

SUBJECT: Minutes from the 12 December 2024 CWPPRA Technical Committee Meeting

1. Ms. Jennifer Vititoe opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m. The following Technical Committee members were in attendance:

Ms. Jennifer Vititoe, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), representing Chairman
Mr. Patrick Williams, National Marine and Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Mr. Kevin Roy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Mr. Doug Jacobson, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Mr. Brian Lezina, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA)
Mr. Britt Paul, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

A copy of the agenda is included as **Encl 1**. A copy of the attendance sheet is included as **Encl 2**.

2. Agenda Item 1. Meeting Initiation

The meeting was conducted via WebEx virtual meeting platform, and in person at the USACE Office building in New Orleans, LA. Ms. Vititoe introduced herself and welcomed those in attendance. She explained she was sitting in for Mr. Durund Elzey, who had prior commitments. To ensure everyone goes home safely, Ms. Vititoe then iterated safety/ emergency exit procedures. Ms. Vititoe then invited the Technical Committee members to introduce themselves, which they did in turn.

Ms. Vititoe opened the floor to discussion from the Technical Committee regarding the agenda. She mentioned there were two additions, one involving a change to the Standard Operating Procedure and the other to acknowledge the upcoming retirement of the Environmental Protection Agency Technical Committee Member, Ms. Karen McCormick, who was online for her last Technical Committee meeting as the EPA representative.

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion to adopt the agenda and to add those two agenda items.

Mr. Lezina made the motion, which Mr. Jacobson seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

Ms. Vititoe reviewed the appropriate process for recording attendance and making public comment both virtually and in person.

3. Agenda Item 2. Report: Status of CWPPRA Program Funds and Projects

Ms. Jernice Cheavis, USACE, presented an overview of CWPPRA funds. The fully funded total Program Estimate since its inception to the present (authorized projects from PPLs 1 – 33) is \$3.423 billion, with the federal requirement at \$2.910 billion. The total funded estimate (received since inception through FY24 and anticipated through FY2026) is \$2.622 billion, with the federal requirement at \$2.052 billion. Current Task Force-approved funding for projects in Phase 1, Phase 2, and O&M and Monitoring totals \$2.682 billion. The estimate of authorized funding for each agency as requested currently totals \$2.375 billion with the federal requirement

at \$2.011 billion (which does not exceed the Total Program Estimate). To determine the federal funds available for decisions of this meeting, the federal funds received through FY 24 are \$2,052,487,050 with the federal cost share requirements for all authorized projects is \$2,011,266 leaving \$41,220,731 available funds, prior to the FY25 allocations.

The CWPPRA Construction Program has \$55,651,034 of funding carried forth from the May Task Force meeting. The Task Force approved \$14,429,801 in funding requests at the October 2024 meeting. The FY25 DOI funding in the amount of \$94,098,424 is estimated. The FY 25 Planning Funds are \$5 million, which are deducted; thus, the total Construction Program funding available for today's proceedings is \$130,319,657.

CWPPRA has authorized 238 projects. The 127 active projects include 18 in Phase 1 Engineering and Design, and 28 in Phase 2 Construction. There are 75 projects which have been constructed and are now in O&M and Monitoring phase, and 6 support programs – Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS), Monitoring Contingency, Storm Recovery, Construction Program Technical Support, the Navigational Aid and Signage Program, and the Wetland Conservation Plan. Forty (40) projects have been completed and closed financially. Additionally, CWPPRA has deauthorized 50 projects, transferred 12 projects, and placed 9 in the inactive category.

Ms. Vititoe opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

4. Agenda Item 3. Report: *Electronic Votes and Approvals*

Ms. Amanda Landry, USACE, reported on the recent electronic voting results. The decision item passed.

One electronic vote was conducted since the scheduled October Task Force meeting. The Technical Committee and Task Force voted to approve the reduction in scope of the PO-181 Bayou Cane Marsh Creation project. This would reduce the project footprint by 154 acres, from 633 acres to 479 acres, resulting in a 141-acre reduction in net acres. A reduction in project footprint has been incorporated by the project team to reduce costs and address minor constructability issues. In addition, a 79-acre portion of the project, is proposed to be constructed as mitigation for marsh impacts associated with the Maurepas Swamp Diversion Project (PO-29). Mitigation funding would be utilized for that portion of the project, thereby reducing the cost to CWPPRA estimated at approximately \$4M. A request for a reduction in scope is necessary to proceed to bid advertisement.

