

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes from the 6 April 2020 CWPPRA Technical Committee Meeting

1. The meeting was initiated at 1:00 p.m. The following Technical Committee members were in attendance:

Ms. Karen McCormick, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Mr. Patrick Williams, NOAA Fisheries
Mr. Mark Wingate, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Chairman
Mr. Brian Lezina, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA)
Mr. Britt Paul, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Mr. Kevin Roy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

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

2. Agenda Item 1. Meeting Initiation

The meeting was conducted via WebEx virtual meeting platform, due to the COVID 19 pandemic and public gathering restrictions. Mr. Inman introduced himself and briefed those in attendance of procedures for participation. He acknowledged those Technical Committee members in attendance. Mr. Wingate called the meeting to order and asked Technical Committee members to re-iterate their names and agency affiliations. Mr. Wingate asked for any opening comments from the Technical Committee; none were proffered. He commented on the changes facing the nation, and encouraged attendees to offer suggestions regarding the on-line meeting format.

Mr. Wingate asked for the Technical Committee to present any changes to the agenda for today's proceedings. Mr. Lezina requested that an item be added for discussion – specifically regarding the programmatic management for signage and marking of completed projects. Mr. Wingate responded affirmatively; Mr. Inman suggested placing the new item at the end of Agenda Item 6 (Report/Discussion of Upcoming 20-year life projects) and adding it as “6d.”

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to include the new agenda item.

Decision: Mr. Lezina made the motion to add the agenda item, which Mr. Williams seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

3. Agenda Item 2. Report: Status of CWPPRA Program Funds and Projects (Jernice Cheavis, USACE)

Ms. Jernice Cheavis, USACE, presented an overview of the status of CWPPRA funds as follows: The fully funded total program estimate since its inception through PPL 1 – 29 is \$3.173 billion. Total projected state and federal sources of funding (through FY21) for all authorized projects in addition to projected Department of the Interior (DOI) funds is \$2.134 billion. A potential gap of \$1,040 billion remains if the Program were to construct all projects to date. Current Task Force-approved funding for projects in Phase I, Phase II and O&M totals \$2.299 billion. Authorized funding obligated to each agency for approved project phases currently totals \$1.948 billion.

Ms. Cheavis continued with an overview of funding as it relates to the electronic Task Force vote in January and February 2020, which authorized PPL-29, Phase II Increment I funding and a budget

increase in the Caminada Headlands Back Barrier Marsh Creation (BA-171) project. When subtracted from the total available program funds (as of January 2020), the above stated authorizations result in a remaining total of \$2,228,655 available for today's proceedings. A project scope change and budget increase will be proposed later today, and would increase the program estimate by \$73,576. If approved, the total available funds brought forward would be \$2,155,079.

A request for approval of the FY21 Planning Program budget is on the agenda. A total of \$103,729 has been carried over from FY20. Added to that is the expected allocation of \$5,000,000 for Planning activities. Today's funding request for FY21 Planning and Outreach totals \$5,103,132. If approved, a surplus of \$597 would remain.

Ms. Cheavis then presented a pie chart summarizing projects as follows: CWPPRA has authorized 226 projects. There are 150 active projects including 32 in Phase 1 Engineering and Design, 17 in Phase 2 Construction, 96 projects that have been constructed and are now in Operations, Maintenance and/ or Monitoring phase, and 5 support projects. Additionally, CWPPRA has completed 17 projects (i.e. reached the 20-year life mark), deauthorized 46 projects, transferred 8 projects, and placed 6 in the inactive category.

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee; none were proffered.

4. Agenda Item 3. Report: Electronic Votes and Approvals (Brad Inman, USACE)

Mr. Inman reported on an item voted upon since the January 2020 Task Force meeting:

- A) In March 2020 an electronic vote was held and resulted in the approval of expanding the Northwest Turtle Bay Marsh Creation Project (BA-125), after a favorable bid was received. The expansion includes an additional 315 acres of marsh creation and 2,600 LF of containment dikes. While a corresponding increase in its O&M and Monitoring budget is anticipated, surplus funds may ultimately be returned to the CWPPRA Program.

