

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes from the 7 April 2022 CWPPRA Technical Committee Meeting

1. The meeting was initiated at 9:30 a.m. The following Technical Committee members were in attendance:

Ms. Karen McCormick, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Mr. Patrick Williams, NOAA Fisheries
Ms. Sarah Bradley, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
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. Ms. Bradley, serving as Chair in place of Mark Wingate, introduced herself and called upon Technical Committee members in attendance to introduce themselves. Ms. Bradley asked for any opening comments from the Technical Committee; none were proffered. She announced that the next CWPPRA meeting (May 2022) will likely be held in person. She also acknowledged the impending retirement of Laurie Cormier (Calcasieu Parish Police Jury), expressing her appreciation and extending best wishes to Ms. Cormier.

Ms. Bradley asked for the Technical Committee to present any changes to the agenda for today's proceedings. None were forthcoming.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Roy made the motion, which Mr. Williams seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

Ms. Bradley briefed those in attendance of procedures for public participation for these virtual proceedings.

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 – 31 is \$3.296 billion. Total projected state and federal sources of funding (through FY22) for all authorized projects in addition to projected Department of the Interior (DOI) funds is \$2.284 billion. A potential gap of \$1,012 billion remains if the Program were to construct all projects to date. Current Task Force-approved budgets for projects in Phase I, Phase II and O&M totals \$2.315 billion. Authorized funding obligated to each agency for approved project phases currently totals \$1.984 billion.

Ms. Cheavis continued with an overview of funding as it relates to expected funding requests at today's proceedings, namely a budget increase of \$329,258 for the Humble Canal Hydrologic

Restoration (ME-11) project, and an increase of \$11,726.74 for the Hwy 387 Hydrologic Restoration (CS-21) project. If authorized, the total of those amounts would be subtracted from the total available program funds and result in a remaining total of \$3,618,294.38 in the Construction Program.

A request for approval of the FY23 Planning Program budget is on the agenda. A total of \$254,972 has been carried over from FY22. Added to that is the expected allocation of \$5,000,000 for Planning activities. Today's funding request for FY23 Planning and Outreach totals \$5,008,132. If approved, a surplus of \$246,840 would remain for FY24.

Ms. Cheavis then presented a pie chart summarizing projects as follows: CWPPRA has authorized 234 projects. There are 130 active projects including 28 in Phase 1 Engineering and Design, 22 in Phase 2 Construction, 74 projects that have been completed and are now in Operations, Maintenance and/ or Monitoring phase, and 6 program support projects. Additionally, CWPPRA has completed 40 projects (i.e. reached the 20-year life mark), deauthorized 49 projects, transferred 10 projects, and placed 5 in the inactive category.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

4. Agenda Item 3. Report/Decision: Upcoming 20-Year Life Projects (Alice Kerl, USACE)

Ms. Kerl explained that the Planning and Evaluation subcommittee met on March 8, 2022 to evaluate all projects nearing their 20-year life status; as a result one project is hereby being recommended for a specific path forward. Mel Guidry, CPRA and Operations Manager for the project, made the presentation. He described the project location, its features and purpose, and its maintenance/ repair history. Based on the most recent inspection (October 2021) several repairs, replacement components and general maintenance actions are recommended; Mr. Guidry specified all recommendations and presented a budgetary estimate for consideration. Eventual transfer of the project to the Cameron Parish Gravity Drainage District is being coordinated. He made the request as follows:

- a. Project requesting approval for a transfer of funds, a cost increase and a time extension for:

ME-11	Humble Canal Hydrologic Restoration	NRCS	1-Mar-23
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- i. approval to transfer \$75,000 from Monitoring to Operation and Maintenance,
- ii. approval of an additional Operation and Maintenance budget increase and funding allocation of \$329,258 for land rights, design, cost estimate, and other preparations needed for a final maintenance event,
- iii. approval of a two-year project life extension (thru March 2025) to allow time for completion of the work.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to approve the recommended path forward for ME-11. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

5. Agenda Item 4. Decision: Request for a No-Cost Time Extension for Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Management (BS-03a) Project (Quin Kinler, NRCS)

Mr. Kinler explained that this project is intended for closeout, but details of the final maintenance event (which will include removal and repair of certain structures) and the final cost estimate have not yet been determined. On behalf of NRCS and CPRA he is hereby requesting the approval of a two-year no-cost time extension for Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Management in order to continue working out the details of final actions before closeout.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public; none were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to approve the two-year, no-cost time extension for BS-03. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Haase seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

6. Agenda Item 5. Decision: Request for a No-Cost Time Extension for Bayou Sauvage NWR Hydrologic Restoration-Phase 1 (PO-16) and Bayou Sauvage NWR Hydrologic Restoration-Phase 2 (PO-18) Projects (Kevin Roy, FWS)