Ms. Vititoe opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

5. Agenda Item 4. Decision: *Request for Inactivation of the Barataria Bay Rim Marsh Creation Project (BA-195)* Ms. Angela Trahan, NRCS, presented the request by NRCS and CPRA for approval of a recommendation to the Task Force to inactivate BA-195. Located in Jefferson and Plaquemines Parishes, this PPL 25 project presented its 95% design in October 2019. Project features included 251 acres of marsh creation and 266 acres of nourishment in four fully contained marsh creation areas. The Fully Funded Cost was \$30,294,291 with a total approved

budget of \$2,693,708 and remaining funds of \$131,500, federal and state match. The request to inactivate is derived from the number of unsuccessful Phase 2 Requests, the time and costs that would be required to update the project design, the uncertainty of landrights, and the availability of more cost-effective projects with limited program funds for construction.

Ms. Vititoe opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion to inactivate the BA-195 Barataria Bay Rim Marsh Creation Project.

Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Lezina seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

6. Agenda Item 5. Decision: *Request for Inactivation of the North Catfish Lake Marsh Creation Project (TE-112)* Ms. Angela Trahan, NRCS, presented the request by NRCS and CPRA for approval of a recommendation to the Task Force to inactivate the TE-112 project. This PPL22 project was in Terrebonne Parish and included 525 acres of marsh creation and 208 acres of marsh nourishment in 7 marsh creation areas. The Fully Funded Cost was \$35,537,336 with a total approved budget of \$3,216,194 and remaining funds of \$524,670, federal and state match. As part of an effort to reduce the backlog of projects currently in Phase 1, inactivation is being requested. Additionally, the project was deemed no longer consistent with the State Coastal Master Plan. The project may be transferred to Ducks Unlimited, should additional funding be secured.

Ms. Vititoe opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion to inactivate the TE-112 North Catfish Lake Marsh Creation Project.

Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Lezina seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

7. Agenda Item 6. Report/Decision: *No Cost Time Extension for Hopedale Hydrologic Restoration (PO-0024)* Brandon Howard, NMFS, presented the NMFS and CPRA request for approval of a recommendation to the Task Force for a one year, no cost time extension for the Hopedale project given a delay in resolving the final maintenance event. The project team wants to complete a onetime maintenance event at the end of the project life. One bid was received and was above the government estimate. The team is working with the current contractor to see if maintenance can be done under the current budget. The work to be done includes replacement of cathodic protection, sandblasting of structure, epoxy coating, and replacement of reflective safety tape to extend the life.

Ms. Vititoe opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion for a no cost one-year time extension of the PO-24 Hopedale Hydrologic Restoration Project.

Mr. Williams made the motion, which Mr. Jacobson seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

8. Agenda Item 7. Report/Decision: *Request for Phase 2 Authorization and Approval of Phase 2 Increment 1 Funding*

Representatives from the sponsoring agencies provided a detailed overview of project location, planned features, goals/ benefits, synergies, and costs for each project listed in the following table:

Agency	Project No.	PPL	Project Name	Phase 2, Increment 1 Request	Fully-Funded Phase 1 Cost	Fully-Funded Phase 2 Cost incl O&M	Total Fully Funded Cost Est.	Net Benefit Acres	Total Cost per Acre
NRCS	BS-41	29	North Delacroix Marsh Creation and Terracing	\$36,986,377	\$42,171,706	\$3,714,166	\$38,457,540	267	\$157,946
FWS	TE-156	29	Bay Raccourci Marsh Creation and Ridge Restoration	\$36,596,029	\$43,442,427	\$3,447,901	\$39,994,526	363	\$119,676
EPA	TE-171	31	Port Fourchon Marsh Creation	\$34,022,807	\$39,013,655	\$3,484,176	\$35,529,479	412	\$94,693

Ms. Vititoe called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public; the following comments were proffered after the presentations were given:

John Lane, St. Bernard Parish, spoke in support of North Delacroix as a top priority for St. Bernard Parish. Letters of Support were received from federal and state delegation for such a beneficial project. This area suffered Ida damage and is synergistic with Reggio and East Delacroix and is a vital piece of the restoration puzzle. Mr. Lane then thanked the project team.