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee; none were proffered.

5. Agenda Item 4. Decision: Request of Funds for East Timbalier Island Sediment Restoration, Phase 1 (TE-25) Monitoring Cost During Closeout (Cecelia Linder, NMFS)

Ms. Linder began the request by pointing out that TE-25 is a PPL-3 project completed in 2000. She explained that approximately \$224,000 in surplus funds was returned to the Program in 2004, but discrepancies exist (between the USACE and OS systems) in the tracking of those funds. This request is basically to correct the project balance. The request is for \$73,576.43 from the CWPPRA program's available funds, in order to financially close the long-term phase of the TE-25.

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee. None were proffered.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the request of funds as iterated above.

Decision: Mr. Williams made the motion, which Ms. McCormick seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

6. Agenda Item 5. Decision: Request For a No-Cost Time Extension for Cote Blanche Hydrologic Restoration (TV-04) (Brian Lezina, CPRA)

Mr. Lezina, in cooperation with NRCS, made the request for Technical Committee recommendation approval of a one year no cost time extension for Cote Blanche Hydrologic Restoration. CPRA and NRCS are continuing to work out the details of final actions in order to proceed to closeout.

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee. None were proffered.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the request for a no-cost time extension of one year for the above-named project.

Decision: Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

7. Agenda Item 6. Report/Decision: Upcoming 20-Year Life Projects (Kaitlyn Carriere, USACE)

Ms. Carriere made the presentation on behalf of project sponsors regarding recommended paths forward for projects nearing the end of their 20-year lives. She referred to the detailed 20-year close-out plans provided in committee member binders, and provided a brief verbal review of each, asking that the Technical Committee recommend to the Task Force the paths forward as provided.

a. Projects requesting approval for project closeout with no additional cost increase:

BA-23	Barataria Bay Waterway West Side Shoreline Protection	NRCS	1-Nov-20
PO-06	Fritchie Marsh Restoration	NRCS	1-Mar-21
BA-26	Barataria Bay Waterway East Side Shoreline Protection	NRCS	31-Mar-21
CS-31	Holly Beach Sand Management	NRCS	31-Mar-23
ME-14	Pecan Island Terracing	NMFS	10-Sep-23
CS-27	Black Bayou Hydrologic Restoration	NMFS	3-Nov-23
TV-17	Lake Portage Land Bridge	NRCS	15-May-24
TV-18	Four Mile Canal Terracing and Sediment Trapping	NMFS	23-May-24
ME-19	Grand-White Lake Landbridge Restoration	FWS	1-Oct-24
PO-24	Hopedale Hydrologic Restoration	NMFS	15-Jan-25
TV-15	Sediment Trapping at the Jaws	NMFS	19-May-25

Ms. Carriere then listed and acknowledged projects that have reached their 20th year and either have been, or are expected to be closed out: TE-26, TE-20, TE-24, TV-12, CS-21, TE-30, and TE-28.

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee. Mr. Williams acknowledged the efforts those involved in the development of these paths forward as new requirements were taken into consideration. He noted that while not specifically included in Agenda Item 6a, the determination had been made to defer CS-23 close-out proceedings until spring 2021; he asked if TV-13 would likewise be deferred and received an affirmative response. He then asked if there was an update on BA-23 regarding the operation of its water control structure beyond its 20-year life; Mr. Steve Gunter responded with a tentative affirmation that the landowner would assume control based on Jefferson Parish permitting provisions. Lastly, Mr. Williams questioned whether or not the proposed path forward for ME-19 could/ should be deferred until after the survey of its rock dike is conducted, so that the Technical Committee could make a more informed decision regarding

