

## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes from the 15 April 2009 CWPPRA Technical Committee Meeting

1. Mr. Thomas Holden opened the meeting at 9:35 a.m. The following Technical Committee members were in attendance:

Mr. Darryl Clark, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)  
Mr. Thomas Holden, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Chairman  
Mr. Tim Landers, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
Mr. Britt Paul, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
Mr. Kirk Rhinehart, LA Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration (LAOCPR)  
Ms. Rachel Sweeney, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), substituting for Mr. Rick Hartman

A copy of the agenda is included as **Encl 1**. A copy of the sign-in sheet is included as **Encl 2**.

2. Agenda Item 1. Report: Status of Breaux Act Program Funds and Projects (Browning). *Ms. Gay Browning, USACE, will provide an overview of the status of CWPPRA accounts and available funding in the Planning and Construction Programs.* Ms. Browning reported that there is currently \$9.7 million available and a potential for \$6 million to be returned by the USFWS to the Construction Program from the Goose Point and East Sabine Projects. The Federal work allowance of \$89.9 million was received on April 14, 2009.

Mr. Holden opened the floor to discussion from the Technical Committee.

Mr. Landers commented that the EPA would be returning roughly \$1.2 million from the Timbalier Island and New Cut Projects.

3. Agenda Item 2. Decision: Selection of Ten (10) Candidate Projects and up to Three (3) Demonstration Projects to Evaluate for PPL19 (Goodman and Roy). *The Technical Committee will consider preliminary costs and benefits of the Priority Project List 19 (PPL 19) Project and Demonstration Project Nominees. The Technical Committee will select 10 projects and up to 3 demonstration projects as PPL 19 candidates for Phase 0 analysis.* Mr. Holden announced that Ms. Melanie Goodman, USACE, would explain the voting process and Mr. Kevin Roy, USFWS, would present the nominee projects for PPL 19.

Ms. Goodman said that each agency will vote to select ten of the 20 nominee projects and three of the five demonstration nominee projects. Each agency will rank projects from highest to lowest. The projects will be ranked first by the number of agency votes received and then by the weighted score. The top ten ranked nominee projects and top three demonstration projects will be selected for evaluation by the Environmental, Engineering, and Economic Workgroups. Final evaluation results will be presented at public meetings in November 2009. At the December

2009 meeting, the Technical Committee will make a recommendation to the Task Force on which candidate projects to select for PPL 19.

Mr. Roy presented the 20 project nominees for PPL 19.

A. Pontchartrain Basin (Region 1)

i. Fritchie Marsh-Northshore Marsh Creation and Terracing Project – Project features include approximately 100,000 linear feet (lf) of terraces, 273 acres of marsh creation, and the addition of culverts under Highway 190. The project will benefit 300 to 350 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$20 to \$25 million.

ii. Seven Lagoons/Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) Marsh Creation, Shoreline Protection and Terracing Project – The project includes construction of an elevated berm to restore approximately 19,000 lf of shoreline, 285 acres of marsh creation and nourishment, and 21,000 lf of terraces. The project will benefit 200 to 250 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$25 to \$30 million.

iii. Labranche East Marsh Creation Habitat Enhancement Project – Project features include 365 acres of marsh creation, 165 acres of shrub/scrub habitat, and 240 acres of subtidal habitat. The project will benefit 500 to 550 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$30 to \$35 million.

B. Mississippi River Delta Basin (Region 2)

i. Pass a Loutre Restoration Project – The primary goal of this project is to dredge the Pass a Loutre Channel, which has become shallow and narrow due to infilling. The material dredged from the channel would be beneficially used to create approximately 587 acres of marsh. The project also includes the construction of 12 crevasses. The project will benefit 1,100 to 1,150 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$30 to \$35 million

C. Breton Sound Basin (Region 2)

i. Monsecour Siphon – The project includes construction of a siphon from the Mississippi River with a 2,000 cubic foot per second (cfs) maximum flow. The project will benefit 1,150 to 1,200 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$10 to \$15 million.

ii. Dedicated Sediment Delivery and Water Conveyance for Marsh Creation West of Big Mar Project – The project includes dredging a conveyance channel across Big Mar to help redirect flow from the Caernarvon diversion to the southwest area of upper Breton Sound. The project will create 500 acres of marsh via river mining and beneficial placement of dredge material. The project will benefit 950 to 1,000 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$20 to \$25 million.

iii. Breton Marsh Restoration Project – The project includes 618 acres of marsh creation and nourishment using material from Lake Lery in an effort to rebuild the landbridge in this area. The project will benefit 350 to 400 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$25 to \$30 million.

D. Barataria Basin (Region 2)

i. Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation Project – This project would extend marsh creation from the PPL 17 Bayou Dupont Project to the Barataria Bay Waterway creating and nourishing 505 acres of marsh using material from the Mississippi River. The project will benefit 250 to 300 net acres over the 20-year project life and the fully funded project cost is \$25 to \$30 million.

ii. Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration and Terracing Project – The purpose of this project is to close off three openings in the ridge and decrease the size of two additional gaps in an effort to reduce saltwater intrusion and tidal exchange. Approximately 30,000 lf of terraces are also included. The project will benefit 100 to 150 net acres over the 20-year project life and the fully funded project cost is \$5 to \$10 million.

iii. Chenier Ronquille Barrier Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation Project – This project would include 11,000 feet of dune and beach restoration and 310 acres of marsh creation and nourishment. The project will benefit 200 to 250 net acres over the 20-year project life and the fully funded project cost is \$40 to \$50 million.

E. Terrebonne Basin (Region 3)

i. Lost Lake Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration Project – Project features include 450 acres of marsh creation between Lake Pagie and Bayou DeCade; 30,000 lf of terraces; and replacement of several plugs and fixed-crest weirs. The project will benefit 600 to 650 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$25 to \$30 million.

ii. Terrebonne Bay Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation Project – Project features include 31,000 lf of shoreline restoration, 535 acres of marsh creation, and cross-section reductions in an effort to reduce tidal exchange between the bay and interior marshes. The project will benefit 250 to 300 net acres over the 20-year project life and the fully funded project cost is \$25 to \$30 million.

iii. Madison/Terrebonne Bay Marsh Creation Project – This project includes 430 acres of marsh creation and nourishment from dedicated dredging. The project will benefit 150 to 200 net acres over the 20-year project life and the fully funded project cost is \$15 to \$20 million.

F. Atchafalaya Basin (Region 3)

i. Bateman Island Sediment Retention and Marsh Restoration Project – This project includes construction of 31,000 lf of terraces to create habitat and capture sediment. The project will benefit 50 to 100 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is less than \$5 million.

G. Teche-Vermilion Basin (Region 3)

i. Cote Blanche Freshwater/Sediment Introduction and Shoreline Protection Project – The project includes enlargement of existing openings and spoilbank gapping to encourage more freshwater flow from the GIWW into the project area as well as 26,000 lf of shoreline

protection. The project will benefit 550 to 600 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$15 to \$20 million.

ii. Cheniere Au Tigre Headland Restoration Project – This project proposes to rebuild approximately 6,000 lf of chenier through the placement of dredge material. The project will benefit less than 50 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$5 to \$10 million.

#### H. Region 4 – Mermentau Basin (Region 4)

i. Freshwater Bayou Marsh Creation Project – Project features include 407 acres of marsh creation and the repair of breaches that have allowed saltwater intrusion into the marsh. The project will benefit 250 to 300 net acres over the 20-year project life, and the fully funded project cost is \$30 to \$35 million.

ii. Rockefeller Gulf of Mexico Shoreline Stabilization, Joseph’s Harbor East Project – This project includes 10,000 lf of shoreline protection in the form of an offshore breakwater. A range of 100 to 150 net acres would benefit over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$35 to \$40 million.

#### I. Calcasieu-Sabine Basin (Region 4)

i. Cameron-Creole Watershed Grand Bayou Marsh Creation Project – This project is designed to address recent loss of marsh from Hurricanes Rita and Ike. Material would be dredged from Calcasieu Lake to create 1,000 acres of marsh. The project will benefit 500 to 550 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$15 to \$20 million.

ii. Kelso Bayou Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration – Project features include the construction of a water control structure to reduce the cross-section of Kelso Bayou by 80 percent in an effort to reduce tidal exchange and saltwater intrusion, 127 acres of marsh creation, and 2,500 lf of shoreline protection. The project will benefit 100 to 150 net acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded project cost is \$15 to \$20 million.

Mr. Roy also presented a summary of the five demonstration project nominees.

