

# Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

## 2nd Priority Project List Report

October 30, 1992

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### INTRODUCTION

The State of Louisiana contains 40 percent of the Nation's coastal wetlands, but is experiencing 80 percent of the Nation's coastal wetland loss. The widespread and complex nature of the coastal wetland loss problem, coupled with the diversity of agencies involved and numerous alternatives proposed, has led many in Federal, state, and local government, as well as the general public, to the conclusion that a comprehensive approach is needed. The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (PL 101-646) was signed into law by President Bush on November 29, 1990, to address the need for a comprehensive approach to this significant environmental problem.

This draft report documents the implementation of Section 303(a) of the cited legislation.

### STUDY AUTHORITY

Section 303(a) of the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA), displayed in Appendix A, "Summary and the Complete Text of the CWPPRA," directs the Secretary of the Army to convene the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force to:

... initiate a process to identify and prepare a list of coastal wetlands restoration projects in Louisiana to provide for the long-term conservation of such wetlands and dependent fish and wildlife populations in order of priority, based upon the cost-effectiveness of such projects in creating, restoring, protecting, or enhancing coastal wetlands, taking into account the quality of such coastal wetlands, with due allowance for small-scale projects necessary to demonstrate the use of new techniques or materials for coastal wetlands restoration.

### STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of this study effort was to prepare the 2nd Priority Project List and transmit the list to Congress by November 28, 1992, as specified in Section 303(a)(3) of the CWPPRA. Section 303(b) of the act calls for preparation of a comprehensive Restoration Plan for coastal Louisiana; that effort is currently in progress, and will be reported on in November 1993, as required by the act.

### PROJECT AREA

Plate 1 is a map which delineates the Louisiana coastal zone. The entire coastal area, which comprises all or part of 20 Louisiana parishes, is considered to be the

stated purpose of the Citizen Participation Group is to "maintain consistent public review and input into the plans and projects being considered by the Task Force" and to "assist and participate in the public involvement program." The group represents a broad spectrum of interests in the coastal zone, and it ensures adequate representation of these interests in the workings of the Task Force. The membership of the Citizen Participation Group is shown below.

### Membership of the Citizen Participation Group

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<b>Chairman:</b> Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana	Concerned Shrimpers of America
<b>Vice Chairman:</b> Gulf Coast Conservation Association	Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association
Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation	Louisiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation, Inc.	Louisiana Landowners Association
Louisiana League of Women Voters	Louisiana Nature Conservancy
Louisiana Oyster Growers and Dealers Association	Louisiana Wildlife Federation, Inc.
Midcontinent Oil and Gas Association	New Orleans Steamship Association
Oil and Gas Task Force (Regional Economic Development Council)	Police Jury Association of Louisiana
Organization of Louisiana Fishermen	<b>Ex Officio Member:</b> U.S. Senator John Breaux

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Even with its widespread membership, the Citizen Participation Group cannot represent all of the diverse interests affected by Louisiana's coastal wetlands. The CWPPRA public involvement program provided an opportunity for all interested parties to express their concerns and opinions and to submit their ideas concerning the problems facing Louisiana's wetlands.

To provide this opportunity, three sets of meetings were held. The first set of meetings consisted of two series of scoping meetings held in October and November 1991—one series for coastal zone parish officials and another series for the general public. The purpose of these scoping meetings was to identify both wetland loss problems throughout the coastal zone and potential solutions to those problems. Literally hundreds of ideas were submitted to the Task Force through the scoping meetings. The schedule of scoping meetings was as follows.

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Hydrologic Basins</u>
February 4-6, 1992 February 12-13, 1992	Baton Rouge New Orleans	Pontchartrain (follow up)
March 17-19, 1992	St. Francisville	Barataria, Breton Sound, Mississippi R. Delta (follow up)
March 25-26, 1992	New Orleans	
April 7-9, 1992	Baton Rouge	Terrebonne, Atchafalaya, Teche/Vermilion (follow up)
April 15-16, 1992	New Orleans	
April 28-30, 1992	Abbeville	Mermentau, Calcasieu/Sabine (follow up)
May 6-7, 1992	New Orleans	

The final set of meetings was a series of public meetings held in June 1992. At these meetings, candidate projects for the 2nd Priority Project List were presented to the public. These meetings ensured a public review of the selection process before detailed evaluations of candidate projects were begun. Public meetings were scheduled as shown below.