proposed Maintenance and O&M expenditures. Mr. Inman interjected that any changes to the close-out path could be proposed later if deemed necessary. Mr. Williams expressed his opinion that costs to the program could be reduced if a signage only option would be deemed adequate, as opposed to the option of extending the rock dike. Mr. Roy defended the notion of extending the rock dike, which was based on the required risk assessment; but he also expressed his willingness to defer the decision and provide detailed cost estimates of both options once the survey is conducted. The discussion shifted to the current SOP for projects entering their 15-20 year close-out phase; after lengthy discussion and clarification of Mr. Williams’ cost-saving concerns, Mr. Wingate called for a motion.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the paths forward to project close-out for the eleven projects outlined above, at no additional cost. (Mr. Williams proffered an amendment to the motion for ME-19 to include language for a signage-only option in its path forward proposal, but no second to his amendment was proffered.)

Decision: Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

- b. Projects requesting approval for closeout with a cost increase:

PO-22	Bayou Chevee Shoreline Protection	COE	17-Dec-21
BA-03c	Naomi Outfall Management	NRCS	15-Jul-22

Ms. Carriere briefly reviewed PO-22 asserting the need for navigational signage. Approximately \$125,000 remains in funding for the project, on which no O&M events have occurred. The rock dike has settled – in some areas below water surface. Mr. Inman added that this request is an example of the need for navigational signage to become part of the close-out protocol as will be discussed in the previously added agenda item (6d).

Mr. Kinler outlined the BA-03c request, which is for additional changes to navigational signage; existing navigational aids have supposedly been damaged by various barge and boat traffic. Although an estimate is not available, it is anticipated by the fall Technical Committee meeting when O&M requests are typically considered.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the paths forward to project close-out with a cost increase.

Decision: Mr. Lezina made the motion, which Ms. McCormick seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

- c. Projects pursuing project extension through formal evaluation:

MR-03	West Bay Sediment Diversion	COE	28-Nov-23
MR-09	Delta Wide Crevasses	NMFS	1-May-25

Ms. Carriere presented the overview of MR-03, its construction and maintenance events. An extension is being sought for continued monitoring. More than \$6.4 million remains in the Maintenance and O&M budget, but the expected total cost of future monitoring events is \$2.06 million. Mr. Inman further explained that while the current success of the project does not meet its goals, prolonged high river conditions are likely to result in more sediment deposition. If further scouring occurs northward toward the federal channel, the emergency closure design (as in the operations plan) would be necessarily implemented. Thus future monitoring is crucial. Any unused funding would be returned to the CWPPRA Program.

Dawn Davis, NOAA Fisheries, presented the request for project extension for MR-09 with an overview of its location, crevasse construction and maintenance events. Remaining funds will allow an additional phase (IV) of crevasse construction and dredging, set to begin in the summer of 2020. She highlighted the relative cost effectiveness (per acre) of this project. As a result of the 20 year-life decision matrix, it was determined that this project exhibits sufficient evidence to warrant an extension. This request is for a 20-year project extension and another \$8.2 million to perform 3 more phases of crevasse construction and strategic cleanout over the next 20 years. Ms. Davis asserted that periodic creation and dredging of crevasse splay mimics their natural cycle. Furthermore, she pointed out that Mississippi River Delta projects were not included in the most recent State Master Plan, so a formal extension of this project (which was included in the 2012 State Master Plan) is the only mechanism for continued restoration in this area.

Mr. Wingate called for comments or questions from the Technical Committee. Ms. McCormick inquired about cost-sharing provision from the state, since the MR-09 project site is not part of the 2017 State Master Plan. Mr. Lezina replied in the affirmative. No further questions or comments were proffered.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the pursuit of project extension for projects MR-03 and MR-09 through formal evaluation.

Decision: Ms. McCormick made the motion, which Mr. Williams seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

- d. Programmatic funding and protocol for long-term signage/markings of completed projects.