Mart Black, Terrebonne Parish Coastal Restoration Director, spoke in support of TE-156. There is lot of need in the area. He acknowledged the issues with landrights in the parish and stated this project has no landrights issues. He also spoke in favor of the TE-171 project.

Chett Chaisson, Executive Director Greater Lafourche Port Commission, was in support of the TE-171 project. He thanked the project team and reiterated the port's \$10 million commitment for the project. He stated that the project works with the port's holistic resiliency goals, as well as its sustainability and economic viability. He also spoke in support of TE-156.

Blaise Pezold, spoke on behalf of the Meraux Foundation as Coastal Program Director in support of BS-41, citing the importance of supporting the landbridge while protecting the ridge and Highway 300 evacuation route.

Amanda Phillips, Edward Wisner Donation, supported TE-171 as a project that would protect Wisner land, as it is adjacent. This and a Phase 1 candidate serve as bookends to protect the property. She also thanked CWPPRA for the completion of the back barrier marsh restoration project.

Ms. Vititoe called for any additional questions or comments from the public or Technical Committee; none were forthcoming.

With no further comments, Ms. Vititoe called for a five-minute break for the Technical Committee to consider information and public comments presented.

Following the recess, Ms. Vititoe invited Ms. Landry to review the collaborative approach to project selection utilizing selection criteria scoring. Ms. Landry reminded all in attendance that CWPPRA has a limited budget and the importance of maintaining a reserve to handle project cost increases and change orders. She explained that the objective is to select the most impactful coastal restoration projects for both the engineering and design phase and the construction phase and to spend funds effectively. In order to accomplish this, a set of five criteria, cost effectiveness, synergy, critical landscape feature, critical area of need, as well as critical infrastructure protection, were established. Six independent agencies score the projects based on the criteria, then come together to collaboratively select projects to make collective and informed recommendations. Additional considerations such as stakeholder support, landowner support, sustainability, as well as operations and maintenance are also taken into account and can be used to adjust project rankings. Ms. Landry then mentioned the process and strategy for selection criteria can be adjusted in the spring and is available online.

Ms. Vititoe requested the combined, weighted, collective scores for the three projects seeking Phase 2 funding be displayed. She then summarized the Technical Committee recommendation for Phase 2 authorization for TE-171 Port Fourchon Marsh Creation and BS-41 North Delacroix Marsh Creation and Terracing. Ms. Vititoe reiterated the importance of maintaining reserves in the case of potential cost overruns. She then explained the conditional authorization recommendation of TE-156 Bay Raccourci Marsh Creation and Ridge Restoration. Should sufficient funds be available by the spring Technical Committee meeting, once project closeouts are completed, bid openings have occurred, and a sufficient funding reserve is maintained the TE-156 project may be funded.

Project	Cost Effective-ness	Synergy	Critical Area of Need	Critical Land-scape Feature	Critical Infra-structure Protection	Adjusted total score (with weights)
Port Fourchon Marsh Creation (TE-171)	7.00	8.33	5.33	7.33	7.17	6.93
North Delacroix Marsh Creation & Terracing (BS-41)	4.00	7.83	6.00	7.17	7.83	6.51
Bay Raccourci Marsh Creation & Ridge Restoration (TE-156)	6.00	8.47	3.33	8.25	0.89	5.14

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion for Phase 2 Authorization and Approval of Phase 2 Increment 1 Funding of BS-41 North Delacroix Marsh Creation and Terracing and TE-171 Port Fourchon

Marsh Creation, with conditional authorization of TE-156 Bay Raccourci Marsh Creation and Ridge Restoration, should sufficient funds be available for the May Task Force meeting.

Mr. Williams made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

9. Agenda Item 8. *Report/Decision: 34th Priority Project List*

Kristen Ramsey, FWS, presented a brief overview of the eight PPL 34 candidate projects, which have been evaluated, and are being considered for Phase 1 Engineering and Design. She explained that typically, 10 candidate projects are considered, however, this year due to landrights complications, only eight projects were being evaluated. She summarized the location, scope, goals, and anticipated costs of each project, as they are oriented geographically east to west across the coast.