Mr. Roy was called to present the request. He began by reviewing the project location(s) and features, which were designed to lower water level within three units of the refuge to promote marsh and forested habitat regeneration. He explained that virtually no operation of the units occurred after Hurricane Katrina and subsequent levee repairs; in 2014 and 2015 both projects were granted six-year extensions. On behalf of FWS and CPRA, Mr. Roy hereby requested approve of a two year no-cost time extension for PO-16 (which expires May 2022) and a one year no-cost time extension for PO-18 (which expires May 2023) in order to determine whether the projects will be closed out (and their O&M transferred to the NWR) or extended within the CWPPRA Program.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to approve the no-cost time extensions for PO-16 and PO-18 as specified. Mr. Roy made the motion, which Mr. Haase seconded; the motion passed without opposition.

7. Agenda Item 6. Decision: Request for a No-Cost Time Extension for Oaks/ Avery Canal Hydrologic Restoration (TV-13a) Project (Dion Broussard, CPRA)

Mr. Broussard simply stated that repairs necessary prior to closeout have not been completed due to land rights delays. On behalf of CPRA and NRCS, he hereby requested a one-year no-cost extension to complete the final maintenance event and proceed to project close out.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public. None were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to approve the one-year no-cost time extension for TV-13a. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Haase seconded; the motion carried without opposition.

8. Agenda Item 7. Decision: Request for a Transfer of Approved O&M to Approved Monitoring and a Monitoring Budget Increase & Funding Allocation for the Hwy 384 Hydrologic Restoration (CS-21) Project (Leigh Anne Sharp, CPRA)

Ms. Sharp simply declared that a monitoring budget deficit was discovered as the budget was being reconciled in anticipation of project closeout. She thus requested approval to transfer \$13,737.42 from the O&M budget (resulting in a \$0 remainder therein) to the Monitoring budget, and an additional Monitoring budget increase and funding allocation of \$11,726.74 to reconcile the budget for project close out.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public. None were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to approve the transfer of funds (\$13,737.42) from the O&M budget, and the Monitoring budget increase (\$11,726.74) for CS-21. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Ms. McCormick seconded; the motion carried without opposition.

9. Agenda Item 8. Decision: Initial Inactivation of East Leeville Marsh Creation and Nourishment (BA-194) Project (Patrick Williams, NMFS)

Mr. Williams began with a review of project location, scope and features; he also summarized its progress within the CWPPRA process – it was selected for Phase I E&D but did not receive subsequent Phase II Construction approval. In comparison with other projects requesting and/or funded from 2016-2020, this project was simply not as cost-effective on a net-acre basis. Optional designs to reduce costs are essentially nullified by the deterioration of site conditions as a result of 2020 and 2021 storm events. Therefore, Mr. Williams, on behalf of the project team, hereby requested approval of a recommendation to the Task Force to initiate inactivation of the East Leeville Marsh Creation and Nourishment Project (BA-194) citing prohibitive site conditions and a backlog of more cost-effective projects as justification. He expressed a deep appreciation for all stakeholder, interested citizens and landowners for their enthusiastic support of this project; he iterated a reminder that at any time in the future this project may be re-instated within CWPPRA, or through some other mechanism. He also asserted that this initial approval is the first step in the SOP for inactivation of a project and encouraged public comment during the time allowed within that framework. Approximately \$1.7 million would be returned to the CWPPRA program if approved.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public. None were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to approve Initiation of the Inactivation process for BA-194. Mr. Williams made the motion, which Mr. Haase seconded; the motion carried without opposition

10. Agenda Item 9. Decision: FY22 Planning Budget Approval, including the PPL 33 Process, and Presentation of FY23 Outreach Budget (Process, Size, Funding, etc.) (Alice Kerl, USACE)

Terri Von Hoven, USACE, presented the recommended PPL 33 Process as follows:

- a. A recommendation to the Task Force to approve that the PPL 33 Process include selecting four nominees each in the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins; three projects 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.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public. None were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to recommend Task Force approval of the PPL-33 process as iterated. Ms. McCormick made the motion, which Mr. Williams seconded; the motion carried without opposition.

Lauren Leonpacher, on behalf of the CWPPRA Outreach Committee, presented the request thus:

- b. A recommendation to the Task Force to approve the FY23 Outreach Committee Budget, in the amount of \$452,113.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public. None were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to recommend Task Force approval of the FY23 Outreach Committee Budget as iterated. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion carried without opposition.

Ms. Cheavis was called to present the request; she noted that the total as presented on the slide is incorrect. The FY23 Planning Budget is itemized in the binders; excluding the Outreach budget, it totals \$4,556,019.

- c. A recommendation to the Task Force to approve the FY23 Planning Budget (including the Outreach Committee Budget), in the amount of \$5,008,132.