Mr. Lezina was called upon to initiate discussion regarding the marking of completed projects—signage, navigational aids (lighted or not), etc. – that may reduce the risks associated with project features. Because each project may call for specific signage, the original cost and placement of signage could be included in the project budget. Mr. Lezina envisions a programmatic funding mechanism for the on-going monitoring and maintenance of the signage after project completion; funds could possibly be leveraged and funding requests could be made incrementally.

Mr. Wingate called for questions and comments from the Technical Committee. Mr. Paul asked if Mr. Lezina was speaking specifically of establishing a separate fund to address long term signage monitoring, evaluation and maintenance. Mr. Lezina responded affirmatively, although an amount has yet to be determined. Mr. Inman iterated agreement on behalf of the P&E subcommittee, although no official recommendation has been formulated. Mr. Williams interjected his support of a separate funding protocol, rather than addressing signage issues on a project-specific basis. Mr. Roy pointed out that similar funds have been set aside before, citing a “storm-recovery” fund and a “monitoring contingency” fund; he suggested assigning the task of devising a budget to a group. Ms. McCormick agreed and suggested allocating a percentage of New Construction funds for this purpose. Mr. Inman pointed out that the risk register, which has defined a backlog of completed projects requiring signage would be a reasonable place to obtain a budgetary estimate. After more discussion and general agreement, Mr. Wingate requested that the P&E subcommittee commence with the preliminary development of a funding protocol and budget to address the need for adequate, long term, post-completion project signage.

After a ten-minute recess, the meeting reconvened with a verbal roll call.

8. Agenda Item 7. Decision: CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Update/Revisions (Kaitlyn Carriere, USACE)

Ms. Carriere presented the requested changes and revisions to the CWPPRA SOP for Demonstration Projects (Appendix E); revisions were proffered verbally and visually for Technical Committee review and approval.

Mr. Wingate opened the floor to discussion from the Technical Committee. Ms. McCormick asserted her opinion that the new language is exclusive and does not encourage innovative solutions for coastal restoration; she stated a preference to simply not approve proposed demonstration projects rather than prohibit their presentation with exclusive language. Mr. Paul concurred by reasoning that each project would be evaluated according to the SOP as it is. Mr. Roy, Mr. Williams and Mr. Lezina each spoke in favor of the revisions, emphasizing the intent to focus on restoration techniques that provide direct acreage gains, rather than technology or research-based procedures that may assist in project implementation, but not have direct acreage benefits.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the request to change the language of the SOP for Demonstration Projects as presented.

Decision: The motion was made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Mr. Roy; the motion carried with 3 assenting votes and two opposing votes.

9. Agenda Item 8. Report/Decision: FY21 Planning Budget Approval, including the PPL 31 Process, and Presentation of FY21 Outreach Budget. (Brad Inman, USACE)

On behalf of the P&E Subcommittee Mr. Inman began with a request for Technical Committee recommendation for approval of the PPL 31 process (which is based on loss-loss rates and is unchanged from last year.

- a. A recommendation to the Task Force to approve that the PPL 31 Process include selecting four nominees each in the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins; three nominees each in the Breton Sound and Pontchartrain Basins; two nominees each in the Mermentau, Calcasieu/Sabine, and Tech/Vermilion Basins, one nominee in the Atchafalaya Basin, and one nominee in the Coastwide category.

Mr. Wingate opened the floor for comment from the Technical Committee. None was proffered.

Decision: Mr. Paul moved that the PPL 31 process be approved and recommended to the Task Force. Brian Lezina seconded the motion, which carried without opposition.

Jennifer Guidry was called to present the Outreach request as follows:

- b. A recommendation to the Task Force to approve the FY21 Outreach Committee Budget, in the amount of \$452,113 (unchanged from the previous year), to continue funding for multiple events, publications, mail-outs, agency involvement, and other endeavors.

Mr. Wingate opened the floor for questions or comment from the Technical Committee. None were proffered.