Region	Basin	PPL 34 Candidates	Agency
2	Breton Sound	Wood Lake Marsh Creation and Terracing	NRCS
2	Breton Sound	East Lake Lery Shoreline Restoration	FWS
2	Barataria	Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration and Marsh Creation	NRCS
2	Barataria	Elmer's Island Restoration	NOAA
3	Terrebonne	Eastern Terrebonne Landbridge Marsh Creation Increment 1	FWS
3	Terrebonne	South Isle de Jean Charles Landbridge Increment	NRCS
4	Mermentau	Grand Chenier Marsh Creation and Terracing	NOAA/NRCS
4	Mermentau	Gulf Shoreline Protection West	FWS

Ms. Ramsey concluded by presenting and explaining the Project Evaluation Matrix table which will aid in the project selection process. Ms. Vittoe commended Ms. Ramsey for her presentation, and acknowledged the work groups and experts at the local, state and federal levels, who have worked extensively and gathered information necessary to develop these projects.

Ms. Vittoe called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee; none were proffered.

Ms. Vittoe called for comments from the public. The following comments were proffered.

John Lane, St. Bernard Parish, was in favor of East Lake Lery and Wood Lake as they are priorities for the Parish. State and Federal delegates provided Letters of Support. The projects protect Highway 300 and infrastructure. St. Bernard has invested in the Lake Lery area, fortified Bayou Terra aux Boeufs ridge, with the exception of the Wood Lake area, which is the missing piece. Two of the major landowners in the area are also here in support of the projects.

Mart Black, Terrebonne Parish Coastal Restoration Director, spoke in support in favor of the two projects in the Terrebonne Basin. He stressed the need to start the Terrebonne landbridge, despite the difficulties of building there. Land is being lost at an alarming rate, and with no protection, they are facing open water from Timbalier Island to the Morganza levee. There is no synergy because no projects have been started. Isle de Jean Charles is worth protecting with the Native American community and its cemetery.

Amanda Phillips, Edward Wisner Donation, advocated for the Elmer's Island Restoration project as it serves as the eastern bookend for protection of the property. The Caminada Headland Beach and Dune Restoration project went all the way to the Caminada Pass while restoring the beach. The back barrier marsh did not make it to the other side of Elmer's Road, making this project an important component of finishing off that work. This is adjacent to Wisner property and would offer protection.

Michael Farizo, Land Manager, Delacroix Corporation and Coastal Corporation, represented primary landowners of the East Lake Lery project. He stated he manages over 130,000 acres of wetlands in Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes and the many landowners he represents are all in favor of the East Lake Lery project.

Kyle Galloway, GIS Engineering, discussed his support for Elmer's Island Restoration. He recalled being a second Lieutenant in the Louisiana Army National Guard with his first project in coastal restoration. He oversaw a construction project to close the gaps in Elmer's Island to protect the back marsh area from the oil spill. Elmer's Island is a beautiful, wonderful ecosystem deserving of more restoration projects.

Blaise Pezold, spoke on behalf of the Meraux Foundation in support of East Lake Lery. Tommy McGinnis, NRCS, worked with Mr. Pezold to determine locations for projects. The Wood Lake region landowners were cooperative and a project location presented itself. The trend around the islands that separate Lake Lery from Bayou Terre aux Boeufs and Delacroix has land receding while the lake that formed following Hurricane Katrina was expanding. Mr. Pezold then mentioned the importance of supporting the ridge that keep the waters from Lake Lery from the Highway 300 evacuation route. The islands to the north serve as a landscape feature. This is a very time sensitive area that if the tidal prism to the north is not repaired, it is not a fixable problem. Wood Lake is a highly cost-effective project.

Scooter Trosclair, Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, spoke on behalf of the Gulf Shoreline Protection West Project. It will help protect more than 10,000 acres of critical and fragile coastal wetlands offering protection for roads and millions invested in drainage infrastructure including levees, pumps and drainage structures. This project is shovel ready, will help to protect the Mermentau sub-basin, and help to complete the void to protect investments. Multiple parishes, the state and federal governments have provided funds for the project.

Susan Mouton, Coastal Zone Manager, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury, supported both projects in the Mermentau Basin. The Grand Chenier project has synergy with ME-20 and ME-32 and provides benefits of 256 net acres of coastal habitat. She stated the Gulf Shoreline Protection West project as a priority for the parish as it is the first line of defense and protects the restoration investments in the interior marshes by reducing shoreline erosion. She then thanked CWPPRA for their investments in coastal Louisiana, ensuring future generations will be able to call southwestern Louisiana home.