A. Rapidly Deployable Pre-Cast Sediment Retention Barrier Demo Project – The intent of this project is to test the use of specially designed pre-cast concrete barriers as retention structures for dredged material and as an alternative to earthen containment dikes.

B. EcoSystems Wave Attenuator Demo Project – This demonstration project would test the use of the EcoSystems Wave Attenuator as an alternative method of shoreline protection in areas with poor soil conditions.

C. Bayou Backer Demo Project – This demonstration project would test the effectiveness of a bio-degradable plastic grass to reduce shoreline erosion and capture sediment.

D. Floating Island Environmental Solutions BioHaven Demo Project – The intent of this demonstration project is to test the effectiveness of the floating island as an alternative to earthen terraces to reduce shoreline erosion and promote growth of submerged aquatic vegetation.

E. Viper-Wall Demo Project – This demonstration project would test the effectiveness of the Viper-Wall to reduce shoreline erosion and capture sediment.

Mr. Holden opened the floor for comments from the public.

Mr. Woody Crews, Wetlands Committee Chair of the Jefferson Parish Marine Fisheries Advisory Board, spoke on behalf of the Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation Project. The project fits in with the multiple lines of defense strategy and is a critical tie-in to other CWPPRA projects in the area. The project will also help to reduce the scouring effect by reducing the tidal prism.

Mr. Brian Fortson, Environmental Specialist with the St. Tammany Parish Government Department of Engineering, spoke on behalf of the Fritchie Marsh-Northshore Marsh Creation and Terracing Project as it is a priority project for St. Tammany Parish. The project includes dedicated delivery from a borrow source, hydrologic restoration, and would provide water quality benefits to the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. The project also fits in to the Lake Pontchartrain Basin's lines of defense model.

Mr. Paul Naquin, St. Mary Parish President, gave his full support for the Cote Blanche Freshwater/Sediment Introduction and Shoreline Protection Project.

Ms. Leslie Suazo, Terrebonne Parish Government, said that the Terrebonne Parish Council passed a resolution in November 2008 regarding the use of the Viper-Wall system and would like to see this demonstration project move forward. Ms. Suazo added that the Terrebonne Parish Advisory Committee is interested in seeing the Floating Island Environmental Solutions BioHaven Demonstration Project considered as well. In regards to the nominee projects, Ms. Suazo stated that she supports all three projects in Terrebonne Parish: Lost Lake Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration, Terrebonne Bay Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation, and Madison/Terrebonne Bay Marsh Creation Projects. Ms. Suazo added that the Madison/Terrebonne Bay Marsh Creation Project is more consistent with the urgent and early action measures outlined in the State's Master Plan. Mr. Rhinehart commented that the State will use the Master Plan as a guiding principle when voting for these projects.

Mr. Sherrill Sagrera, Vermilion Parish Coastal Advisory, gave his support for the Cheniere Au Tigre Headland Restoration Project. Natural ridges and cheniers are important for hurricane and marsh protection. The project also complements the Freshwater Bayou Marsh Creation Project.

Mr. W.P. Edwards, Chairman of the Vermilion Parish Coastal Restoration Advisory Committee and land manager of Vermilion Corporation, spoke on behalf of the Cheniere Au Tigre Headland Restoration Project. The project is needed to prevent the breaches in the chenier from opening up and allowing concentrations of saltwater to accumulate behind the ridge. Mr. Edwards also gave his support for the Freshwater Bayou Marsh Creation Project.

Mr. Nic Matherne, Director of the Department of Coastal Energy and Environment for the Lafourche Parish Government, spoke on behalf of the Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration Project. This project is part of the State's Master Plan and Coast 2050. Mr. Matherne stated that the project now has complete landowner support and will help to restore the natural function of the ridge. This is Lafourche Parish's number one priority project.

Mr. Randy Moertle, representing the Little Lake Land Company and General Agricultural Services, voiced his support for the Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration and Terracing Project. Jefferson, St. Charles, and Lafourche Parishes all support this project as a multiple lines of defense. On behalf of the E.A. McIlhenny Company, Mr. Moertle expressed his support for the Cheniere Au Tigre Headland Restoration Project.

Mr. Patrick Amedee, Lafourche Parish School Board, spoke on behalf of the Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration and Terracing Project.

Mr. Ryan Bourriaque, speaking on behalf of the Cameron Parish Police Jury and Ms. Tina Horn, asked the Technical Committee to consider all the projects in Cameron Parish including the Cameron-Creole Watershed Grand Bayou Marsh Creation Project and the Kelso Bayou Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration Project.

Ms. Marnie Winter, representing Jefferson Parish, spoke in support of the Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation Project. This is a critical area that has severely deteriorated and is allowing higher tidal exchange than has been historically seen. Restoration of 505 acres in this area would restore some of the landbridge's natural hydrology. The project would also help to protect the Pen and the community of Lafitte. The project is supported by all landowners and is Jefferson Parish's number one project. Jefferson Parish also supports the Bayou L'Ours Ridge Restoration and Chenier Ronquille Barrier Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation Projects.

Ms. Vickie Duffourc, Bayou Segnette Boater's Association, gave her support for the Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation Project. The project is important for protection of the New Orleans metro area.

Mr. Darren Angelo, Plaquemines Association of Business and Industry, gave his support for the Chenier Ronquille Barrier Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation Project. This project fits in with other BA-35 projects for rebuilding barrier islands along the coast. Mr. Angelo also asked the Technical Committee to consider the Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation Project.

Mr. P.J. Hahn, Plaquemines Parish, spoke on behalf of the Chenier Ronquille Barrier Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation, Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation, Breton Marsh Restoration, Dedicated Sediment Delivery and Water Conveyance for Marsh Creation West of Big Mar, Monsecour Siphon, and the Pass a Loutre Restoration Projects. Mr. Hahn feels that restoring the barrier islands should be the highest priority.

Ms. Albertine Kimble, Plaquemines Parish, said that the Chenier Ronquille Barrier Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation Project would help to stop tidal flow. Ms. Kimble added that the Pass a Loutre Restoration Project could work and suggested bringing the hopper dredge further downstream. The Breton Marsh Creation Project would build marsh and protect Delacroix Island, while the Monsecour Siphon Project would help save the ridges in the area. Ms. Kimble also gave her support for the Dedicated Sediment Delivery and Water Conveyance for Marsh Creation West of Big Mar Project.

Mr. Guthrie Perry, representing Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries and serving as Program Manager at the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, spoke in support of the Rockefeller Gulf of Mexico Shoreline Stabilization, Joseph's Harbor East Project. The refuge has lost approximately 10,000 acres to shoreline erosion in the last 89 years, or roughly 9 percent of the total refuge area. Previous projects have shown that the use of rocks in this area would have been a waste of money because the clay layer extends 40 feet deep. Data from the Shoreline Erosion Protection - Joseph's Harbor Westward Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) project could be used for the Rockefeller Project. Mr. Perry added that there are five pipelines coming ashore in this area. Some of the well heads that were properly plugged and abandoned in the 1950s are now offshore and causing a navigation hazard.

Mr. Bobby Warren, a charter boat captain from Plaquemines Parish, made a comment about the proposed crevasses for the Pass a Loutre Restoration Project. Mr. Warren said that he does not believe the current crevasses are helping and feels that dredging would work much better than crevasses in the Pass a Loutre area. Mr. Warren does not think that digging holes through perfectly good pieces of land is accomplishing anything.

Mr. Holden opened the floor for final Technical Committee comments on the nominee projects.

Mr. Rhinehart stated that the State is not willing to continue with the Pass a Loutre Project until the issue with the hopper dredge disposal at the head of Pass a Loutre is resolved. The State does not want CWPPRA to augment funds to dredge the area only to have it fill in again. A year ago the State offered conditional consistency provided that the USACE could present a model that explained how the material was naturally removed from the channel. The State has engaged the USACE to work towards a resolution. However, based on current conditions, the State does not support entering a cost share agreement and spending restoration funds on the Pass a Loutre Project.

Mr. Holden said that the USACE has responded to the conditional consistency determination and the State understands the USACE's position. Mr. Holden added that recently there was a near emergency condition at Southwest Pass. The channel dimensions had gone from 750 feet to 400 feet in some places. The USACE, US Coast Guard, and the navigation industry were in a position to implement emergency conditions. The USACE initiated a red flag condition to commission the *Wheeler* hopper dredge to dredge the area and help prevent the potential loss of Southwest Pass. Since there were two no-bid situations, the contract was issued under an emergency basis to dredge approximately 8 billion cubic yards of material. The hopper dredge disposal site above Head of Passes is essential to maintaining the navigation channel to support the port's economy. The USACE offered to allow the State's use of USACE dredges at the

State's cost to further dredge and mine the river. There are also cutterhead dredges working below Southwest Pass. Mr. Holden said that there are tough choices to be made with limited funds. There still isn't full channel width at Southwest Pass. It is very difficult for the Commander to choose not to dispose in the Pass a Loutre area right now. Mr. Joaquin Mujica, USACE, emphasized the importance of Pass a Loutre as a coastal area and added that the USACE is working with all parties involved to come to a resolution.

