

**BREAUX ACT**  
**Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act**

**TASK FORCE MEETING**  
**6 October 2022**

**Minutes**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Mark Wingate convened the 106th meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:30 a.m. on October 6, 2022, in the Board Room of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DARM, 7400 Leake Ave., New Orleans, LA. The meeting was also made available via WebEx Meeting platform. The agenda is shown as Enclosure 1. The Task Force was created by the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA, commonly known as the Breaux Act), which was signed into law (PL 101-646, Title III) by President George Bush on November 29, 1990.

**II. ATTENDEES**

The attendance record for the Task Force Meeting is presented as Enclosure 2. The Task Force members introduced themselves as follows:

Mr. Mark Wingate (USACE), Chairperson, serving for Colonel Cullen Jones  
Mr. Kevin Roy (USFWS)  
Mr. Chad Kacir (NRCS)  
Mr. Brian Lezina (CPRA)  
Mr. Troy Hill (EPA)  
Mr. Chris Doley (NMFS)

**III. OPENING REMARKS**

Mark Wingate introduced himself, explaining his substitution for newly instated commander, Colonel Cullen Jones. He asked Task Force members to introduce themselves; they did so, and identified the state and federal agencies they represent. Mr. Wingate asked for Task Force comments; none were proffered.

Mr. Wingate called upon Brad Inman (USACE), who iterated the procedure for public comment (virtually and in person) and reminded attendees to sign in on the sheet designated for public record. He also mentioned emergency exits in the event of an alarm and provided logistical directions for restrooms and breakrooms in the midst of construction.

**IV. AGENDA and MINUTES**

Mr. Wingate asked if the Task Force had any changes to make to the agenda; none were proffered. He then called for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

Mr. Lezina made a motion to adopt the agenda, which Mr. Kacir seconded; the motion passed without dissent.

Mr. Wingate called upon Brad Inman (USACE) to iterate the procedure for public comment (in person and virtually); he did so and reminded attendees to sign in on the sheet designated for public record.

Mr. Wingate asked Mr. Inman to present the minutes of the last Task Force meeting (May 2022); he indicated that the minutes had previously been provided to the Task Force for their review and recommended that the Task Force adopt the minutes. Mr. Wingate asked if the Task Force or the public had any questions regarding or changes to the minutes; none were proffered. Mr. Wingate called for a motion to accept the minutes.

Mr. Hill made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented; Mr. Doley seconded the motion, which passed without dissent.

## **V: TASK FORCE DECISIONS**

### **Agenda Item #10 – Decision: Request to Incorporate Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef Demonstration (LA-08) into Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization (ME-18) Projects and a Budget Increase (Jennifer Smith, NMFS)**

Ms. Smith reviewed the location, features and history of construction for the two projects, which are immediately adjacent to each other, which function synergistically, and which are demonstrably successful. There is no budget, however, to maintain the navigational signage erected for the LA-08 (demonstration) project. Ms. Smith presented this two-fold request is to a) incorporate the LA-08 demo project into ME-18, and b) increase the O&M budget of ME-18 in order to maintain navigational signage as required by the US Coast Guard. LDWF will assume responsibility for the signage at the end of project life.

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate then called for a motion to incorporate the Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef Demonstration (LA-08) into Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization (ME-18) Project, with an O&M Budget Increase of \$211,169. Mr. Doley made a motion to transfer the project as presented; Mr. Lezina seconded the motion, which passed without dissent.*

### **Agenda item #11 – Decision: Final 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. In comparison with other project funding requests from 2016-2020, this project was simply not as cost-effective on a net-acre basis. Optional designs to reduce costs had been considered but were essentially nullified by the deterioration of site conditions (as a result of 2020 and 2021 storm events) and economic inflation. Therefore, Mr. Williams requested approval of a recommendation to the Task Force to finalize 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 noted that as per the CWPPRA inactivation process, an opportunity for public and stakeholder comment had been provided.

