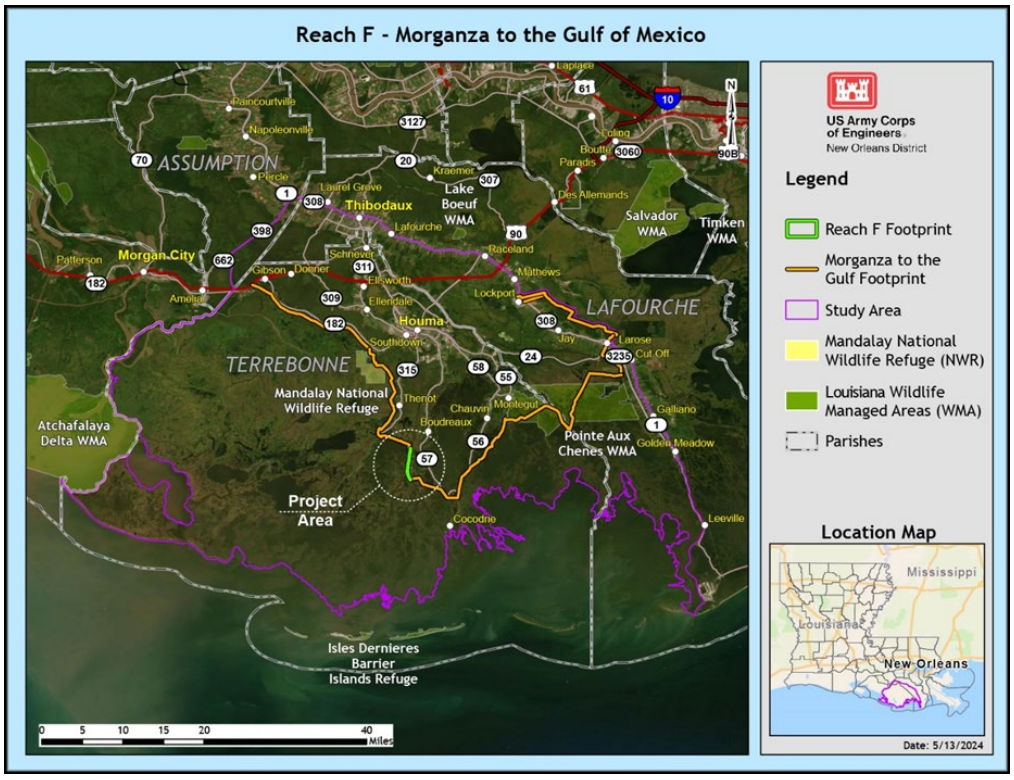
Reach F, Hurricane and Storm Risk Reduction Project Morganza to the Gulf, Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana



Appendix K: Socioeconomics

July 2026

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Socioeconomics Details

Population

Population and household characteristics in the region of influence (ROI) determine consumption patterns, land use activities, and future development patterns. Table X-1 displays the historic and projected population in the ROI, extending from the years 1970 to 2046. Throughout 1970s, the Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes experienced significant growth; from 1970 to 1980 their populations grew by 20.8 percent and 24.8 percent respectively. The population in Terrebonne Parish and Lafourche Parish declined slightly in the late 1980s but recovered by the late 1990s. Between 2005 and 2006 population increased as those fleeing Hurricane Katrina moved to the ROI. Post- Katrina population in the ROI continued to increase at steady incremental rate; these trends are expected to continue over the next 25 years. The largest population center in the ROI is Houma, LA. According to the American Community Survey 2021, the population of Houma was 33,461.
Households

Table 1 shows the number of households in the ROI from the year 1970 to the year 2045. The number of households in the ROI increased by an average of 4 percent every year between 1970 and 1980. In the following decades, the two parishes experienced steady growth, closely mirroring trends in population. In most recent years, the number of households in Lafourche Parish increased from 35,650 in 2010 to 38,090 in 2020 (6.8 percent increase) and the number of households in Terrebonne Parish increased from 40,020 in 2010 to 43,050 in 2020 (7.6 percent increase). According to the American Community Survey 2021, the number households in Houma was 14,893. Projected data estimates that trends in the number of households in the project area would continue. The number of households in Lafourche Parish is expected to reach 41,810 by the year 2035 and the number of households in Terrebonne Parish is expected to reach 46,320.