Decision: A motion was made by Mr. Roy and seconded by Ms. McCormick to recommend to the Task Force approval of the FY21 Outreach Committee budget in the amount of \$452,113 as presented; the motion carried without opposition.

Ms. Cheavis presented the FY 21 planning budget noting the inclusion of a line item for the Report to Congress. She also noted that the line item for Environmental Banking was removed; those funds were shifted into the General Planning line item. Her request concluded thus:

- c. A recommendation to the Task Force to approve the FY21 Planning Budget, which includes Outreach Committee Budget, of \$5,103,132.

Mr. Wingate opened the floor for questions or comment from the Technical Committee. None was proffered.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to recommend to the Task Force for approval of the FY21 Planning Budget in the amount of \$5,103,132 as presented.

Decision: A motion was made by Mr. Williams and seconded by Ms. McCormick; the motion carried without dissent.

10. Agenda Item 9. Report/Decision: Selection of Ten Candidate Projects to Evaluate for PPL 30 (Brad Inman, USACE) The Technical Committee considered preliminary costs and benefits of the 30th Priority Project List (PPL) projects listed in the following table.

Region	Basin	PPL 30 Nominees	Agency
1	Pontchartrain	Bayou Ducros Marsh Creation	NRCS
1	Pontchartrain	Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline - Drum Bay Increment	NMFS
1	Pontchartrain	Miller Bayou Marsh Creation	NMFS
2	Breton Sound	Reggio Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration	EPA
2	Breton Sound	Spanish Lake-Grand Lake Marsh Creation	FWS
2	Breton Sound	Phoenix Marsh Creation - West Increment	FWS
2	Barataria	Grand Bayou Ridge and Marsh Restoration - Phase 2	FWS
2	Barataria	Northeast Turtle Bay Marsh Creation Extension	NRCS
2	Barataria	Fifi Island Marsh Creation	FWS
2	Barataria	Southeast Golden Meadow Marsh Creation	FWS
2	Barataria	East Leeville Marsh Creation Increment 2	NMFS
3	Terrebonne	Bay Raccourci Marsh Creation Increment II	FWS
3	Terrebonne	Jug Lake Marsh Creation	NRCS
3	Terrebonne	South Falgout Canal Marsh Creation and Terraces	NRCS
3	Terrebonne	South Bayou Decade Marsh Creation	EPA
3	Terrebonne	Port Fourchon Marsh Creation	EPA
3	Teche-Vermilion	North Marsh Restoration (North Increment)	NMFS
3	Teche-Vermilion	West Branch Marsh Creation on Marsh Island, LA	NMFS
4	Mermentau	Southeast Pecan Island Marsh Creation	NRCS
4	Mermentau	Flat Lake Gulf Shoreline Protection	NMFS
4	Calcasieu-Sabine	Mud Lake South Marsh Creation	EPA
4	Calcasieu-Sabine	East Prong Marsh Creation and Terracing	FWS
Coastwide		Coastwide Ridges	EPA
Demonstration		Marine Gardens/Dolosse Hard Armor	TBD

On 30 March 2020 the Technical Committee selected (by electronic vote) 10 projects as PPL 30 candidates to be evaluated for Phase 0 analysis. Results were presented in the following table. These projects will be considered later as potential Phase I (Planning and Engineering and Design) candidates. A demonstration project was not selected to move forward.