Mr. Wingate opened the floor for questions or comments from the Task Force, and from the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve Final Inactivation of East Leeville Marsh Creation and Nourishment (BA-194) Project. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion passed without dissent.*

**Agenda Item #12 – Decision: Six Month Time Extension Request for Bayou Chevee Shoreline Protection (PO-22) Project (Barry Richard, CPRA)**

Mr. Richard asserted that the final maintenance event for this project is nearly complete, awaiting final design and final maintenance event. The project’s end of life is December 2022. A 6-month time extension was hereby requested to ensure there is enough time to install additional safety features on navigational signage and to close out the project. A budget increase for this project is included in the incremental O&M requests (Agenda Item #20b).

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the six-month extension for the Bayou Chevee Shoreline Protection (PO-22) project. Mr. Hill made the motion, which Mr. Kacir seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

**Agenda Item #13 – Decision: Request for a Monitoring Budget Increase for Freshwater Introduction South of Highway 82 (ME-16) Project (Leigh Anne Sharp, CPRA)**

Ms. Sharp stated simply that a Monitoring Budget increase in needed to complete monitoring and close-out activities, due to an unexpected monitoring budget shortfall. Mr. Roy denies the availability of project O&M funds which could possibly be transferred. Ms. Sharp concurred. Therefore, she requested a \$39,776 increase in Monitoring funds to complete monitoring activities, prepare a final report, and complete an end-of-project life assessment.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve a Monitoring Budget increase of \$39,776 for ME-16. Mr. Roy made the motion, which Mr. Kacir seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

**Agenda Item #14 – Decision: Delta Wide Crevasses (MR-09) Project Life Extension (Dawn Davis, NMFS) 12:05 p.m. to 12:20 p.m.**

Ms. Davis provided an in-depth history of the project, including its location, features, construction timeline, total costs, and net acreage realized. Simple and cost-effective to build, this project was constructed in four phases (since 1999) and consists of a total of 14 constructed crevasses, one plug constructed in an existing crevasse, and maintenance dredging of new and/or existing crevasses. Maintenance is simply periodic dredging to promote and/or expand crevasse splays. Ms. Davis explained the matrix with which formal assessment and rationale for project extension was reached, citing specific project synergies, net acreage gained, cost-effectiveness and simplicity of design and construction. With maintenance logically required beyond the

project life, and with no other entity willing to accept transfer of responsibility for the project, NMFS and CPRA hereby propose a 20-year project life extension for MR-09. The net budget increase for the proposed extension is \$13,044,961 (fully funded budget estimate of \$13,507,350 minus \$462,389 which remains in the budget), with a calculated cost effectiveness of \$31,932 per acre over the additional 20 years. These calculations are based on three additional phases wherein 20 more crevasses will be constructed from 2025 – 2035. NMFS and CPRA hereby include with the extension request the first-year incremental request of \$3,918,457.59.

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force; Mr. Hill pointed out, that although the project matrix was employed, this request could be considered a new project, because it includes new construction as well as maintenance dredging, and within the CWPPRA process, future requests such as this may be a point of contention. Mr. Wingate called for public questions or comments; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the 20-year project life extension with a budget increase of \$13,044,961 and the first-year incremental request of \$3,918,457.59 for MR-09. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Lezina seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

#### **Agenda item #15 – Decision: Transfer of Funding from O&M to Monitoring for Barataria Bay Waterway East Side Shoreline Protection (BA-26) Project (Danielle Richardi, CPRA)**

Ms. Richardi simply stated that a transfer of \$500 funds from the O&M budget to the Monitoring budget is required to correct a long-standing deficit within the Monitoring budget; all monitoring activities have been completed. The only task remaining is the final O&M report in preparation for project closeout in the next fiscal year.

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the transfer of \$500 from the O&M budget to the Monitoring budget for BA-26. Mr. Hill made the motion, which Mr. Kacir seconded; the motion carried without dissent.*

#### **Agenda Item #16 – Decision: Annual Request for Incremental Funding for FY25 Administrative Costs for Cash Flow Projects (Sarah Bradly, USACE)**

Ms. Bradley pointed out that project-specific incremental funding requests for administrative services are provided in the Technical Committee binders, and hereby requested Task Force approval of total funding necessary for financial management of those projects in the amount of \$98,451.