Table 1. Populations and Households

Population (Ths.)								
Parish	**1970**	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**
Terrebonne	76.17	95.09	97.04	104.76	111.55	114.46	115.31	115.88
Lafourche	69.05	83.47	85.81	89.78	96.68	98.66	99.22	99.50
Number of Households (Ths.)								
Parish	**1970**	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**
Terrebonne	19.60	29.50	31.86	36.16	40.02	43.05	45.37	47.19
Lafourche	18.01	25.70	28.82	32.05	35.65	38.09	40.03	41.52

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA); U.S. Census Bureau (BOC); Moody Analytics (ECCA) Forecast

Labor and Employment

Labor Force

Labor and employment numbers illustrate the level the economic activity in the ROI- an integral part of the social and economic environment. The labor force includes all citizens over the age

of 16 employed or actively seeking employment in the ROI.

Table 2 displays the total labor force in the ROI from 1990-2046. Employment trends in the ROI are strongly influenced by the oil and gas industry; meaning employment is highly sensitive to booms and busts in the oil and gas industry. For example, the price of oil declined sharply in the late 1990s and, in response, the labor force in Terrebonne Parish declined by 4 percent and the labor force in Lafourche Parish declined by 3 percent. Similar trends occurred in the years following a sharp decline in oil prices in 2008 and 2014.

Moody Analytics predicts that the labor force would flatten out over the next 25 years. As concerns over climate change increase there is pressure to move away from a dependence on fossil fuels. The year 2020 saw another collapse in the price of oil, but this time oil prices may not recover as consumers and producers alike look to other energy efficient solutions.

Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate is the percentage of people that are unemployed out of the total labor force. The unemployment rate is another proxy for the overall health of the economy. Table 2 shows the unemployment rate for the ROI as well as the total unemployment rate for state of Louisiana.

Overall, the unemployment rate in the ROI is relatively low. The unemployment rate of the state of Louisiana much higher than the unemployment rate in the ROI with only a few exceptions. As mentioned previously, historically, employment in the ROI is tied to the oil and gas industry though the unemployment rate is much more sensitive to changes to the market than the labor force because people only drop out of the labor force when economic conditions are so bad that they stop seeking employment altogether. The spikes in unemployment correspond with an overall decline in the price of oil. There are significant increases in the unemployment rate in 1992, 2000, 2005, post-2008, 2015. Moody's Analytics estimates that the unemployment would flatten out over the next 25 years.

Table 2. Labor and Employment

Labor Force (Ths.)						
Parish	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**
Terrebonne	40.52	45.88	50.91	50.53	49.80	50.37
Lafourche	36.71	41.14	45.07	44.46	43.74	44.15
Unemployment Rate (%)						
Parish	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**
Terrebonne	4.36	4.65	6.47	6.47	7.17	7.08
Lafourche	4.09	4.49	6.14	5.87	6.50	6.42
Louisiana	6.18	5.28	7.94	6.86	7.05	6.69

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA); U.S. Census Bureau (BOC); Moody Analytics (ECCA) Forecast

Employment by Industry

The type of employment in the ROI gives us an idea of what industries areas are important to the ROI. Table 3 shows the employment by industry for each parish in the ROI. The biggest industry in the ROI is the trade, transportation, and utilities industry. Historically, Terrebonne

Parish heavily relied on the natural resource and mining industry. After the collapse of oil in the 1980s Terrebonne Parish began to diversify and employment in industries like government, manufacturing and health/education services became more popular. The natural resource and mining industry pays the highest wages in ROI. According to the 2018 American Community Survey, retail trade is the most common industry in Terrebonne Parish followed by healthcare/social assistance, mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction and food services. The most common industries in Lafourche Parish include healthcare/social assistance, manufacturing, retail trade, and construction.

Moody Analytics predicts that trade, transportation, and utilities would remain the most popular industry in the ROI followed by healthcare/education services and government.

Table 3. Employment by Industry (Ths.)

Terrebonne Parish				
Industry	**1970**	**1990**	**2010**	**2040**
Natural Resources and Mining	4.57	4.69	5.44	4.36
Construction	1.48	2.06	3.14	2.93
Manufacturing	2.98	2.75	5.94	4.39
Trade; Transportation; and Utilities	6.10	8.57	12.33	11.33
Information	0.50	0.44	0.40	0.39
Financial Activities	1.13	2.12	2.90	2.97
Professional and Business Services	0.94	1.70	5.62	6.30
Education & Health Services	0.94	3.31	5.47	8.37
Leisure and Hospitality	1.37	3.11	4.81	5.13
Other Services	0.65	1.12	1.84	1.39
Government	3.75	5.90	6.99	6.03
Lafourche Parish **Industry**	**1970**	**1990**	**2010**	**2040**
Natural Resources and Mining	1.18	1.24	1.50	1.26
Construction	0.57	0.67	2.15	1.79
Manufacturing	2.45	2.19	2.58	2.12
Trade; Transportation; and Utilities	4.79	6.50	11.79	10.34
Information	0.14	0.35	0.25	0.26
Financial Activities	1.01	2.03	1.92	1.53
Professional and Business Services	0.54	1.21	3.61	3.01
Education & Health Services	0.44	1.27	3.09	3.84
Leisure and Hospitality	0.52	1.10	2.70	2.81
Other Services	0.36	0.56	0.69	0.64
Government	2.92	4.93	7.24	7.44