Mr. Holden added that he has spoken with Mr. Louis Buatt, Assistant Secretary of the LA Office of Coastal Restoration and Management, about the issue and Mr. Chris Accardo, USACE Chief of Operations, is working with the State. The USACE is looking at alternatives such as an alternate disposal site or beneficial reuse that tie into the State's Master Plan. The USACE is not avoiding what the State is asking them to do; the USACE is just in a difficult situation and is fighting to regain the full dimensions of the river.

### **Voting Results**

Mr. Travis Creel, USACE, presented the agency voting results. The top projects are listed below in order by the number of agency votes with the weighted score shown in parentheses.

The top 10 candidate projects were:

1. Cameron-Creole Watershed Grand Bayou Marsh Creation Project - 6 agency votes (34)
2. Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation Project - 6 agency votes (26)
3. Chenier Ronquille Barrier Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation Project - 5 agency votes (30)
4. Labranche East Marsh Creation Habitat Enhancement Project - 5 agency votes (27)
5. Freshwater Bayou Marsh Creation Project - 4 agency votes (30)
6. Monsecour Siphon Project - 4 agency votes (28)
7. Lost Lake Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration Project - 4 agency votes (26)
8. Fritchie Marsh-Northshore Marsh Creation and Terracing Project - 4 agency votes (21)
9. Breton Marsh Restoration Project - 4 agency votes (18)
10. Dedicated Sediment Delivery and Water Conveyance for Marsh Creation West of Big Mar Project - 4 agency votes (17)

The top three candidate demonstration projects were:

1. Bayou Backer Demo Project - 4 agency votes (9)
2. EcoSystems Wave Attenuator for Shoreline Protection Demo Project - 4 agency votes (8)
3. Viper-Wall Demo Project - 4 agency votes (7)

**DECISION: Mr. Clark moved to accept the top ten projects as PPL 19 candidate projects (Cameron-Creole Watershed Grand Bayou Marsh Creation Project, Bayou Dupont to Bayou Barataria Marsh Creation Project, Chenier Ronquille Barrier Shoreline Restoration and Marsh Creation Project, Labranche East Marsh Creation Habitat Enhancement Project, Freshwater Bayou Marsh Creation Project, Monsecour Siphon Project, Lost Lake Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration Project, Fritchie Marsh-Northshore Marsh Creation and Terracing Project, Breton Marsh Restoration Project, and Dedicated Sediment Delivery and Water Conveyance for Marsh Creation West of Big Mar Project) and the top three demonstration projects as PPL 19 candidate demonstration projects**



**(Bayou Backer Demo Project, EcoSystems Wave Attenuator for Shoreline Protection Demo Project, and the Viper-Wall Demo Project). Mr. Paul seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed. The results of the Technical Committee decision will be reported to the Task Force.**

4. Agenda Item 3. Discussion/Decision: Initial Discussion of FY10 Planning Budget Development (Process, Size, Funding, etc.) (Goodman). *The FY10 Planning Program Budget development, including the PPL 20 Process, will be initiated.* Ms. Goodman announced that the Planning and Evaluation (P&E) Subcommittee would like to develop the PPL 20 process similar to the PPL 19 process. The nominee selections, candidate selections and evaluations, and final project selections for PPL 20 would be the same as in PPL 19. However, during the Coastwide Voting Meeting in February 2009, comments were made about the inconvenience of having to travel to vote for projects at a meeting where there was no opportunity for public comments. It was suggested that an online, automated voting system be used in lieu of future voting meetings. The P&E also suggests returning to four Technical Committee and four Task Force meetings per year in an effort to reduce the length of meeting agendas.

Mr. Holden opened the floor for Technical Committee comments.

Mr. Clark said that he supports the idea of an electronic coastwide voting meeting. This would save wear and tear on vehicles and travel time. Mr. Clark does not think any changes to the current PPL process should be made at this time, but recommended the P&E review the PPL 20 process to determine if other items should be brought up at the September meeting. Ms. Goodman said that the P&E has not discussed the PPL 20 process in detail, but would use the previous year's PPL as a baseline.

Mr. Paul feels the process is working and also thinks it is a good idea to look into electronic voting. If electronic voting is used, it should be tested beforehand to make sure that it works properly. Mr. Paul agreed that returning to four Technical Committee and Task Force meetings each year would help to keep the meetings from lasting so long.

Mr. Landers supports having a remote voting system as it would save on resources and travel time. He was interested in hearing the public's view on a remote voting system. Is there a preference for keeping the voting meeting in a public forum versus electronic voting? Ms. Goodman said that the P&E could solicit feedback from the parish representatives.

Ms. Leslie Suazo, with Terrebonne Parish, said that she would have no problem with an electronic voting process though some of the smaller parishes may not have the capability to use an online system. Ms. Sweeney said that a fax vote could be done if the parish was not set up to participate in online voting.

Mr. Landers added that the P&E should also look at the effect of returning to four quarterly meetings on the overall Planning budget as the addition of extra action items across all six agencies has the potential to increase costs.

Ms. Marnie Winter, with Jefferson Parish, asked for a written summary on the electronic voting process. Ms. Goodman stated that the P&E would prepare a proposal and send it out to the parish representatives for review. Ms. Winter added that she prefers a face to face meeting, but would like to give the proposal more thought. Ms. Goodman said that the goal would be to make the voting process anonymous, but that protections would be needed to make sure the correct people are providing the votes.

Mr. Rhinehart asked if there was a way to incorporate a virtual, online meeting to augment the public meeting to possibly alleviate travel concerns and provide an alternative opportunity to access the meeting. Mr. Holden said that while those capabilities exist, they may be limited in some parishes.

Mr. W.P. Edwards, with Vermilion Parish, suggested using a conference call to vote on projects.

**ACTION ITEM: The P&E will consider the cost involved with returning to four quarterly meetings and review the cost comparison for an electronic or alternative voting process versus the cost of a public voting meeting. The P&E will also prepare a proposal outlining electronic voting, conference call, or fax vote procedures for future coastwide voting. The proposal will be sent to all parish voting representatives for review.**

5. Agenda Item 4. Discussion/Decision: Consideration for Phase II, Increment 1 Funding for Barataria Basin Landbridge Project (BA-27, CU-3). The Technical Committee will consider the motion passed by the Task Force at the January 2009 meeting to approve Phase II, Increment 1 funding for a feasible separable increment of the Barataria Basin Landbridge Project (BA-27, CU-3), if sufficient funding is available. The Technical Committee will analyze the funds available in the Construction Program budget and make a recommendation to the Task Force on whether or not to approve the project for Phase II. Mr. Quin Kinler, NRCS, presented the proposed separable increments for the Barataria Basin Landbridge Project - Construction Unit 7. The project was broken into three potential increments for partial Phase II funding options as shown in the table below:

Option	Percent of Original Shoreline Protection	Linear Feet of Shoreline Protection	Phase II Total	Phase II, Increment 1
1	45%	10,260 ft	\$15.4 million	\$12.4 million
2	33%	7,580 ft	\$12.0 million	\$9.5 million
3	25%	5,700 ft	\$9.7 million	\$7.5 million

Mr. Holden opened the floor to comments/discussion from the Technical Committee.

Mr. Paul added that he would like this project to be moved for a Task Force decision in June to fund the project at the 25 percent level, at the very least.

Mr. Clark supports the project, but added that projects currently under construction may experience cost overruns or high bids. There should be a better understanding of how much money is available by June. Mr. Clark added that the program can borrow against funds (approximately \$100 million) that have been promised to projects, but not yet obligated.

Mr. Tim Landers asked for clarification on the current available funds. Ms. Goodman responded that there is almost \$17 million available, including \$9.7 million left over from the previous Task Force meeting and the pending return of \$6 million from the Goose Point and East Sabine Projects and \$1.2 million from the Timbalier Island and New Cut Projects.

Mr. Holden said that it may be premature to make a recommendation at this time and suggested the Technical Committee have a fax vote to present the Task Force with the appropriate increment. Mr. Clark, Mr. Paul, and Mr. Landers agreed.