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Hydrologic Basins</u>
June 16, 1992	Morgan City	Atchafalaya, Teche/Vermilion
June 18, 1992	Belle Chasse	Barataria, Breton Sound, Mississippi River Delta
June 23, 1992	Houma	Terrebonne
June 25, 1992	Lake Charles	Mermentau, Calcasieu/Sabine
June 30, 1992	New Orleans	Pontchartrain

hydrology. Further background involved descriptions of vegetative types. Projections for the future of each basin were presented. Finally, the coastal wetlands problems were discussed in detail, and strategies were developed for dealing with those problems on a basin-by-basin basis. These meetings formed the basis for development of the conceptual plans which will ultimately lead to the comprehensive restoration plan required by Section 303(b) of the CWPPRA. Projects which were proposed during and after these meetings are identified with an "X" (e.g., XTE-41).

Projects which had been proposed but not selected for the November 1991 Priority Project List were also considered.

## SCREENING OF PROPOSED PROJECTS

The tremendous number of proposals submitted called for the development of an easily implemented screening process which would allow winnowing these hundreds of ideas down to a manageable number. These projects could then be evaluated in more detail. Basin captains, one for each of the hydrologic basins, were appointed from among the Task Force agencies to take the lead in screening projects. Each captain had a team with a representative from each agency. The basin teams were responsible for doing preliminary evaluations of all projects submitted and making a recommendation to the Planning and Evaluation Subcommittee for candidate projects to be considered for the 2nd Priority Project List. The subcommittee then put together a list of 36 candidate projects to be evaluated for the second list. These candidates were presented in the public meetings which took place in the last two weeks of June 1992. Following those meetings, the subcommittee revised the list of candidate projects to incorporate input from the public. This process is described in the next four sections. The candidate projects which emerged would be evaluated in considerable detail to determine their cost effectiveness.

### Basin Teams.

To give some form to the screening process, the Planning and Evaluation Subcommittee developed two tools: a Preliminary Evaluation Sheet (PES) and a Screening Information Sheet (SIS).

The PES constituted the first level of screening, and was designed to evaluate a proposal's fitness for the CWPPRA in general and the 2nd Priority Project List in particular. If the purpose of the project was not long term protection, restoration, enhancement; or creation of coastal wetlands, or the project did not meet the objectives set for its particular basin at the plan formulation meetings, the project was dropped from consideration. The PES also screened out projects which could not be constructed within the five year time frame prescribed by the CWPPRA for priority list projects. Any project which was judged capable of meeting the timing criterion was evaluated according to whether it: possessed local support; served as a linchpin project in the overall restoration strategy for its basin; provided a significant opportunity to preserve, improve, or build coastal wetlands; and had regional impacts or was a small demonstration project. Projects which received three or more points in this system were elevated to the next level of evaluation.