With no further public comment, Ms. Vittoe called for a ten-minute breakout session for Technical Committee members to discuss the projects and comments.

When she reconvened the meeting, Ms. Vititoe asked Ms. Landry to review the project selection process. Ms. Landry then recapped the process, stating that is very similar to that of the Phase 2 process. The Tech Committee utilized the selection criteria and other considerations, such as public comment, to determine the projects of PPL 34. She then stated the Technical Committee scores projects according to the criteria including cost effectiveness, synergy, critical area of need, critical landscape feature, and critical infrastructure protection. There are a number of items listed under other considerations, including stakeholder input and landowner support, as well as other items such as sustainability and operations and maintenance that are deliberated. Public participation is an extremely valuable part of the process.

Ms. Vititoe requested the following table be displayed. The table shows the combined and weighted total scores of the Technical Committee using the selection criteria to evaluate the projects presented. She further explained the top two projects were Wood Lake Marsh Creation and Terracing and East Lake Lery Shoreline Restoration. Recognizing the similarity of the goals of these two projects and the proposed overlap of the borrow area, the Technical Committee was aiming to optimize project placement. The Technical Committee is recommending combining these projects into a single Phase 1 authorization. Both restoration areas will be evaluated for borrow availability with partial survey data and then a project will be recommended to the Task Force. The next highest adjusted total score is Grand Chenier Marsh Creation and Terracing, which will be recommended to the Task Force for Phase 1 funding. The fourth project is Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration and Marsh Creation. With the additional considerations and the critical area of need of the Terrebonne Basin projects, the Technical Committee is recommending advancing and combining the South Isle de Jean Charles Landbridge Increment and Eastern Terrebonne Landbridge Marsh Creation Increment 1 projects and advancing a project in the vicinity. Project collaborative scores are shown in the table below:

CWPPRA PPL 34 Technical Committee Project Selection Scores

Project	Cost Effective- ness	Synergy	Critical Area of Need	Critical Landscape Feature	Critical Infra- structure Protection	Adjusted total score (with weights)
Wood Lake Marsh Creation and Terracing	6.00	7.67	7.50	7.33	7.67	7.24
East Lake Lery Shoreline Restoration	5.00	7.83	7.50	8.17	6.50	6.97
Grand Chenier Marsh Creation and Terracing	6.00	7.50	6.83	6.33	7.50	6.86
Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration and Marsh Creation	3.00	6.50	9.00	8.17	7.33	6.84
South Isle de Jean Charles Landbridge Increment	5.00	5.17	8.00	7.00	7.33	6.55
Eastern Terrebonne Landbridge Marsh Creation Increment 1	4.00	5.03	8.50	6.64	7.78	6.48
Gulf Shoreline Protection West	1.00	8.58	9.00	8.75	2.33	5.95
Elmer's Island Restoration	1.00	7.33	3.00	7.67	5.83	4.73

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion to recommend the selected PPL 34 projects combined Wood Lake Marsh Creation and Terracing/Lake Lery Shoreline Restoration, Grand Chenier Marsh Creation and Terracing and combined South Isle de Jean Charles Landbridge Increment/Eastern

Terrebonne Landbridge Marsh Creation Increment 1 to the Task Force for Phase 1 Engineering and Design approval.

DECISION: Mr. Lezina made the motion which Mr. Paul seconded; the motion carried without opposition.

Mr. Pat Williams requested to further clarify the Technical Committee approvals regarding PPL 34 combination projects. He stated the importance for all in attendance to understand that not each of the projects as presented has been approved. The Technical Committee can recommend up to four Phase 1 projects. Recently because of funding limitations and the backlog, only two have been approved. The Technical Committee is continually re-evaluating funding ability and the backlog. This year, the Technical Committee working with all the agencies, innovatively looked to advance more than two projects. The similarities of the projects were evaluated. In the case of Wood Lake and East Lake Lery, they are in the immediate proximity of one another and share the same borrow area, thus only one is feasible to move forward. The authorization is intended for the evaluation of both restoration areas and to obtain initial advanced data on both project areas. Projects would be reassessed through screening and one project would advance at 30% design. Similarly for the Eastern Terrebonne Landbridge area, it is of interest with a high land loss rate, with certain sections of the landbridge providing protection for critical infrastructure. Similar to the pairing of Wood Lake/East Lake Lery, a pairing of the overall landbridge will be evaluated. The goal is to deliver an assessment of the alignment of the landbridge as well as increment 1 to advance through 30% design for recommendation. Additionally, a recommendation for increments 2 and 3 for future PPLs will also be generated.