Mr. Rhinehart asked about the economy of scale with mobilization and demobilization (mob/demob) as the project is broken into increments. How do the costs per foot change with each increment? Mr. Paul said that he would provide this information for the June meeting. Mr. John Jurgensen, NRCS, added that mob/demob costs are not as much of an issue with this project as compared to a marsh creation-type project.

**DECISION: The Technical Committee deferred making a recommendation on which Barataria Basin Landbridge Project increment to fund.**

**ACTION ITEM: The NRCS will provide the costs per foot for each separable increment to the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee will have a fax vote before the June Task Force meeting to recommend which increment to fund for Phase II.**

6. Agenda Item 5. Discussion/Decision: Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Incremental Funding Correction for Little Lake Shoreline Protection/Dedicated Dredging near Round Lake (BA-37) (Burkholder). The Task Force approved an O&M incremental funding request in the amount of \$65,124 for the Little Lake Shoreline Protection/Dedicated Dredging near Round Lake Project (BA-37) on November 5, 2008. However, an error was recently discovered, resulting in a shortfall of \$48,615. The correct incremental funding request amount should have been \$113,739. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries and OCPA are requesting funding approval for the \$48,615 shortfall. Mr. David Burkholder, LAOCPA, explained that the cost of a consultant performed survey was not included in the obligations to date estimate because the survey had not yet been invoiced. Mr. Burkholder requested that the Technical Committee approve \$48,615 to cover the shortfall.

**DECISION: Mr. Paul made the motion to approve \$48,615 for O&M incremental funding for the Little Lake Shoreline Protection/Dedicated Dredging near Round Lake Project. Mr. Rhinehart seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

7. Agenda Item 6. Report/Discussion: Status of the PPL 1 - West Bay Sediment Diversion Project (MR-03) (Holden and Rhinehart). The USACE will provide a status on the West Bay Project and efforts to develop a Work Plan with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA)/OCPA to address the overall induced shoaling issue as directed by the Task Force at their November 5, 2008 meeting. Mr. Holden announced that Ms. Goodman would provide the update on the West Bay Sediment Diversion Project.

### **Status of Pilottown Anchorage Area (PAA)**

Ms. Goodman stated that the PAA dredging schedule and disposal of dredge material has been delayed by one month due to ongoing negotiations between the USACE and the State on a Schedule of Cost Change Request. The USACE anticipates advertising the dredging package by the end of April. The USACE believes that the dredge material should be strategically placed in the middle of the receiving area to create islands. The State prefers to beneficially use all dredge material instead of using the material to create open water islands because beneficial use would produce immediate land creation benefits. The USACE would like to deposit half of the maintenance dredge material in open water for island formation and use the other half beneficially along the bank line to create marsh. The USACE will continue to coordinate with the State through Mr. Robert Routon, Project Manager, to decide the best configuration of the island.

### **Modeling Work Plan**

Ms. Goodman reported that the Technical Committee held a special meeting on February 27, 2009 with stakeholders, navigation interests, and environmental groups to review and comment on the Draft West Bay Work Plan.

Hydraulic engineering and modeling experts from the USACE Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) met with State representatives Mr. Routon and Mr. Buatt and the State's contractor Brown, Cunningham, and Gannuch (BCG) on March 12, 2009 to review the State's independent efforts to evaluate shoaling in the PAA and determine if the State's efforts would be sufficient to replace the ERDC's 1-Dimensional (1D) modeling effort and other tasks outlined in the Work Plan. There was not enough information in that meeting to make a determination and the USACE is awaiting details from BCG.

The USACE received 129 comments from the Technical Committee, stakeholders, and peer review teams by March 13, 2009. Most of the comments were incorporated into the Work Plan. The USACE provided the final Work Plan to LAOCPR on April 8, 2009 for review. The USACE is ready to begin executing the Work Plan with the State's cooperation as soon as final concurrence is received from the peer review team and Technical Committee.

### **Mr. Holden opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee.**

Mr. Clark said that the Work Plan was well written and asked if the USACE had begun work on any of the components. Ms. Goodman responded that the USACE has begun data collection efforts. Mr. Clark commented that the six-month plan should be used since that was time frame given by the Task Force. Ms. Goodman added that the estimated cost for the six-month plan was between \$800,000 to \$900,000.

Mr. Clark asked if the money would come from the construction budget and when the money would be needed. Ms. Goodman said that the USACE could ask permission for the money now, but it may be premature as the Work Plan is pending final concurrence from the peer review team. Ms. Goodman agreed that the funds should come from the project's O&M budget and hoped that the Technical Committee could conduct a fax vote to recommend the Task Force

approve the use of those funds. Ms. Goodman said that final concurrence from the Science and Technology Team and the Academic Advisory Group may be ready by April 24, 2009.

Mr. Rhinehart thought that it was premature to make a decision now as the State has not finished commenting on the plan. The State's consultant, BCG, will be ready to present preliminary data next week and the State is in the process of setting up a stakeholder meeting. Mr. Rhinehart agreed that it is appropriate to use O&M funds to cover the cost and asked how much money had been spent thus far. Ms. Goodman said that she could not answer that at this time, but would provide the estimate to the State.

Mr. Rhinehart expressed concern over placement of an island in the receiving area. He would like to review the survey data to better understand what is happening in the area before placing any material. Ms. Goodman said that the USACE would meet with the State to determine material placement locations. Mr. Rhinehart said that if the placement location was not resolved, then the State prefers to use all of the material for beneficial use until there is better understanding of what is happening in the receiving basin.

Mr. Holden added that as the channel realigns, the velocity profiles have increased and have impacted marsh creation. Mr. Holden felt it would be premature to present the technical results without taking the time to review and understand what the results mean.

Ms. Sweeney asked when the Work Plan would be finalized. Ms. Goodman would like to have the Work Plan finalized with the understanding that the USACE would review the State's results to determine if the State's modeling efforts are sufficient to enhance or replace the 1D modeling and hydrologic analysis. Mr. Holden said that the Work Plan is ready to move forward as soon as the reviews are complete and expects to see a Task Force vote in two to three weeks.

Ms. Cynthia Duet, Governor's Office of Coastal Activities (GOCA), asked if the timeframe provided by Mr. Holden included time for review of the State's BCG effort and if the Technical Committee was going to have a vote. Mr. Holden said that there may not be time for all of the USACE technical people to review BCG's results. It is important to keep this moving and meet the Task Force's six-month deadline. Ms. Goodman added that it is important to continue with data collection efforts while the State evaluates the Work Plan so that high water events aren't missed.

Ms. Duet asked if results from the BCG efforts could negate the need for data collection. Mr. Fred Pinkard, ERDC, said that this is not the case as the data collection ties heavily into the current conditions of the geomorphic assessment and modeling efforts.

Ms. Duet requested expenditures from August 2008 to date on the West Bay Project.

**DECISION: The Technical Committee deferred making a recommendation on the West Bay Work Plan until the peer review team comments have been received. Once the Work Plan has been finalized, the Technical Committee will have a fax vote on the Work Plan.**

**ACTION ITEM: The USACE will provide expenditures to date on the West Bay Project to the State and GOCA.**

8. Agenda Item 7. Discussion: Project Update and Request for Project Scope Change for PPL 11- River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp Project (PO-29) (Landers and Rhinehart). The EPA, in coordination with the State of Louisiana will provide a project update and request a change in project scope for the River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp project because the 30% Design revised cost estimate exceeds the original approved project cost estimate by more than 25%. The original approved estimated construction including a 25% contingency cost was \$37,531,000. The revised 30% Design estimated construction including a 30% contingency cost is \$151,725,000. EPA and the State are recommending continuing to work toward 95% Design, in collaboration with the USACE and other CWPPRA partners, at which time the PO-29 project would be transferred to a different appropriation for construction funding. Mr. Landers announced that the State and EPA recently reached the 30 percent engineering design milestone on the Maurepas Swamp Project and are committed to moving this project forward over the next 16 months. Mr. Landers asked Mr. Ken Teague, EPA Project Manager, and Mr. Brad Miller, State Project Manager, to provide an update on the project.

Mr. Teague stated that the goal of the project is to restore and protect cypress swamps south of Lake Maurepas by reintroducing sediment- and nutrient-laden water from the Mississippi River. Project features include a diversion structure at the Mississippi River, a sedimentation pond, and a new channel from the diversion structure to Hope Canal north of Airline Highway. Existing structures will be relocated to improve channel alignment along Hope Canal to Interstate 10. The project was approved for Phase I at the August 7, 2001 Task Force meeting for \$37.5 million. The project benefit area is over 36,000 acres and Wetland Value Assessment (WVA) benefits were 8,486 Average Annual Habitat Units.