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the Request for Incremental Funding in the amount of \$98,451 for FY25 Administrative Costs. Mr. Lezina made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion carried without dissent.*

**Agenda item #17 – Decision: Request for Funding for the CWPPRA Program’s Technical Services (Michelle Fischer, USGS)**

On behalf of USGS and CPRA, Michelle Fischer iterated technical services provided for construction projects within the CWPPRA Program, including lacoast.gov web hosting, database maintenance, and web security, as well as automatic fact sheet creation, social media, and other outreach content development and distribution. The program also assists with geospatial analysis throughout authorized project phases and responds to various geospatial requests from the CWPPRA agencies. Ms. Fischer hereby requested approval of a budget increase and FY23 funding for technical services in the amount of \$218,386.

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve a budget increase and FY23 funding for technical services in the amount of \$218,386. Mr. Hill made the motion, which Mr. Lezina seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

**Agenda Item #18 – Decision: Request for a Time Extension with a Budget Increase for the Naomi Outfall Management (BA-03c) Project (Barry Richard, CPRA)**

Mr. Richard explained that the final maintenance event for this project has been delayed. The deconstruction of one of the navigational aids for this project became necessary in order to give NRDA access one of its projects. The project extension will allow time for the project team to conduct maintenance on the remaining nav-aid structures; the budget increase is the estimated cost of reconstruction of the structure removed. The Task Force will consider the Technical Committee’s recommendation

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve a two-year time extension and budget increase and funding allocation in the amount of \$146,515.65 for BA-03c. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion carried without dissent.*

**Agenda Item #19 – Decision: Request for a Change in Scope for the St. Catherine Island Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection (PO-179) Project (Kristen Ramsey, FWS)**

Ms. Ramsey began her request with a review of project location, its features and a timeline of its progress since approval in 2017. She then presented a detailed summary of rationale for reducing the project footprint, and she described several cost-saving options that were considered. The 95% design meeting is scheduled for next week. The change of scope is necessitated because between Phase 0 and the 30% design meeting the material costs have increased and the project footprint was reduced, thereby reducing the cost/benefit ratio by more than 25%. The fully funded cost per acre increased by 36.5%. Ms. Ramsey emphasized that the overall budget increased by 7.8% and AAHUs were only reduced by 6.6%, figures which

indicate a retention of benefits while keeping costs down. She also pointed out that this scope change was approved by the Technical Committee in recent electronic voting.

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the change in project scope for PO-179. Mr. Roy made the motion, which Mr. Hill seconded; the motion carried without dissent.*

**Agenda Item #20 – Decision: Request for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Incremental Funding (Kent Bollfrass, CPRA)**

The request for FY25 O&M incremental funding totals \$4,877,961.62 and O&M budget increase totals \$23,231.00. Mr. Bollfrass presented the request as follows, highlighting specifically those exceeding \$100,000 in incremental funding.

- a. PPL9+ Projects requesting approval for FY25 O&M incremental funding in the total amount of \$3,678,829.75 for the following projects
  - Coastwide Vegetative Planting (LA-39)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$5,373.00
  - Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization (ME-18)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$37,419.00
  - Cameron-Creole Grand Bayou Marsh Creation (CS-54)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$9,509.00
  - Oyster Bayou Marsh Creation (CS-59) for annual inspection and admin  
Incremental Funding Request: \$129,080.00
  - Freshwater Introduction South of Highway 82 (ME-16)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$16,623.00
  - Grand Lake Shoreline Protection (ME-21)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$35,844.00
  - South White Lake Shoreline Protection (ME-22)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$9,552.00
  - Four Mile Canal Terracing and Sediment Trapping (TV-18)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$23,796.00
  - East Marsh Island Marsh Creation (TV-21)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$29,447.00
  - Cole’s Bayou Marsh Restoration (TV-63) for annual inspection and maintenance events including containment dike gapping  
Incremental Funding Request: \$530,251.00
  - West Belle Pass Barrier Headland Restoration (TE-52)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$8,140.75
  - Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection, Phase 3 (BA-27c) for annual inspection, reporting and navigation aid maintenance  
Incremental Funding Request: \$208,100.00