# Summary of Preliminary Evaluation Sheets

## Pontchartrain Basin Projects

No.	Project Name	Proj Type	Wetland Supports		Comp in 5 Years	WVA Data by Jun 92	Local Support	Linch Pin Alternative	Significant Opportunity	Demo Proj	Total Points	Priority List		Restoration Plan
			Main Objective	Basin Objectives								Local Support	Let Candidate	
FPO56B	Seabrook Barrier (Sill)	HR	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
FPO56A	Seabrook Barrier (Lock)	HR	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
PPO62	MIRGO Total Closure, Two/Three Sills	HR	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
PPO6B	MIRGO Speed Limit	SP	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes
XPO76	MIRGO New Route in Mississippi Sound	HR	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
PPO6A	MIRGO Navigable Gate	HR	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
PPO5	MIRGO Sill/Facility Relocation	HR	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
XPO57	MIRGO Closure, Violet Sediment Diversion, Move Facil	SD	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
PPO88	MIRGO Bank Stabilization	SP	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes
XPO68	MIRGO-Widen/Deepen, Close Bayous, Gate	HR	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
XPO53	Bonnet Carre Operation Modification	FD	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes
FPO55	Bonnet Carre Diversion 30,000 cfs	FD	Yes	Yes	No	No								Yes
XPO66	Artificial Barrier Islands West of Chandeleurs	SP	Yes	Yes	No									Yes
XPO65	Artificial Oyster Reefs	SP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	Yes	Yes
PPO40	Bayou Bienvenue/Dupre Freshwater Introduction	FD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes				Yes
PPO42	Bayou Bienvenue/Dupre Saltwater Prevention	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes
PPO13	Bayou Chinchuba / Lake Pontchartrain Shore Prot	SP	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes
PPO28	Bayou Chinchuba Marsh Restoration	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes
PO8	Central Wetlands Pump Outfall	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes									Built
PPO4	Eden Isles East Marsh Protection	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	1	Yes	Yes	Yes
PO6	Fritchie Wetland	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	3	Yes	Yes	Yes
HR	Hydrologic Restoration													
MC	Marsh Creation													
FD	Freshwater Diversion													
SD	Sediment Diversion													
MM	Marsh Management													
MP	Marsh Protection or Restoration													
SP	Shoreline Protection													

# Summary of Preliminary Evaluation Sheets (Con't)

## Pontchartrain Basin Projects

No.	Project Name	Proj Type	Wetland		Supports Basin Objectives	Comp In 5 Years	WVA Data by Jun 92	Local Support	Linch Pin Alternative	Significant Opportunity	Demo Proj	Total Points	Priority List		Restoration Plan	
			Main Objective	Yes									Yes	Yes		Yes
XPO51A	Manchac WMA Hydrologic Restoration	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes		3	Yes		Yes	
XPO51B	Manchac WMA Hydrologic Restoration	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes		1	Yes		Yes	
XPO58	P Manchac Shore Protection	SP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
PO5	Southeast Lake Maurepas Wetlands	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
PO13	Tangi/Pontchartrain Shore Protection	SP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
XPO49	Tangipahoa Swamp Hydrologic Restoration	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
XPO47	Amite Diversion Canal/Bank Modification	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		3	Yes		Yes	
XPO16	Amite Diversion Channel Weir Maintenance	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes								Built	
XPO60	Cypress Succession Management	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
XPO48B	Hope Canal Hydrologic Restoration	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		3	Yes		Yes	
PPO17	Lower Maurepas Basin Hydrologic Restoration	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
XPO44	Maurepas Basin Sediment Diversion	SD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
XPO45	Maurepas Basin Sediment Pumping	SD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
XPO48A	Tennessee Williams Canal Hydrologic Restoration	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
XPO46	Tickfaw Freshwater Diversion	FD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		3	Yes		Yes	
PPO21	Stormwater Runoff Treatment / Marsh Creation	FD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No								Yes	
	Orleans Parish		No	No			No								No	
PPO22	Stormwater Runoff Treatment / Marsh Creation		No	No			No								No	
	East Jefferson		No	No			No								No	
PPO85	Stormwater Runoff Treatment / Marsh Creation		No	No			No								No	
	Duncan Canal		No	No			No								No	
PPO34	Stormwater Runoff Treatment / Marsh Creation		No	No			No								No	
	Bonnabel Canal		No	No			No								No	
PPO23	Project Swallow		No	No			No								No	
PPO24	Purchase Marshes Around Lake Pontchartrain		No	No			No								No	
PPO25	Grass Bed Re-establishment		No	No			No								No	
PPO61	River Ridge Batture Park		No	No			No								No	
HR	Hydrologic Restoration															
MC	Marsh Creation															
FD	Freshwater Diversion															
SD	Sediment Diversion															
MM	Marsh Management															
MP	Marsh Protection or Restoration															
SP	Shoreline Protection															

## Summary of the Breton Sound Basin Team Meeting

The Breton Sound Basin team met on June 10, 1992, to begin the initial screening of projects for the 2nd Project Priority List. Members of the team included Mrs. Donna Keller Bivona, Corps of Engineers, Basin Captain; Mr. Carrol Clark, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources; Mr. George Townsley, Soil Conservation Service; Mr. Gerry Bodin, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services; Mrs. Peggy Jones, National Marine Fisheries Service; Ms. Jeanene Peckham, Environmental Protection Agency; and Mr. Richard Boe, Corps of Engineers, Environmental Branch. Dr. Bruce Thompson, the basin's academic advisor, was unable to attend.