Mr. Miller said that URS performed the work for Task 1 to address hydraulic feasibility and collect topographic, bathymetric, and hydrologic data. Results from Task 1 indicated a need for outfall management strategies, use of flow pulsing techniques, and a pump station at Hope/Bourgeois Canal. The engineering and design (E&D) to the 30 percent level was performed in Task 2. The intake structure was designed with a maximum capacity of 2,000 cfs. The proposed conveyance channel is 5.5 miles long with several outlets for side flow between the Mississippi River and Airline Highway. The pump station would have a 250 cfs capacity. The total cost is \$152 million with the majority of the cost (\$75 million) needed for site work. The Phase 0 cost estimate of \$37.5 million did not recognize the amount of material that would have to be hauled off-site. URS can begin work on the final design with anticipated completion in August 2010. EPA has begun work on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)-like report called an Environmental Information Document since this project will most likely be transferred to another funding source for construction. EPA has received letter of concurrence from the LAOCPR to continue the project.

Mr. Miller concluded that the State and EPA feel strongly in keeping this project in CWPPRA to reach a final design. The project is important to restore and enhance Maurepas Swamp. Significant progress has been made over the life of the project and a design team is in place. Mr. Miller feels that transferring this project to the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) now would result

in a delay to reach the 95 percent design level. There are potential opportunities to using surplus funds from oil and gas revenue if the project stays in CWPPRA.

Mr. Holden opened the floor to comments from the Technical Committee.

Mr. Clark asked about the purpose of the pump station. Mr. Miller said that project construction will disrupt natural drainage that flows into Hope Canal. The pump station is needed to pump water from existing canals and roadside ditches into Hope Canal. Mr. Teague added that the pump station will provide mitigation for the disruption.

Mr. Holden asked if it was the State and EPA's intent to move the Maurepas Swamp Project into another venue for construction and not to ask CWPPRA for the \$152 million. Mr. Landers said that there are a number of potential funding authorities and CWPPRA is one possibility. The LCA is another funding potential, but the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2007 caps the amount of funds available for the project at \$68 million. The third option is to use State-only funds.

Mr. Rhinehart agreed with Mr. Landers and added that there is potential to fund components of the project by different funding sources. All funding opportunities should be explored.

Mr. Holden compared the funding challenge for the Maurepas Swamp Project with the West Bay Project. Mr. Holden said that the Technical Committee is clearly not at a point to commit 100 percent to the Maurepas Swamp Project to complete construction and manage the project over the 20-year life. If the Federal and State partners do not believe that the project is viable to construct now under CWPPRA, but agree that the diversion should be implemented under another program, then the USACE feels that the Technical Committee should consider whether it is appropriate to continue spending Phase I funds on the project. The USACE also feels that if the State and EPA determine that the project is no longer viable under CWPPRA, then the project should be brought immediately to closure and transferred to an appropriate authority. Mr. Holden stated that the USACE is not in a position to endorse continuation of this design. There is a question about whether or not NEPA requirements could be met if the project were transferred to LCA. There is also a question about whether or not the alternative location for the method of conveyance is the preferred alternative under NEPA compliance. If CWPPRA were to fund both the West Bay and Maurepas Swamp Projects, then there would be little money remaining.

Mr. Paul asked about the level of effort required for the USACE to review the project information prepared by the State and EPA to determine if any holes exist and what would be needed to continue with the project at a later date. Mr. Holden said that the project must be consistent with the demonstrable report that the Chief of Engineers must convey to Congress. The record of decision under the environmental document is specific and cannot be EIS-like. Mr. Holden said that the difficulty at this point is how to proceed. Mr. Holden feels that CWPPRA should be taking action to move this into the appropriate authority where a funding stream exists to complete the project.

Mr. Landers said that the Feasibility Level Analysis prepared in Phase 0 is technically and financially defensible. He added that supporting work was done in the 2005 Chief's Report that recommended a diversion into Hope Canal as the basis of a plan formulation. Mr. Landers offered to work with the USACE to ensure that the scoping meetings and work developed during Phase 0 are NEPA compliant and defend the preferred alternative.

Mr. Clark said that this is a good project that will protect almost 6,000 acres of swamp over 20-years and enhance 36,000 acres of swamp. He felt that it may be more appropriate to transfer the project to LCA because the project is outside of the scope and funding capabilities of CWPPRA. Mr. Clark was amazed at the 400 percent increase in construction costs and he does not believe the Maurepas Swamp Project can be built in increments. Mr. Clark expressed concern about designing the project under CWPPRA and then LCA not agreeing with the selected alternative. Mr. Clark would like the USACE, EPA, and State to get together and develop a plan to move forward.

Ms. Sweeney asked if the long term O&M were also updated at the 30 percent design level. Mr. Miller said that the O&M costs were updated and are estimated at \$20 million. Ms. Browning noted that the original O&M was \$2 million. Ms. Sweeney asked if the O&M budget included the cost of closure or if the structure would be left in place after 20 years. Mr. Landers said that the plans do not include closure.

Mr. Landers commented that the \$140 million cost is a conservative estimate. The uncertainties with regard to available CWPPRA funding to build this project are no different than uncertainties placed on other PPL projects. Mr. Landers added that there is value in having a design available should funds be appropriated.

Mr. Richard Murley, URS, spoke about the cost estimate for the project. He has seen a significant decline in construction costs over the past year because of the economy. Construction costs post-Katrina were inflated because the contractors had a lot of work and were bidding high. As the amount of work has decreased, prices have been consistently lower than what was estimated a year ago.

Mr. Rhinehart said that he was taken aback by Mr. Holden's comments. Mr. Rhinehart did not say the State and EPA were taking the possibility of CWPPRA funding off the table. Mr. Rhinehart also did not say that a motion would not be made to continue the project. This project is critical to the State and has been on every restoration plan conceived since the 1950s. Mr. Rhinehart expressed his disappointment to hear negative statements coming out in the discussion. Mr. Rhinehart asked the Technical Committee to embrace this project and keep the momentum going to advance the project and ultimately build it, whether it is through CWPPRA or another funding stream. The State is not asking for additional funding. Mr. Rhinehart does not see the advantage of moving the project to LCA since there are no construction funds in LCA at this time. Mr. Rhinehart said that, to his knowledge, there is no law that says the project team can't operate under CWPPRA if the project is authorized in LCA. He feels that Congress would like to see resources leveraged to the maximum extent. Two other state projects, Bayou Lafourche and Myrtle Grove, have been through similar discussions; there are no cost shares in place and the projects are not advancing in LCA. Mr. Rhinehart does not want to see the same



thing happen to the Maurepas Swamp Project. This is a different concept than West Bay and it is not appropriate to compare the two. Mr. Rhinehart wants to coordinate with the USACE and find a way to keep this project viable and complete construction as quickly as possible.

Mr. Holden said that the USACE wants to build this project and keep it moving, but has reservations about whether or not alternative methods were properly addressed to justify and support the selection of the preferred alternative. The USACE is not convinced that there is a commitment by the State and EPA to build the project under CWPPRA and does not feel that CWPPRA should continue to expend \$1.9 million in remaining funds to complete the design. Mr. Holden added that the reason the Myrtle Grove Project has not moved forward is because the USACE and State have not signed a cost share agreement and project management plan.

Mr. Paul asked if the USACE performed any work on the Hope Canal Diversion Project under LCA. Mr. Holden said that the USACE will not move forward with the LCA project until the cost share agreements are in place.

Mr. Paul asked Mr. Holden about the USACE's review of the structures and levee work. Mr. Holden replied that the Chief of Engineering provided comments, but there are comments about the coffer cell structures and construction loads that need to be addressed. Mr. Holden believes that if the project is moved to LCA now, then the USACE will be able to assimilate the information into a structured document with a supportable, defensible preferred alternative.

Ms. Sweeney suggested that the EPA, State, and USACE meet to develop a plan within the existing budget to bring the project to a substantial completion, but not necessarily a final design, so the USACE can move the project forward under LCA. Ms. Sweeney said that while she understands Mr. Holden's concerns, CWPPRA has taken chances and made investments in projects much larger than envisioned. In some ways, this was the origin of the LCA Program. It would be a wise investment of CWPPRA money to package the plan for a better transition to another authority or potential funding under CWPPRA. Mr. Rhinehart recognized that there needs to be additional coordination with the USACE because ultimately the USACE has responsibility for levee safety. Mr. Holden added that the USACE and State have the same common goal: to build the project.