- Little Lake Shoreline Protection/ Dedicated Dredging Near Round Lake (BA-37)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$2,130.00
- Lost Lake Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration (TE-72) for inspection, admin, reporting and structure operation  
Incremental Funding Request: \$135,177.00
- Hydrologic Restoration and Vegetative Planting in the Des Allemands Swamp (BA-34-2)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$50,000.00
- Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) for admin and incentives  
Incremental Funding Request: \$2,273,878.00
- Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery- Marsh Creation and Terracing #3 (BA-164)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$8,411.00
- Grand Liard Marsh and Ridge Restoration (BA-68)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$36,754.00
- Goose Point Marsh Creation (PO-33)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$86,970.00
- Bayou Bonfuca Marsh Creation (PO-104)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$14,537.00
- Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Restoration (BA-48)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$3,863.00
- Barataria Barrier Island Complex: Pelican Island and Pass La Mer to Chalant Pass Restoration (BA-38)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$20,942.00
- Pass Chalant to Grand Bayou Pass Barrier Shoreline Restoration (BA-35)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$3,033.00

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the request for FY25 O&M incremental funding in the amount of \$3,678,829.75. Mr. Lezina made the motion, which Mr. Doley seconded; the motion carried without dissent.*

- b. PPL1-8 Projects requesting approval for FY25 O&M incremental funding in the total amount of \$1,199,131.87 and budget increases in the total amount of \$23,231.00 for the following projects
  - Cameron Creole Maintenance (CS-04a) for CPRA admin, routine maintenance  
Incremental Funding Request: \$269,014.00
  - Replace Sabine Refuge Water Control Structures at Headquarters Canal, West Cove Canal, and Hog Island Gully (CS-23) for CPRA admin, annual inspection, and maintenance events

- Incremental Funding Request: \$525,417.00
- Freshwater Bayou Wetland Project (ME-04)  
Incremental Funding request: \$13,114.00
- Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization (ME-13)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$79,007.00
- Cote Blanche Hydrologic Restoration (TV-04)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$54,474.00
- Brady Canal Hydrologic Restoration (TE-28) for budget reconciliation  
Incremental Funding Request: \$234,874.87
- Bayou Chevee Shoreline Protection (PO-22)  
Budget Increase Request: \$23,231.00  
Incremental Funding Request: \$23,231.00

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the FY25 O&M incremental funding in the total amount of \$1,199,131.87 and budget increases in the total amount of \$23,231.00. Mr. Kacir made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

**Agenda Item #21 – Decision: Request for Monitoring Incremental Funding (Kent Bollfrass, CPRA)**

The total request for FY25 Monitoring incremental funding is \$11,007,053.80. Mr. Bollfrass presented the requests as follows, highlighting those requests which exceed \$100,000:

- c. PPL9+ Projects requesting approval for FY25 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$661,303.80 for the following projects
  - Black Bayou Culverts Hydrologic Restoration (CS-29)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$42,523.00
  - Coastwide Vegetative Planting (LA-39)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$24,648.00
  - Cole’s Bayou Marsh Restoration (TV-63)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$18,930.00
  - East Marsh Island Marsh Creation (TV-21)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$24,808.00
  - Freshwater Introduction South of Highway 82 (ME-16)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$39,775.80
  - Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization (ME-18)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$37,196.00
  - Cameron- Creole Freshwater Introduction (CS-49)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$48,028.00
  - North Lake Mechant Landbridge Restoration (TE-44)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$18,836.00



- West Lake Boudreaux Shoreline Protection and Marsh Creation (TE-46)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$19,326.00
- Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) for the (typical) helicopter survey and report  
Incremental Funding Request: \$234,754.00
- Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery System (BA-39)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$1,728.00
- Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation (BA-42)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$42,370.00
- Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation (BA-48)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$66,156.00
- Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery- Marsh Creation and Terracing #3 (BA-164)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$40,180.00
- Bayou Bonfuca Marsh Creation (PO-104)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$2,045.00

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the FY25 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$661,303.80 for PPL9+ projects. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Kacir seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

- d. PPL1-8 Projects requesting approval for FY25 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$345,750.00 for the following projects
- Cameron Creole Maintenance (CS-04a) for structure operations, data analysis and reporting  
Incremental Funding Request: \$110,803.00
  - Sabine Refuge Marsh Creation Increments 4 and 5 (CS-28-4)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$45,989.00
  - Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization (ME-13)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$4,857.00
  - Replace Sabine Refuge Water Control Structures at Headquarters Canal, West Cove Canal, and Hog Island Gully (CS-23) for structure operations, data analysis and reporting  
Incremental Funding Request: \$184,101.00