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA); U.S. Census Bureau (BOC); Moody Analytics (ECCA) Forecast

Public Facilities and Services

Public and quasi-public facilities and services in the project area include medical facilities,

schools, police stations/sheriff's offices, and fire stations. As of 2023, there were eight hospitals in the project area. Lafourche Parish has five police stations/sheriff's offices and a juvenile justice facility located within the project area and Terrebonne Parish has three police stations/sheriff's offices, according to 2018 ESRI data. There are 48 fire stations located within the project area—18 in Lafourche Parish and 30 in Terrebonne Parish. Public and quasi-public facilities and services in the project area also include a Final RPEIS May 2013 Morganza to the Gulf, LA Final Revised Programmatic EIS 5-49 extensive network of pumps and levees for flood risk reduction, and a series of navigation canals, including the GIWW, the HNC and Bayou Lafourche.

Transportation and Navigation

Several major highways are located within the project area. For example, in Terrebonne Parish, Highways 315, 661, 57, 56, and 55 run in a north-south direction through the project boundaries while Highways 24, 90, 182, 309, 311, 316, 3040, 659, 660, and 58 run in an east-west direction. In Lafourche Parish, Highway 24 runs in an east-west direction through MTG project features as described in the RPEIS. In addition, numerous smaller highways and local streets would be within MTG project features as described in the RPEIS. A series of navigation canals, including the HNC and the GIWW, are also located within the project area as well as the Port of Terrebonne. The HNC is Houma's 26-mile direct waterway route to the Gulf from the Intracoastal Waterway. The GIWW is a navigable inland waterway that passes through the heart of Houma-Terrebonne in an east-west direction. The Port of Terrebonne, located in Houma roughly 26 miles north of the Gulf at the convergence of the HNC and GIWW, is classified as a medium draft port and has 400 acres of leasable, waterfront acres. The port is connected (via the HNC and GIWW) to ports and docks along the U.S. gulf coast and other markets. The Houma-Terrebonne Airport and Industrial Park is also located within the project area. The airport provides easy access to the Gulf and to the Central and South American markets.

Income Per Capita

Income per capita serves as a proxy for regional and community economic growth. Table 4 shows the income per capita for the ROI for the years 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020, 2030, and 2040. Income per capita in the ROI increased throughout the past 50 years in response to economic growth and inflation.

Table 4. Income Per Capita ($)

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040
Parish								
Terrebonne	2,953	9,571	13,307	20,821	38,788	50,482	71,469	103,019
Lafourche	2,829	9,200	13,239	23,485	40,391	50,061	65,374	86,354

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA); U.S. Census Bureau (BOC); Moody Analytics (ECCA) Forecast

Tax Revenues and Property Values

If hurricanes significantly impact businesses, industries, farms, and property values, and impact local employment and income, the tax base created by these activities could be impacted as well. Reduction in the flood risk from the surges associated with tropical events is the primary objective of projects similar to those proposed and can have a commensurate positive impact on property values. Conversely, the lack of hurricane damage risk reduction in areas most

sensitive to storm damage could limit the growth of property values. In 2009, USACE identified a total of 52,041 residential and nonresidential structures within the project area: 45,778 residential structures and 6,263 nonresidential/commercial structures. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average median value of owner-occupied homes in Lafourche Parish between 2017-2021 was estimated to be $162,100 (compared with the state average of $174,000). The average median value of owner-occupied homes in Terrebonne Parish during this same period was estimated to be $160,600.

Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is the unifying force of a group due to one or more characteristics that provide commonality. These characteristics may include such commonality as race, education, income, ethnicity, religion, language, and mutual economic and social benefits. Community cohesion is the force that keeps group members together long enough to establish meaningful interactions, common institutions, and agreed upon ways of behavior. It is a dynamic process, changing as the physical and human environment changes. The changes brought about by water resource developments can impact community cohesion in different ways. For example, changing a ROW may divide a community; it may cause the dislocations of a significant number of residents; or it may require the relocation of an important local institution, such as a church or community center. On the other hand, a water resource development, such as construction of a hurricane levee, can represent an important public works project heavily supported by the local community.

The presence of social institutions such as libraries, places of worship, and schools provide residents an opportunity for civic participation and engagement, which increases community cohesion. The project area is comprised of settled communities with stable complements of places of worship, schools, and community interaction. As of 2023, there were 31 schools and 98 places of worship in the project area.