Mr. Clark agreed with Ms. Sweeney and Mr. Rhinehart that all three agencies should meet to develop an action plan. The cost for the Maurepas Swamp Project is currently over the LCA's budget, but not within the CWPPRA scope. The Technical Committee is not prepared to support a scope change until a plan forward has been developed. Mr. Clark proposed that all three agencies work together before the next Task Force meeting to address issues such as canal alignment and the use of a siphon as an alternative.

Ms. Goodman addressed a comment made by Mr. Rhinehart that suggested it would be acceptable to Congress to use CWPPRA funds to develop an LCA Program. Congress approved the Hope Canal Project under WRDA for development under a specific cost share, including the engineering design and construction. Ms. Goodman posed two questions: Should CWPPRA accept that it is the intent of Congress to move this project into LCA? Does CWPPRA have a responsibility to adhere to the law that Congress set in WRDA 2007 that established that the

project would be developed and constructed under LCA at specific cost share? Ms. Sweeney wondered if the questions posed by Ms. Goodman would mean that if Congress passed a law saying that a current CWPPRA project would become an LCA project, then the CWPPRA project would stop immediately.

Mr. Paul said that the 30 percent review comments must be addressed before moving forward. Mr. Landers agreed.

Ms. Sweeney said that the EPA, State, and USACE need to reach a conceptual agreement to not necessarily stop all activity, but to not initiate any new engineering and design activities. She would like for the three agencies to package the plan to fit many molds.

Mr. Murley stated that URS has addressed most of the comments received at the 30 percent design review, but it will take additional work to respond to many of the geotechnical comments. Part of the additional work is to address the USACE's concern that this project can be safely constructed in the proposed location. Since the USACE has jurisdiction over the Mississippi River levees, nothing can be constructed without the USACE's approval.

Mr. Holden stated that the USACE will work with the EPA and the State to evaluate the data and identify how to transfer the project into LCA, but would not do any further reviews on new design efforts.

**DECISION: Mr. Clark moved that the EPA, State, and USACE develop an action plan that would facilitate the continuation of E&D for the Maurepas Project under CWPPRA or promote a seamless transition for final design and construction under another program (e.g., an LCA or State program). That action plan should be completed and submitted to the Technical Committee prior to the June 2009 Task Force meeting and also prior to the initiation of new E&D tasks. Mr. Clark, Mr. Paul, Mr. Rhinehart, Ms. Sweeney, and Mr. Landers voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Holden opposed. The motion was passed by the Technical Committee.**

9. Agenda Item 8. Report/Discussion/Decision: Status of Unconstructed Projects (Goodman). *Ms. Goodman will provide an overview of the status of unconstructed projects on PPL's 1-14. The P&E may recommend individual project actions for the Technical Committee to consider. Emphasis will be on projects that have been delayed due to project related issues.* Ms. Goodman announced that Mr. Paul would request a change in scope for the Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project. In the interest of time, Ms. Goodman asked to defer discussions on three other projects: South Lake DeCade Freshwater Introduction Project, Grand Lake Shoreline Protection Project associated with the Tebo Point CIAP Project, and the Avoca Island Diversion and Land Building Project.

Ms. Goodman stated that discussions would also be held on three projects that the P&E is recommending for deauthorization: Weeks Bay Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection, Castille Pass Sediment Delivery, and the Mississippi River Sediment Trap Projects.

### **Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project**

Mr. Paul presented the Technical Committee with a copy of the Draft Scope Change Report. The project has been revised in conjunction with the State, landowners, and project sponsors from a hydrologic restoration project to a terracing project. The updated numbers have been sent to the Environmental Workgroup for review. Mr. Paul requested the Technical Committee approve the change in project scope at no additional cost.

**DECISION: Ms. Sweeney moved to approve the change in project scope for the Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project. Mr. Clark seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

### **Weeks Bay Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection Project**

Ms. Goodman reported that this project was up for deauthorization in April 2008. The USACE determined through preliminary engineering and design that the project was not a feasibly-constructible project and the P&E recommends deauthorization.

Mr. Holden opened the floor to comments from the public on the Weeks Bay Project.

Mr. Randy Moertle, representing Avery Island, Inc. and McIlhenny Company, said that he was surprised to hear that the USACE recommended deauthorization of the Weeks Bay Project. Originally the project featured hydrologic restoration and included expensive sheet piling. Vermilion Parish and other stakeholders tried to keep the project moving forward with the use of HESCO baskets as an alternative method for shoreline protection in 2007. The project was recommended for deauthorization in 2007 and a one-year extension was granted. In 2008, it was determined that the HESCO baskets did not work because the waves would knock them over, so a second extension was requested. Mr. Moertle said that the P&E decided to recommend the project for deauthorization this year without giving him a chance to make presentation on the project's progress. Mr. Moertle and his colleagues have been working with NOAA Fisheries, LSU Extension, and NRCS District Conservationists on this project. Mr. Moertle said that there are \$200,000 in CIAP funds from Iberia and Vermilion Parishes that can be used for project planning and engineering. The parishes will likely hire the Shaw Group to develop a design that will work in the project area. Mr. Moertle proposed to take concrete paneling that was used for the landbridge and strategically place it to provide shoreline protection and a sediment trap. Mr. Moertle requested a written justification from any agency that votes to deauthorize the Weeks Bay Project. He would like 60 days to respond to the written justifications. No CWPPRA funds are being spent on this project; his only request is that the project be kept on the books. Mr. Moertle also requested an audience with the Task Force to be able to present why he thinks the project is important. Mr. Moertle does not feel that he has been given due process and feels the decision to deauthorize the project was made behind closed doors.

Mr. Clark responded to Mr. Moertle's comments by clarifying that this recommendation was made by the P&E to the Technical Committee and not by the USACE themselves.

Mr. Holden asked Mr. Moertle when they could expect to see some accretion associated with current efforts. Mr. Moertle said that the sediment traps have been proven to work at the Boston Canal and Little Vermilion Bay. Mr. Moertle feels the Weeks Bay Project can be redesigned to capture the sediment. If the project is deauthorized then it will be almost impossible to get the

project back on the PPL. Mr. Moertle does not want to give up on the project now since they are working hard to find an alternative without cost to CWPPRA.

Mr. Clark asked Mr. Moertle if he would be prepared to present an action plan to the Task Force in June. Mr. Moertle responded yes and added that he is working under the same permitting and funding constraints as CWPPRA. Mr. Clark said that the reason why the USFWS voted to deauthorize the project was because no work plan had been developed or submitted within the two year extension.

Ms. Sweeney said that she was confused why Mr. Moertle felt caught off guard by the recommendation to deauthorize the project. Ms. Sweeney said that her vote to deauthorize the project was not based on a lack of progress, but on the engineering feasibility of the project as originally proposed.

Mr. Moertle said that his group is coming up with a viable alternative to use concrete panels, which is a proven CWPPRA technique. Mr. Moertle wants it engineered in a certain alignment to capture sediment, provide shoreline protection, and provide a WVA that is within the project scope.

Ms. Goodman asked Mr. Moertle if he was proposing to complete a design on the project to fund under CWPPRA and if there was any intent to coordinate with the Federal sponsor to take the plan through the Workgroup reviews as part of the CWPPRA SOP. Mr. Moertle said that there was a misunderstanding because he had the impression that there was no money left and his group was trying to do everything all on their own. He understands now that this is incorrect. Ms. Browning noted that there is about \$700,000 left in the project budget. Mr. Moertle said that he is proposing that the parish engineer design the project with the \$200,000 in CIAP funds, then CWPPRA would be given plans for a viable, reasonable alternative. Mr. Rhinehart said that this sounds more like a feasibility analysis and not a final design. Mr. Paul said that it could then be turned over to the Federal sponsor to finalize the design with the remaining project funds. Ms. Goodman commented that the USACE couldn't finalize the design until the CWPPRA SOP was followed. Mr. Creel noted that a Task Force motion made at the June 2007 meeting stated that no additional funding would be spent on this project and that motion would have to be overturned.

Mr. Moertle pleaded with the Technical Committee to keep the Weeks Bay Project alive by granting another one-year extension in order to complete an engineering feasibility report. Mr. Clark told Mr. Moertle that a detailed design is not needed with a feasibility report; only the concept is needed. Mr. Moertle asked for the Technical Committee's assistance to guide and direct his group on completion of the plan.

Mr. W.P. Edwards presented the Technical Committee with a written statement from Mr. Gerald Bertrand, President of the Vermilion Parish Policy Jury. The statement read, "Vermilion Parish strongly supports the CWPPRA Weeks Bay Project. It was identified in the Coast 2050 Plan as a linchpin project for Vermilion Parish. It is a freshwater and sediment diversion project for both Vermilion Parish and the Mermentau Basin. The Parish respectfully requests that this project not be deauthorized."