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee and the public. None were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to recommend Task Force approval of the FY23 Planning Budget as iterated. Mr. Williams made the motion, which Ms. McCormick seconded; the motion carried without opposition.

11. Agenda Item 10. Report/Decision: Selection of Ten Candidate Projects to Evaluate for PPL 32 (Kristen Ramsey, FWS)

Kristen Ramsey, FWS, provided an overview (including location, features, goals, net acreage and fully-funded cost estimates) of each the PPL 32 Project Nominees which were selected in Coastwide Electronic voting. The project nominees are listed and presented geographically from east to west in the following table:

Region	Basin	PPL 32 Nominees	Agency
1	Pontchartrain	Bayou Ducros Marsh Creation	NRCS
1	Pontchartrain	Central Wetlands Hydrological Restoration and Marsh Creation	EPA
1	Pontchartrain	Duncan Canal Marsh Creation	NRCS
2	Breton Sound	Yscloskey Marsh Creation	FWS
2	Breton Sound	Davant Marsh Creation (Increment 1)	EPA
2	Breton Sound	Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge Restoration and Marsh Creation	NRCS
2	Barataria	West Dupre Cut Marsh Creation	NRCS
2	Barataria	Northwest Little Lake Marsh Creation	FWS

2	Barataria	Southeast Golden Meadow Marsh Creation	FWS
2	Barataria	Bayou Chevreuil Hydrologic Restoration and Vegetative Planting	EPA
3	Terrebonne	Bayou Jean Lacroix Marsh Creation	NRCS
3	Terrebonne	Southwest Golden Meadow Marsh Creation	FWS
3	Terrebonne	Northwest Lake Decade Marsh Creation	NMFS
3	Terrebonne	West Louisiana Highway 1 Marsh Creation	NMFS
3	Teche-Vermilion	Freshwater Bayou East Marsh Restoration	NRCS
3	Teche-Vermilion	South Avery Island Shoreline Protection & Marsh Restoration	NRCS
4	Mermentau	Freshwater Bayou Marsh Creation - Increment 2	NRCS
4	Mermentau	Highway 82 South Marsh Creation	NMFS
4	Calcasieu-Sabine	East Cove South Marsh Creation	NRCS
4	Calcasieu-Sabine	Mud Lake South Marsh Creation	EPA
Demonstration		Reefbud	USACE

Ms. Bradley called for questions or comments from the Technical Committee: none were proffered.

Ms. Bradley called for public comments or questions. John Lane (St. Bernard Parish) spoke in favor of projects consistent with the St. Bernard Parish Strategic Priority Plan – specifying the Bayou Ducros Marsh Creation, Central Wetlands Hydrological Restoration and Marsh Creation, Yscloskey Marsh Creation and Bayou Terre aux Boeufs Ridge Restoration and Marsh Creation projects. He asserted the additional support of landowners, NGOs, state and congressional delegates and many private citizens. Amanda Voisin (Lafourche Parish) spoke in support of the following projects: NW Little Lake Marsh Creation (in an area of urgent need since its destruction by Hurricane Ida); SE and SW Golden Meadow Marsh Creation (to protect the existing levee system); and West Louisiana Hwy 1 Marsh Creation (to protect parish infrastructure/investments). Earl Matherne (St. Charles Parish) spoke in support of the Duncan Canal Marsh Creation project, referring to it as integral to the continuing efforts to protect the LaBranche Wetlands.

Ms. Bradley called for a recess to allow time for the Technical Committee to consider the preliminary costs and benefits of the 32nd Priority Project List (PPL) projects and select 10 projects as PPL 32 candidates. When proceedings reconvened, Ms. Bradley performed a roll call of Technical Committee members.

Ms. Kerl explained the ranking and scoring procedures and called upon Ms. Von Hoven to formally summarize the results; the selected projects are illustrated in the following table. Ms. Von Hoven also explained the Technical Committee’s rationale for not voting the Demonstration project forward.

13. Agenda Item 12. Request for Public Comments

Ms. Bradley called for final public comments. None were proffered.

14. Agenda Items 13 and 14. Announcement: Dates of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meeting (Alice Kerl, USACE)

The Task Force meeting will be held May 19, 2022 at 9:30 a.m. (tentatively at Acadiana Center for the Arts) in Lafayette, LA, and will include a virtual component. Dates for future meetings were provided as follows:

May 19, 2022	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	TBD
September 1, 2022	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee Meeting	TBD
October 6, 2022	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	TBD
December 8, 2022	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee Meeting	TBD

*subject to change

15. Agenda Item 15. Decision: Adjourn

Ms. Bradley called for a motion to adjourn this meeting. Ms. McCormick made the motion, which Mr. Paul seconded. The motion carried without opposition and the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.