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the FY25 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$345,750.00 for PPL1-8 projects. Mr. Roy made the motion, which Mr. Kacir seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

Mr. Bolfrass presented the final incremental request as follows:

- e. Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) requesting approval for FY25 incremental funding in the total amount of \$10,000,000
  - Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (LA-30)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$10,000,000

Mr. Wingate called for question or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to approve the FY25 incremental funding request in the total amount of \$10,000,000 for CRMS program. Mr. Lezina made the motion, which Mr. Kacir seconded. The motion carried without dissent.*

## **9. VI. INFORMATION**

### **Agenda Item #3 – Report: Electronic Vote (Brad Inman, USACE)**

Mr. Inman reported recent results of Technical Committee electronic voting:

- September 21, 2022 – the Technical Committee approved a 2-year time extension and \$146,515 budget increase for the Naomi Outfall Management (BA-03c) project
- September 28, 2022 – the Technical Committee approved a scope change, the details of which will be presented [in Agenda Item #18].
- July 13-14, 2022 – Multi-agency approval of a path forward for use of unexpended construction funds. The path forward will allocate the returning cost share funds (25%) toward the construction of other projects and reserve the returning federal share (75%) for Task Force discretionary use. (This vote was conducted at a multi-agency retreated conducted by Col Murphy.)

### **Agenda Item #4 – Report: Status of CWPPRA Program Funds and Projects (Sarah Bradley, USACE)**

Ms. Sarah Bradley, USACE, (sitting for Ms. Cheavis) presented an overview of CWPPRA funds, beginning with the Construction Program. The fully funded total Program Estimate since its inception to the present (authorized projects from PPLs 1 – 31) is \$3.258 billion. The total funded estimate (received since inception and anticipated through FY2026) is \$2.618 billion, leaving a potential gap of \$640 million if the Program were to construct, operate and maintain all projects to date. This gap fluctuates as future federal funding is appropriated for CWPPRA beyond 2026. Current Task Force-approved funding (based on budget estimates) for projects in Phase I, Phase II, and O&M and Monitoring totals \$2.414 billion. Authorized funding for each agency as requested currently totals \$2.079 billion, clearly not an over-commitment of the existing funded estimate.

Ms. Bradley then presented a similar bar-chart graph to illustrate the federal portion of each bar sum iterated above, in order to further explain the approved path forward for unexpended construction funds referred to in the previous agenda item. She pointed out specifically the Federal funds received to date (\$1,882,885,957.08), and federal funds allocated to date

(\$1,759,853,548.63), the difference of which is available for construction (\$123,032,408.45). These figures were obtained through an extensive financial reconciliation of all approved projects to ensure accuracy and transparency in accounting. Ms. Bradley presented four projects for which the financial reconciliation and final closeout had been performed, each of which resulted in a return of funds to the CWPPRA program. As depicted, the 25% cost share portion (\$22,550,065.05) will be added to available funds for construction requests at these proceedings.

As previously mentioned, the Program Estimate is currently \$3,257,812,643 for PPL's 1 – 31. A recommendation will be made today by the Technical Committee to approve additional funding for Construction Program Technical Services and for several other budget increases; if approved, the total Program Estimate will increase by \$13,465,652, and it will total \$3,271,496,681 .

The CWPPRA Program has an available balance of \$123,032,40 carried from the May Task Force meeting. The Program anticipates an estimate of DOI funding in the amount of \$84,161,724 (which will be allocated for the FY23 construction program.) The Program also has access to the unexpended funds (as a result of financial closeout) which total \$22,550,065. Thus, the total of available funds is \$229,744,197. The total of anticipated funding requests (which will be presented individually at this meeting) is \$20,517,771. The federal portion of the funding requests were (and will be moving forward) illustrated. If all funding requests are approved, the Program will move forward into FY23 with available funds totaling \$212,304,092.

Finally, Ms. Bradley presented a pie chart graph to summarize CWPPRA project status. The Program has authorized a total of 234 projects. The 130 active projects include 28 in Phase 1 Engineering and Design, 22 in Phase 2 Construction and 6 support projects. There are 74 projects that have been constructed and are now in final phases of Operations and Maintenance, or Monitoring, and 40 projects that have been closed financially. Additionally, CWPPRA has deauthorized 49 projects, transferred 10 projects, and placed 5 in the inactive category.