Mr. Paul added that for Wood Lake/East Lake Lery, both project areas would be evaluated with the potential for a combination of project features. One project would be recommended, not necessarily one project or the other but a combination of the two is possible.

Mr. Roy emphasized the difficulty presented to the Technical Committee with so many projects scoring well. The top six projects were very close, and all were high priority projects. Over the last few years, only two projects have been funded for Phase 1 Engineering and Design. When evaluating the top two projects, it was evident that approach did not make sense, particularly with the same goals and borrow source. Going off script this year, the Technical Committee decided to combine the two projects into one Phase 1 authorization with an expanded Engineering and Design effort. This provides the ability to evaluate an array of alternatives and features. As Mr. Paul mentioned, it could result in a combination of features, using data and engineering to derive the best features for that area. Grand Chenier was easy to approve as is, at the third position on the list. The Bayou L'Ours Ridge project is being skipped over, demonstrating flexibility with the other considerations. The Technical Committee recognizes the need in the Eastern Terrebonne Basin to get something moving. That is why the Technical Committee moved down the list to evaluate the next two projects, South Isle de Jean Charles and Eastern Terrebonne that had almost the same scores. Both projects are on the Eastern Terrebonne landbridge, but located at opposite ends. That area deserves a greater effort to determine the best Increment 1 project with some advanced engineering and design with expanded data collection of surveys and geotechnical analyses. Similar to Wood Lake/East Lake Lery proposal, the proposed combination of the Eastern Terrebonne landbridge projects is a more

expanded engineering and design effort. The intent is to use the data collected to conduct an alternatives analysis to develop a project that will lead to a Phase 2 request. The additional data and analysis should result in subsequent Increments for continuation of projects, thus mapping out the Eastern Terrebonne landbridge. The technical Committee feels this is the best approach given the suite of projects presented this year.

Ms. Vititoe called for additional comments from the public. none were proffered.

10. Agenda Item 9. *Additional Agenda Items*

Ms. Vititoe mentioned there were two agenda items added earlier, the first being a change to the Standard Operating Procedures. Essentially, the original language limited inactivation to an unconstructed project that had been determined as feasible, had completed 95% design, but had not been funded due to programmatic issues. The proposed revision broadens the ability to move a project considered feasible to inactive status to include those that have been funded for construction but are unable to proceed because of programmatic issues in addition to those not funded.

Ms. Vititoe opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion to amend the CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures as presented.

Mr. Jacobson made the motion, which Mr. Paul seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

Ms. Vititoe explained the second additional agenda acknowledges the retirement of Ms. Karen McCormick, EPA Technical Committee member since 2008. She has been an integral part of the Technical Committee and is retiring at the end of the year. Ms. Vititoe expressed CWPPRA is grateful for her invaluable service to the program. She then invited the Technical Committee to comment as Ms. McCormick was online for the meeting.

Mr. Jacobson commented that he was sitting in for Ms. McCormick at the meeting. He thanked Ms. McCormick for her great leadership with the coastal restoration program of EPA as well as with all the other programs she was involved in over the last 15 years. Mr. Jacobson proceeded to thank Ms. McCormick for her mentorship and strong leadership particularly leading the EPA team's restoration efforts in Louisiana.

Ms. McCormick expressed how she wished she was at the meeting, but was unable to because she was recovering from an illness. CWPPRA has been a large part of her career growth and is an integral part of EPA success, she explained. She mentioned that CWPPRA would not be successful without input from the locals. Because everything starts locally and ends locally, public input and support is critical to the process. State and federal partners will continue to do great things with CWPPRA. As everyone heard in this meeting, CWPPRA is embracing innovation by developing ways to move the coastal restoration program forward. Ms. McCormick then expressed her appreciation for everyone and mentioned next time she is in Louisiana it will be as a guest enjoying her visit.