Ms. Sweeney said that if the Technical Committee were to recommend deauthorization of projects today, this would mean that the next meeting would be the first of two steps as required by the SOP. This meeting is only to recommend initiation of deauthorization.

Mr. Edwards said that sometimes it is hard to deal with the Federal sponsor. On the Weeks Bay Project, it seems that the Federal sponsor lacked both imagination and communication with local sponsors. Vermilion and Iberia Parishes are looking to spend the \$200,000 CIAP funds on more than a concept. He said that they already have a concept that has been demonstrated in existing CWPPRA projects.

**DECISION: Mr. Paul moved to grant a one-year extension on the Weeks Bay Project for preparation of a feasibility report using CIAP funds. The local project sponsors should coordinate with the State and USACE project managers on a regular basis and present a progress report at the December 2009 Technical Committee and January 2010 Task Force meetings. Mr. Rhinehart seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

#### **Castille Pass Sediment Delivery Project**

Ms. Goodman said that the P&E voted to recommend deauthorization of this project mainly because of the induced shoaling issue. Ms. Sweeney added that the USACE Regulatory and Operations Divisions wanted CWPPRA to agree to pay for shoaling induced by the project in perpetuity. The NMFS and the State are both in agreement to move the project to deauthorization.

Mr. Clark said that he was disappointed that the USACE wants CWPPRA to agree to pay for induced shoaling in perpetuity. This is a well designed restoration project in an area of opportunity with a relatively small amount of potential shoaling (9,000 to 10,000 cubic yards per year). Mr. Clark hoped that someone within the USACE would step in and have the 9,000 to 10,000 cubic yards of dredging per year added to the regular operations cost for this area because of a commitment to restoration.

Ms. Sweeney said that regardless of the regulatory issue, this project has been up for Phase II funding several times and there are also permitting issues. She agreed that this is an area of great opportunity in the Atchafalaya Delta, but perhaps not the highest area of need.

Mr. Landers mirrored Mr. Clark's comments and expressed concern of letting shoaling issues drive the decision to deauthorize a project. It seems premature to throw in the towel now as there are still questions to answer with regard to shoaling. Mr. Landers concedes to the decision made by NOAA and the State to recommend deauthorizing the project. Mr. Rhinehart added that the project has a number of other issues and that the State does not want to set a precedent of removing projects with shoaling issues.

**DECISION: Ms. Sweeney made a motion to recommend the Task Force initiate deauthorization of the Castille Pass Sediment Delivery Project. Mr. Rhinehart seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

### **Mississippi River Sediment Trap Project**

Ms. Goodman said that the P&E recommends deauthorizing this project because of cost. The original estimate, which pre-dated Hurricane Katrina, to construct the sediment trap was \$52 million. The USACE estimates that it would cost an additional \$52 million for continued maintenance, which would be outside the scope of the CWPPRA Program.

Mr. Holden commented that the USACE has had discussions with the State to look at alternative disposal sites.

**DECISION: Mr. Rhinehart moved to recommend the Task Force begin deauthorization on the Mississippi River Sediment Trap Project. Ms. Sweeney seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

10. Agenda Item 9. Discussion/Decision: Funding Request for Post-Hurricane Operations and Maintenance on Sabine Structures Project (CS-23) (Clark and Rhinehart). *The USFWS and LAOCPR request Technical Committee approval for an O&M budget increase in the amount of \$1,213,114, including incremental funding in the amount of \$1,031,840 to cover post-hurricanes Rita and Ike repairs and modifications. The incremental funding would be used to repair a gate, replace an actuator, and other work, and modify existing 1-stemmed gates to 2-stemmed gates. Electrical repairs were completed using federal post Hurricane Rita supplemental funding provided for the Sabine National Wildlife Refuge. The remaining post-hurricane supplemental funding was insufficient to complete the project and was returned to the USFWS regional office to be used on other hurricane related projects. Thus, there are no remaining supplemental funds to complete the remaining O&M and modification work. Funds previously provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency were expended by LAOCPR for designs.* Mr. Clark explained that the structures had not been operating properly since 2004 due to electrical problems caused by the incorrect three-phase electricity supplied in the public power lines. Hurricane Rita damaged these power lines and the new lines had the true three-phase electrical power needed to run the actuators. Hurricane Rita also destroyed many of the motors and caused problems with the structures. The USFWS tried to use post-Rita supplemental funding to take care of repairs, but there were no bidders for the work. The Tennessee Valley Authority agreed to do the electrical work for \$200,000 and USFWS returned the remaining funds to the regional office. Additional funds are needed for repairs and modifications, which include the replacement of actuators and installation of additional stems per gate. The project structures have been open since October 2005 and were only operational during 2004. Results of the 2004 monitoring report show that the yearly mean salinities were lower within the project area as compared to reference sites, which indicates that the project was able to reduce saltwater intrusion during that time. Mr. Clark requested Technical Committee approval of \$1,031,840 in O&M funding to repair and modify the structures.

Mr. Holden opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Billy Leonard, with the USFWS Southwest Louisiana Refuge Complex, said that the extra O&M funds are necessary because the structures are working minimally right now. When the structures were operating normally, they were able to kept salinity levels down. There are some

salinity levels as high as 14. Full operation of the structures could help to bring the levels down to 4 or 5.

Ms. Goodman added that this project is synergistic with the Sabine Marsh Creation Project and provides hydrologic controls of salinity in marsh created by CWPPRA.

**DECISION: Mr. Clark moved to approve the increase in O&M budget for the Sabine Structures Project in the amount of \$1,213,114, including incremental funding of \$1,031,840. Mr. Paul seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

11. Agenda Item 10. Report/Decision: Scope Change Request for Little Pecan Bayou Hydrologic Restoration (ME-17) (Paul and Rhinehart). Mr. Paul reported that the number of structures along Little Pecan Bayou proposed with the original concept has been reduced, which results in a change to costs and benefits. There is also more freshwater conveyance in the new scope. Mr. Paul asked the Technical Committee to approve the change in scope, so that the project may move forward.

**DECISION: Ms. Sweeney moved to approve the scope change for the Little Pecan Bayou Hydrologic Restoration Project. Mr. Holden seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

12. Agenda Item 11. Discussion/Decision: Proposed Revision of the Ecological Review CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedure Requirement (Clark and Rhinehart). *The USFWS and LAOCPR request Technical Committee approval to revise the CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to remove the Ecological Review (ER) requirement for most projects, with the exception that the State and/or Federal project sponsors would have the option of conducting an ER for: complex projects; projects for which there is little precedent to indicate whether or not they would be effective; or other projects as deemed necessary. Currently, the SOP requires that a draft ER be submitted at the 30% Design Review meeting [CWPPRA SOP Section 6(e)], and a final ER be submitted with Phase II materials (Appendix C SOP). Environmental Assessments (EA), which are required for all Federal projects to satisfy National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, typically contain information provided in the ER. Eliminating the ER for most projects, with the exceptions outlined above, would save time and costs without altering the effectiveness of the ecological review conducted during project development through the NEPA process.* Mr. Clark said that the EAs prepared under NEPA for Federal projects often include the same information that is required for ERs. The information may become repetitive especially for terracing and shoreline protection projects where ERs have been done in the past. Mr. Clark suggested removing the requirement for ERs, but allowing project sponsors to prepare one if it is deemed necessary. It would be discussed whether or not a project needs the ER at the 30 percent design review meeting.

Mr. Rhinehart agreed that the ER has become repetitive and would like to focus the ER efforts on projects that have uncertainties or can provide a learning opportunity for the program. Mr. Rhinehart clarified that it would be determined whether or not an ER is needed when the project is put on the PPL list and not at the 30 percent design review meeting as Mr. Clark stated.

Ms. Sweeney asked how this change would apply to projects that are currently in Phase I engineering and design. Mr. Rhinehart recommended that the Federal sponsor and State decide whether or not an ER is required for those projects and apply this change retroactively. Mr. Landers reiterated that ERs would no longer be mandatory, but voluntary.

Mr. Holden asked that project sponsors who do not intend to complete an ER for a project notify the Technical Committee. Ms. Sweeney suggested leaving the decision on whether or not to prepare an ER up to the sponsoring agencies.

