletel.com	985-632-4666
Michael Eby	Rep. Richard Baker	michael.eby@mail.house.gov	225-929-7711
ROY WOODS	GREAT LAKES DRAGGING		

Browning, Gay B MVN

From: LeBlanc, Julie Z MVN
Sent: Tuesday, June 15, 2004 11:35 AM
To: 'billg@dnr.state.la.us'; 'bpaul@la.usda.gov'; 'chrisk@dnr.state.la.us'; 'coffees@gov.state.la.us'; 'cynthia.duet@gov.state.la.us'; 'deetra.washington@gov.state.la.us'; 'don.gohmert@la.usda.gov'; 'erik.zobrist@noaa.gov'; 'flores.miguel@epa.gov'; 'gautreak@gov.state.la.us'; 'gerryd@dnr.state.la.us'; 'hill.troy@epa.gov'; Saia, John P MVN; 'john_hefner@fws.gov'; 'mcquiddy.david@epa.gov'; 'pat.forbes@GOV.STATE.LA.US'; Rowan, Peter J Col MVN; 'randyh@dnr.state.la.us'; 'richard.hartman@noaa.gov'; 'rolland.schmitt@noaa.gov'; 'russell_watson@fws.gov'; 'sam_hamilton@fws.gov'; Constance, Troy G MVN; 'britt.paul@la.usda.gov'; 'darryl_clark@fws.gov'; 'john.jurgensen@la.usda.gov'; 'martha_segura@fws.gov'; 'philp@dnr.state.la.us'; 'rachel.sweeney@noaa.gov'; Hawes, Suzanne R MVN; Monnerjahn, Christopher J MVN; 'comvss@lsu.edu'; 'finley_h@wlf.state.la.us'; Rauber, Gary W MVN; Miller, Gregory B MVN; 'jonathanp@dnr.state.la.us'; 'kevin_roy@fws.gov'; 'peckham.jeanene@epa.gov'; 'ruiz_mj@wlf.state.la.us'; Browning, Gay B MVN; Lopez, John A MVN; Goodman, Melanie L MVN
Subject: RE: FINAL Minutes from 14 Apr 04 Task Force Meeting

Task Force Members:

In preparing for the upcoming Technical Committee meeting, I noted a motion that required revision to the wording in order to accurately capture the intent of the Task Force. In reviewing the transcripts from the meeting, it was obvious that the intent was to move to an annual cycle for approval of Phase II funding requests (not all construction approvals). Construction approvals for projects on PPLs 1-8 will continue to be allowed quarterly since these funds have already been "set aside". To correct this, the words "construction approval" were replaced with "Phase II funding approval" in the motion. The revised language is outlined in red in the attached Word document (page 8).

These revised minutes will be provided as the "final" minutes in the Task Force binder.



Minutes of PRA Task Force
Minutes of PRA Task Force

Julie Z. LeBlanc
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
(504) 862-1597

-----Original Message-----

From: LeBlanc, Julie Z MVN
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2004 1:54 PM
To: 'billg@dnr.state.la.us'; 'bpaul@la.usda.gov'; 'chrisk@dnr.state.la.us'; 'coffees@gov.state.la.us'; 'cynthia.duet@gov.state.la.us'; 'deetra.washington@gov.state.la.us'; 'don.gohmert@la.usda.gov'; 'erik.zobrist@noaa.gov'; 'flores.miguel@epa.gov'; 'gautreak@gov.state.la.us'; 'gerryd@dnr.state.la.us'; 'hill.troy@epa.gov'; Saia, John P MVN; 'john_hefner@fws.gov'; 'mcquiddy.david@epa.gov'; 'pat.forbes@GOV.STATE.LA.US'; Rowan, Peter J Col MVN; 'randyh@dnr.state.la.us'; 'richard.hartman@noaa.gov'; 'rolland.schmitt@noaa.gov'; 'russell_watson@fws.gov'; 'sam_hamilton@fws.gov'; Constance, Troy G MVN; 'britt.paul@la.usda.gov'; 'darryl_clark@fws.gov'; 'john.jurgensen@la.usda.gov'; 'martha_segura@fws.gov'; 'philp@dnr.state.la.us'; 'rachel.sweeney@noaa.gov'; Hawes, Suzanne R MVN; Monnerjahn, Christopher J MVN; 'comvss@lsu.edu'; 'finley_h@wlf.state.la.us'; Rauber, Gary W MVN; Miller, Gregory B MVN; 'jonathanp@dnr.state.la.us'; 'kevin_roy@fws.gov'; 'peckham.jeanene@epa.gov'; 'ruiz_mj@wlf.state.la.us'; Browning, Gay B MVN; Lopez, John A MVN; Goodman, Melanie L MVN
Subject: FINAL Minutes from 14 Apr 04 Task Force Meeting

Task Force:

Attached are the final minutes and transcripts from the subject Task Force meeting, in both Word and Adobe format. The final agenda and sign in sheet, enclosures 1 and 2, respectively, are also attached.

<< File: Minutes of CWPPRA Task Force Meeting - 14 Apr 04 - FINAL.doc >> << File: Minutes of CWPPRA Task Force Meeting - 14 Apr 04 - FINAL.pdf >>
<< File: CWPPRA Task Force Transcripts 14 April 2004 - FINAL.doc >> << File: CWPPRA Task Force Transcripts

14 April 2004 - FINAL.pdf >>

<< File: Encl1-final agenda for archived binder Apr 04 TF meeting .pdf >> << File: Encl2_Tsk_Frc_Mtg_41404.pdf >>

Julie Z. LeBlanc
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
(504) 862-1597

-----Original Message-----

From: LeBlanc, Julie Z MVN

Sent: Monday, May 03, 2004 11:37 AM

To: billg@dnr.state.la.us; bpaul@la.usda.gov; chrisk@dnr.state.la.us; coffees@gov.state.la.us; cynthia.duet@gov.state.la.us; deetra.washington@gov.state.la.us; don.gohmert@la.usda.gov; erik.zobrist@noaa.gov; flores.miguel@epa.gov; gautreak@gov.state.la.us; gerryd@dnr.state.la.us; hill.troy@epa.gov; John Saia; john_hefner@fws.gov; mcquiddy.david@epa.gov; pat.forbes@GOV.STATE.LA.US; Peter Rowan; randyh@dnr.state.la.us; richard.hartman@noaa.gov; rolland.schmitt@noaa.gov; russell_watson@fws.gov; sam_hamilton@fws.gov; Troy Constance; britt.paul@la.usda.gov; darryl_clark@fws.gov; john.jurgensen@la.usda.gov; martha_segura@fws.gov; philp@dnr.state.la.us; rachel.sweeney@noaa.gov; Suzanne Hawes; Christopher Monnerjahn; comvss@lsu.edu; finley_h@wlf.state.la.us; Gary Rauber; Gregory Miller; jonathanp@dnr.state.la.us; kevin_roy@fws.gov; peckham.jeanene@epa.gov; ruiz_mj@wlf.state.la.us; Gay Browning; John Lopez; Melanie Goodman

Subject: DRAFT Minutes from 14 Apr 04 Task Force Meeting

Task Force/Technical Committee:

Attached are the DRAFT minutes and transcripts from the subject meeting. Please review and provide comments by **Friday, 14 May 04**. Once revisions are incorporated, the final versions will be forwarded along with the enclosures (agenda and sign-in sheet).

<< File: Minutes of CWPPRA Task Force Meeting - 14 Apr 04 - DRAFT.doc >> << File: CWPPRA Task Force Transcripts 14 April 2004 -DRAFT.doc >>

Julie Z. LeBlanc

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers

(504) 862-1597