Mr. Paul expressed his appreciation for Ms. McCormick's willingness to work with CWPPRA over the years, as well as the development of partnerships. He mentioned her cooperation to tackle tough issues and decisions and was grateful for her leadership. Mr. Paul then wished Ms. McCormick the best in her retirement and mentioned he hopes she comes back to visit.

Mr. Lezina thanked Ms. McCormick for all of her hard work. He then let those in attendance know of the much larger role Ms. McCormick and the EPA team play in coastal programs, in addition to CWPPRA. On behalf of the State of Louisiana, Mr. Lezina then thanked Ms. McCormick for all of her service.

Mr. Roy remarked that since the Task Force retreat, it has not been easy working through program changes. He then mentioned his appreciation for her help and support working through some very difficult meetings. Mr. Roy then expressed his disappointment that Ms. McCormick will not be around to continue the work. He then mentioned he will send her the next version of the collaboration document to review.

Ms. McCormick then commented that her interactions with Mr. Roy helped her grow in her career.

Mr. Williams shared his appreciation for the journey she participated in, especially the investment in collaboration. As Mr. Lezina mention, that this is a CWPPRA meeting, but Ms. McCormick has been a coastal champion in habitat restoration and the intersection with clean air and clean water. Mr. Williams reiterated his appreciation of Ms. McCormick's efforts with CWPPRA and beyond. He wished her a happy retirement and thanked her for her hard work over the years.

Ms. Vittoe then presented a certificate of commendation for exemplary service as the Technical Committee Representative for the Environmental Protection Agency to Ms. McCormick.

11. Agenda Item 10. *Request for Public Comments*

Ms. Vittoe called for final public comment. Mr. Kenneth Ragas presented a brief history of his family in South Louisiana since 1769. He is a native of Buras and expressed his disappointment that no PPL 34 projects were presented for Plaquemines Parish and that no representatives of the Parish were in attendance. He mentioned that his family member Domingo Ragas was sent from Spain, organized the first river pilot system and that his family donated their land for levees. Mr. Ragas then stated that computer models lacked their input. Protection is the main issue for his area. He mentioned that his family land has washed away while oyster beds were destroyed. He called for a prudent decision-making process. He discussed the Flood Control Act of 1928 was to protect from floods, not to permit crevasses, which in his view, contributes to flooding. Mr. Ragas recalled being involved in PPLs 1, 2, 3, and expressed his excitement at arriving at PPL 34 with an offering of great projects. He reiterated his disappointment that no projects were presented to protect his family land, as well as the citrus groves and oyster beds of Plaquemines Parish.

12. Agenda Item 11. Announcement: Priority Project List 35 Regional Planning Team Meetings

Ms. Landry presented the following RPT meeting schedule:

February 4, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Region IV Planning Team Meeting	Lake Charles
February 5, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Region III Planning Team Meeting	Morgan City
February 6, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Region I & II Planning Team Meeting	Lacombe
February 25, 2025	10:30 a.m.	Coastwide Electronic Voting	(via email, no meeting)

13. Agenda Item 12. Announcement: Date of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meeting

Ms. Landry announced that the next Task Force meeting would be held Thursday, January 23, 2025 at 9:30 a.m. at the USGS Wetland and Aquatic and Research Center, Lafayette, LA.

14. Agenda Item 13. Announcement: Scheduled Dates of Future Program Meetings*

Ms. Landry imparted the following CWPPRA meeting schedule:

January 23, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Task Force Meeting	Lafayette
February 4, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Region IV Planning Team Meeting	Lake Charles
February 5, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Region III Planning Team Meeting	Morgan City
February 6, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Region I & II Planning Team Meeting	Lacombe
April 10, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee Meeting	Baton Rouge
May 8, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Task Force Meeting	Lafayette
September 11, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee Meeting	Baton Rouge
October 9, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Task Force Meeting	New Orleans
December 11, 2025	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee Meeting	New Orleans

*subject to change

15. Agenda Item 14. Decision: Adjourn

Ms. Vititoe called for a motion to adjourn the proceedings.

Mr. *Williams* made the motion, which Mr. *Lezina* seconded; the motion carried without dissent. The meeting adjourned at 11:51 a.m.