A brief overview of the PES's for the list of projects proposed in this basin was given by the basin captain. The complete list of proposed projects in this basin consisted of 21 projects distributed as shown below.

Sediment or Freshwater Diversion	6
Hydrologic Restoration	12
Marsh Protection or Restoration	3

As a result of the preliminary evaluation of the projects and the discussion of the team, 8 of the 21 projects (see Summary of Preliminary Evaluation Sheets) were deferred from consideration as potential 2nd Priority Project List candidates. These projects (PBS-2, PBS-4, PBS-7, PBS-8, PBS-9, PBS-10, BPS-14, and PBS-15) will require further analysis and may be considered on a subsequent priority list or in the Comprehensive Restoration Plan.

Projects PBS-3 and PBS-12 are duplicates of BS-3b (Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Management North of Lake Lery), and therefore were not evaluated. Project PBS-11, Caernarvon Freshwater Diversion Operation Modification, was determined to be inappropriate for the CWPPRA. In order to operate the structure for sediment introduction instead of freshwater introduction, an amendment to the existing project authorization would be required.

Projects BS-1a, BS-1b, BS-4a, BS-4b, and BS-5 are scheduled to be implemented under the State's 1992 Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Plan; therefore, they were not considered for the 2nd Priority Project List.

Project BS-3b, Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Management North of Lake Lery, was deferred pending the outcome of Project BS-3a, Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Management South of Big Mar.

# Summary of Preliminary Evaluation Sheets

## Breton Sound Basin Projects

No.	Project Name	Proj Type	Wetland		WVA Data by Jun 92	Local Support	Linch Pin Alternative	Significant Opportunity	Demo Proj	Total Points	Priority List		Restoration Plan
			Main Objective	Supports Basin							Comp in 5 Years	State or Support	
BS-1A	Restoration of Bohemia Diversion	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	3		Yes	
BS-1B	Bohemia Diversion Outfall Management	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	6		Yes	
BS-3A	Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Mgmt S. of Big Mar	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	6	Yes	Yes	
BS-3B	Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Mgmt N. of Lake Lery	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	6		Yes	
BS-4A	White's Ditch Outfall Management	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	6		Yes	
BS-4B	White's Ditch Enlargement and Outfall Management	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	6		Yes	
BS-5	Bayou Lamoque Diversion	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	4		Yes	
PBS-2	Barrier Island from Pointe A La Hache to the MRGO	MP	Yes	Yes	No			Yes	No	4		Yes	
PBS-3	Restoration of marshes N. of Lake Lery (see BS-3B)	HR	Yes	Yes	No			Yes	No			Yes	
PBS-4	Relocation of the Mississippi River into Breton Basin	SD	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	3	Yes	Yes	
PBS-5	Fiddler Point Barrier Island	MP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No	4	Yes	Yes	
PBS-6	Crevasse South of Bohemia	SD	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No	4		Yes	
PBS-7	Bohemia Sediment Diversion (large scale diversion)	SD	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No	6		Yes	
PBS-8	Interior Barrier Island	HR	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No	4		Yes	
PBS-9	Interior Ridge Restoration and Enhancement	HR	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No			Yes	
PBS-10	Caernarvon Sediment Diversion	SD	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No			Yes	
PBS-11	Caernarvon Diversion Operation Modification	SD	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No			Yes	
PBS-12	Divert Caer. O/F into marshes N. of Lery (see BS-3B)	HR	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes	3	Yes	Yes	
PBS-13	Oyster Reef Demonstration	MP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	No			Yes	
PBS-14	Foresore Dike Restoration at Olga	HR	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No			Yes	
PBS-15	Scarsdale Spillway	SD	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		Yes	No			Yes	

HR Hydrologic Restoration  
 MC Marsh Creation  
 FD Freshwater Diversion  
 SD Sediment Diversion  
 MM Marsh Management  
 MP Marsh Protection or Restoration  
 SP Shoreline Protection