Mr. Inman spoke of the huge effort undertaken by Jernice Cheavis and various CWPPRA agencies to financially reconcile each project budget, which resulted in the fortunate return of funds to the program. He expressed his hope that the path forward discussed at the retreat will prevent the need for such activity in the future. He asserted that reserving some of those funds would allow the Task Force to respond accordingly to cost-increasing contingencies (like inflationary bids) that may occur as approved projects progress. In finality, Mr. Inman spoke of the unique opportunity to re-evaluate the selection and ranking criteria for proposed projects.

Mr. Wingate commended the entire CWPPRA team and Ms. Cheavis for their efforts. He called for questions or comments from the Task Force. Mr. Lezina lauded the effort as well, and iterated his satisfaction with the path forward determined, as it will allow flexibility in decision-making within the program in response to dynamic environments and changing project requirements. Mr. Wingate called for public comment; none were proffered.

#### **Agenda Item #5 – Report: Construction Update (Brad Inman, USACE)**

Mr. Inman called upon several CWPPRA agency representatives to report on projects that are currently under construction or recently completed along the LA coast.

Quin Kinler (NRCS) provided an update on the Coastwide Vegetative Plantings (LA-39) project. He began with an assertion that the vegetative planting project is in its 11<sup>th</sup> year. He provided a list of all plantings completed, and highlighted three specific sites by describing location, explaining rationale of project features, and exhibiting photos. Highlighted projects (Bay Dénesse, Little Vermilion Bay #3, and Tigre Lagoon) were completed in 2022.

Robert Dubois (USFWS) reported on the South Grand Chenier Marsh Creation (ME-20) project. The project is located to the west of Rockefeller Refuge, south of Hwy 82. The project features include two inland marsh creation cells (346 acres) and two earthen plugs along the Gulf Shoreline at the site of two breaches to the south. A notice to proceed (NTP) was issued in January 2022; construction has been completed at the marsh creation cells. Construction of the earthen plugs is complete, but the articulated concrete mats (ACMs) have not yet been delivered and placed. Estimated costs are \$15.2 million. Mr. Dubois provided pictorial evidence of dredging and sediment placement, along with evidence of earthen plugs filling in with sand and vegetation. In closing, Mr. Dubois emphasized the synergy of this project with ME-18. No questions or comments were proffered. (*This presentation was interrupted by a fire drill.*)

Kristen Ramsey (FWS) gave an update for the New Orleans Landbridge Shoreline Stabilization and Marsh Creation (PO-169) project. She depicted its location and described a small reduction in acreage because one of the three borrow sites is subject to a conservation easement. Construction at the three larger marsh creation cells is well under way – earthen containment dike construction and installation of articulated concrete mats is completed for MCA1 and MCA3 and is ongoing at MCA2. Dredging for MCA1 (with a borrow site in Lake Pontchartrain) is anticipated in October 2022; dredging for MCA2 and MCA3 (with a borrow site in Lake Catherine) is anticipated in January 2023. The project will result in approximately 3 miles of shoreline protection and 253 acres of marsh creation along both sides of Hwy 90, providing protection for that hurricane evacuation route, and contributing to the preservation of the New Orleans Landbridge. Construction bids have come in under the construction estimate.

Patty Taylor (EPA) presented a construction update for the Caminada Headland Back Barrier Marsh Creation (BA171) project. She described the project location as south of New Orleans, adjacent to Port Fourchon, immediately west of Elmer's Island. She listed a brief history/ timeline of the project, which was combined with BA-193 in an effort to save money and capitalize on project synergy. The area subsequently experienced the impacts of two major storm events. Ms. Taylor happily reported that dredging is currently underway with anticipated completion in October 2022. She described the fill location between the northern containment dike and the previously constructed southern dune, (which was partially repaired after heavy storm damage using displaced material to create a containment dike thereupon.) The purpose of the project is to restore approximately 900 acres of back barrier marsh. Ms. Taylor provided pictorial evidence of dredging, describing project features and type/ quality of the dredge material and fill area. She finally acknowledged project partners, contributors and stakeholders.