**DECISION: Mr. Clark moved to revise the SOP to remove the requirement for an ER for most projects. The State or Federal sponsors would have the option of conducting an ER as deemed necessary. In addition, the Federal and State sponsor will notify the Technical Committee and P&E which projects will require an ER before the 30 percent design review. Mr. Paul seconded. All Technical Committee members voted in favor and the motion passed.**

13. Agenda Item 12. Report/Discussion: Status of the PPL 8 – Sabine Refuge Marsh Creation Project, Cycle 2 (CS-28-2) (Holden). *Ms. Fay Lachney will provide a status on the changes to the Plans and Specifications and results of the bid opening for the construction contract for the Sabine Refuge Marsh Creation Project permanent pipeline feature.* Ms. Fay Lachney, USACE, announced that the construction contract was awarded on April 13, 2009 to Wilco Pipeline. The anticipated completion date is April 2010, which is before the next dredging cycle for the Calcasieu River Ship Channel. The pipeline will be available to convey dredge material for beneficial use during the FY 11 dredging event.

14. Agenda Item 13. Report/Discussion: Plaquemines Parish Master Plan (Hahn). Mr. P.J. Hahn, Plaquemines Parish, said that there are 38 total projects scheduled for the parish including CWPPRA, CIAP, and funded and non-funded projects. Plaquemines Parish partnered with ERDC to determine what kind of storm surge protection these projects would provide for the parish. ERDC modeling results show that while the projects provide coastal restoration, they do not offer any storm surge protection. Mr. Hahn said that Mr. Mike Flores would provide an overview of the Plaquemines Parish Master Plan to look at projects with coastal restoration and storm surge protection features.

Mr. Flores reported that members from Plaquemines Parish met with the USACE to review the schedule for proposed levee improvements. Plaquemines Parish plans to focus on Reach B2 of the levee system in the pilot initiative. The concept includes placement of a cypress or forested ridge adjacent to the levee system. The ridge will provide wetland enrichment, help reduce wave action, and provide a protective barrier to the levees. The ridge will be constructed adjacent to the levees from Boothville to Venice. The project would cost \$230 million to build in open water versus about \$27 million to build it adjacent to the levees. Approximately \$18 million will be needed for mitigation. The target completion date for the design is September 2010 with a one-year construction period. Bathymetric surveys to identify source material and cross-sections of the river have been completed. Mr. Flores hopes to have the permit application submitted this summer. The project's work thus far is being funded by the parish. The parish is seeking



funding from State resources to fund the project for Reach B-2. Mr. Hahn added that the parish is open to ideas and suggestions from the Technical Committee on how to obtain future funding.

15. Agenda Item 14. Additional Agenda Items (Holden).

**Outreach Committee Announcement**

Mr. David Marks, CWPPRA Outreach Committee Coordinator, invited everyone to attend the CWPPRA Annual Dedication Ceremony on April 22, 2009. The dedication will begin at 10:30 a.m. at the USFWS Southeast Refuge in Lacombe, Louisiana.

**Cameron-Creole Project Levee Repairs**

Mr. Rhinehart initiated a discussion on levee repairs for the Cameron-Creole Project. The State requested that CWPPRA approve the use of \$4.9 million that is currently in the project's O&M budget to repair damages on the levee system caused by Hurricane Ike. The State was previously given \$4.9 million by CWPPRA to repair damages caused by Hurricane Rita. FEMA was able to completely fund those repairs. The State would like to use the \$4.9 million that is already in the budget to help cover the \$18 million cost to repair damages from Hurricane Ike. FEMA reimbursed the State 100 percent for the Hurricane Rita repairs, but there is a risk that FEMA may not elect to reimburse the State for these repairs. Mr. Rhinehart said that Mr. Burkholder could offer more details.

Mr. Clark said that the State is showing faith by putting up \$13.1 million for the cost of repairs. He thought it was reasonable to transfer the \$4.9 million already approved to the levee repair. Mr. Paul supported this idea as well since the funds have already been authorized.

Mr. Landers asked if the levee was an original part of the restoration project. Mr. Rhinehart replied yes and added that the funds are needed to bring the levees back to their original height.

Ms. Sweeney asked if the State would front the difference. Mr. Rhinehart said that the State will float the remainder (\$13.1 million) to begin repairs and is hoping for 100 percent reimbursement from FEMA

Mr. Burkholder clarified that the State submitted claims to FEMA for repairs after Hurricane Rita. The State requested funds from CWPPRA three separate times to repair water control structures, close off four breaches, and repair erosion to the levees. These funds are the \$4.9 million that is currently in the O&M budget. Those repairs were reimbursed 100 percent by FEMA. There is still a pending claim for erosion damage to the levee cause by Hurricane Rita. The State has also submitted a claim for erosion caused by Hurricane Ike. The \$18 million needed for repairs includes the pending Rita claim and Ike claim. The Hurricane Ike claim is about 15 percent of the total cost. Mr. Rhinehart noted that other projects depend on the Cameron-Creole levees being intact.

Ms. Sweeney asked if the previously approved \$4.9 million was to be returned to the CWPPRA Program after reimbursement by FEMA or was it considered a permanent addition to the project. Mr. Clark did not recall. Mr. Paul thought that the money would be returned to the CWPPRA Program if FEMA paid for the repairs. Ms. Goodman commented that a process was developed

for handling damages to projects that had a potential to use FEMA funds for repairs. The process involved the State fronting the money and CWPPRA reimbursing the State if FEMA did not. Ms. Goodman added that there has been recent questioning by FEMA on whether or not CWPPRA projects are refundable for hurricane damage repairs using FEMA funds. Ms. Goodman hoped the Technical Committee would consider the previous process put in place for handling these repairs in light of the recent FEMA inquiries.

Mr. Holden asked if this would preclude CWPPRA from having these funds available for other operation and maintenance and would have liked more time to review this request. Mr. Rhinehart stated that the State has previously been able to float funds to cover the cost of repairs while awaiting FEMA reimbursement. The State cannot float \$18 million for these repairs and was hoping to use the available \$4.9 million to be able to move ahead with these critical repairs.

Ms. Sweeney asked Mr. Burkholder about the repair schedule. Mr. Burkholder said that the bid packages are ready and could be distributed in the next few weeks.

Mr. Holden asked Mr. Burkholder about the status of the claims. Mr. Burkholder said that a Hurricane Rita claim submitted three years ago is still pending. FEMA representatives recently made a site visit and are preparing a project worksheet for a claim submitted for Hurricane Ike. There is a risk that the State may not get reimbursed.

Ms. Sweeney asked if the Cameron-Creole Project was non-functional due to the damages. Mr. Paul said that the breaches have been repaired, but the levee is still at a low level. Full functionality will not return until the levee is raised back to pre-storm condition. Mr. Rhinehart said that the State has many resources competing for the \$18 million and cannot front the entire repair cost.

Ms. Browning noted that the \$4.9 million has been obligated to the State, but has not yet been disbursed to the State for use.

Mr. Holden asked Ms. Mary Kingsley, attorney with the USACE, to speak on the matter. Ms. Kingsley stated that under the USACE O&M provision, the State has to expend the money first before the USACE can reimburse the funds. This is a matter of Federal fiscal law that does not allow the USACE to pay in advance for services unless Congress has given expressed authority to do so. Ms. Kingsley added that if the USACE gives money to the State in advance of resolving the FEMA claim, FEMA may consider this an alternative Federal funding source and will not be able to provide reimbursement.

Mr. Holden is concerned that approving use of these funds would set a precedent in how CWPPRA is addressed by FEMA in future claims. Mr. Holden would like to defer a decision on this matter.

Mr. Rhinehart said that the State is going to proceed with the repairs using State dollars. He wanted to go ahead and seek reimbursement through the O&M process while waiting on the final disposition to FEMA.

Mr. Paul said that he is agreeable to letting the State use those funds when they are needed. Mr. Holden cautioned that providing those funds may be a short-term gain that could come back to be problematic when trying to address future claims.

**DECISION: The Technical Committee deferred making a recommendation on approval of funds to cover the cost to repair damage caused by Hurricanes Rita and Ike on the Cameron-Creole levee system.**

16. Agenda Item 15. Request for Public Comments (Holden). There were no public comments.

17. Agenda Item 16. Announcement: Date of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meeting (Goodman). Mr. Scott Wandell, USACE, announced that the next Task Force meeting will be held June 3, 2009 at 9:30 a.m. at the Estuarine Fisheries and Habitat Center, 646 Cajundome Blvd., Lafayette, Louisiana.

18. Agenda Item 17. Announcement: Scheduled Dates of Future Program Meetings (Goodman). Dates and locations of future program meetings through December 2009 can be found on the agenda (**Encl 1**).

19. Agenda Item 18. Decision: Adjourn. Mr. Holden adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:30 p.m.