CWPPRA PPL 30 Candidate Vote - Technical Committee

Region	Basin	Type	Project	COE	EPA	FWS	NMFS	NRCS	State	No. of votes	Sum of Point Score
2	BS	MC/HR	Reggio Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration	11	12	6	2	8	6	6	45
2	BS	MC	Spanish Lake-Grand Lake Marsh Creation	7		12		10	10	4	39
3	TE	MC	Bay Raccourci Marsh Creation Increment II			10	12	6	9	4	37
4	ME	MC/TR	Southeast Pecan Island Marsh Creation		11		7	11	5	4	34
2	BS	MC	Phoenix Marsh Creation - West Increment	8		7	6		12	4	33
2	BA	MC/RR	Grand Bayou Ridge and Marsh Restoration - Phase 2		5	9	5		11	4	30
3	TV	MC	West Branch Marsh Creation on Marsh Island, LA		9		8	1	4	4	22
4	CS	MC/TR	East Prong Marsh Creation and Terracing		4	11	4	3		4	22
3	TV	MC/TR	North Marsh Restoration (North Increment)	4		2	11		3	4	20
4	ME	SP	Flat Lake Gulf Shoreline Protection	1		8	3	5		4	17
2	BA	MC	Northeast Turtle Bay Marsh Creation Extension		7	3		12		3	22
1	PO	SP	Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline - Drum Bay Increment		6		10		1	3	17
3	TE	MC	South Bayou Decade Marsh Creation	6	2				8	3	16
4	CS	MC	Mud Lake South Marsh Creation		10			2	2	3	14
1	PO	MC	Bayou Ducros Marsh Creation		3		1	9		3	13
3	TE	MC	Jug Lake Marsh Creation	5		1		7		3	13
1	PO	MC	Miller Bayou Marsh	12			9			2	21

			Creation								
2	BA	MC	Southeast Golden Meadow Marsh Creation	10		5				2	15
2	BA	MC	Fifi Island Marsh Creation	9		4				2	13
3	TE	MC	Port Fourchon Marsh Creation	2	8					2	10
CW			Coastwide Ridges	3	1					2	4
2	BA	MC	East Leeville Marsh Creation Increment 2						7	1	7
3 TE		MC/TR	South Falgout Canal Marsh Creation and Terraces					4		1	4

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The following voting process is used by the Technical Committee to select 10 candidate projects under PPL 30:

1. Each agency represented in the Technical Committee will be provided one ballot for voting.¹ 2. Each agency represented in the Technical Committee will cast weighted votes for 12 projects. All votes must be used. 3. Each agency will vote for their top projects, hand-written on the above ballot form.² 4. A weighted score will be assigned (12, 11, 10,...1), to be used in the event of a tie. (12 highest...1 lowest).³ 5. Initial rank will be determined based upon the number of votes received for a project (unweighted).⁴ 6. The Technical Committee will select the top 10 projects as candidates under PPL 30.⁵ 7. In the event of a tie at the cutoff of 10, the weighted will be used as a tie-breaker.⁶ 8. The tied projects will be ranked based upon a sum of the weighted score.⁷ 9. The results of the Technical Committee candidate selection will be reported to the Task Force.

Mr. Wingate opened the floor for questions or comment from the Technical Committee. None were proffered.

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to recommend to the Task Force approval of the selected projects for Phase 0 analysis.

Decision: Mr. Williams made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion carried without opposition.

11. Agenda Item 10. Additional Agenda Items (Brad Inman, USACE)

Previously approved and addressed.

12. Agenda Item 11 & 12. Announcement: Dates of future Program meetings

The Task Force meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2020 at 9:30 a.m. at the Estuarine Habitats and Fisheries Center, 646 Cajundome Blvd., Lafayette, Louisiana (pending public gathering restrictions). Mr. Inman reiterated the invitation to offer suggestions for improving electronic meetings.

Scheduled Dates of Future Program Meetings* (Brad Inman, USACE)

May 6, 2020	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	Lafayette
September 3, 2020	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	New Orleans
October 29, 2020	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans
December 3, 2020	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	New Orleans

*subject to change

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments regarding the upcoming meetings; none were proffered.

Mr. Wingate thanked the Technical Committee for its participation, and commended the staff of the USACE for organizing and hosting today's proceedings.

13. Agenda Item 13. Decision: Adjourn

Mr. Wingate called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Roy made the motion, which Mr. Williams seconded; the motion passed without dissent.