In conclusion, Mr. Inman pointed out that these projects illustrate the various techniques employed by CWPPRA and the accomplishments possible owing to the partnerships/ cooperation of entities involved. Mr. Wingate invited questions or comments; none were proffered.

### **Agenda Item #6 – Report: Outreach Committee Report (Lauren Leonpacher, USGS)**

Ms. Leonpacher summarized activities, products and events conducted by the Outreach Committee from May 2022 to October 2022. *Watermarks 360* is a virtual version of the original Watermarks publication, which was developed and released during Covid, and which subsequently has become a staple in virtual wetland education activities. In addition to its presentation at recent teacher trainings, seminars, student camps and local events, this virtual publication is the impetus for partnerships with area universities. The *Watermarks 360* website was launched in February, but Ms. Leonpacher iterated statistics (since May2022) for its usage, material downloads and multi-state access. Other activities included a “Take Your Kids to Work Day” at the USACE New Orleans District Headquarters, various CWPPRA project site visits, and setting up CWPPRA displays at World Oceans Day, and Hunting and Fishing Day. Ongoing activities include the “traveling” Louisiana Wetlands book display, CRMS user guide update, the “I Hope” oral history & portrait series, new brochures, , social media posts. Ms. Leonpacher concluded her presentation with a list of upcoming activities. Improvements to the LA Coast website, Dedication Celebration, a virtual training program for educators at Southern University, various festivals and an Outreach Committee meeting are planned between now and December.

Mr. Wingate complimented Ms. Leonpacher and the outreach team for their efforts and contributions. He opened the floor to comments or questions; none were proffered.

### **Agenda Item #7 – Report: Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (Leigh Anne Sharp, USGS)**

Ms. Sharp began with a programmatic update, reporting that the 2021 Coastwide Flight imagery is in and is satisfactory for use in CRMS land-water analysis. The imagery is collected and the analysis is updated every three years for the benefit of spatial analysis at CRMS sites and for CWPPRA project assessment and planning.

Ms. Sharp stated that additional funding for the CRMS Program is continually being sought; some progress is being made through NRDA application process. She briefly mentioned the cost share percentages if NRDA funding is secured.

Ms. Sharp then presented data beginning with elevation change and accretion data that spans 10+ years. The data is relevant to predicting marsh creation trajectories. For example, the Chenier plain gains elevation at half the rate of the Deltaic plain. She pointed out that apparent elevation gain isn’t always due to accretion, so it’s important to evaluate each potential project site to understand the dynamics therein. Other data sets (salinity, flooding, land change) are integral and should be incorporated when attempting to understand apparent land loss or gains.

Ms. Sharp asserted that the CRMS team, in cooperation with CPRA, is working to identify a standard methodology through which accretion data can be applied to marsh creation planning and E&D, and ultimately contribute to project costs savings and project success.

Mr. Wingate called for questions or comments from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

### **Agenda Item #8 – Report: Coastwide Nutria Control Program – Annual Report (Jennifer Manuel, LDWF)**

Ms. Manuel presented the annual report on the Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) beginning with the programs background. The program’s goal of annually removing 400,000 nutria from the marsh was set in 2002 in order to significantly reduce nutria-induced marsh damage. The registration process and tracking information is conducted online. The trapping season is defined as November 20 to March 30 each year. The initial incentive payment to trappers was increased to \$6 a tail in 2019 to encourage participation. A mobile collection station makes its way across the coast, within the set program boundary; additional collection sites have been added as necessary.

Ms. Manuel provided comparative statistical data from seasons 2019—2022. Fluctuations in participation have been influenced in those years by the Covid stay-at-home mandates, by the subsequent economic downturn, and by Hurricane Ida respectively. Typically, about 400 people enroll in the program each year, and about 61 percent actually turn in tails. Most individuals turn in less than 250 nutria tails; a few turn in 10,000 tails or more. Most of the nutria are harvested from its preferred habitat – fresh marsh – as opposed to fewer harvested from intermediate or brackish marsh, and very few from saltwater marsh; some are harvested from agricultural lands, especially crawfish ponds. Highest harvest CNCP participation occurs typically in January and February, at the end of deer and waterfowl seasons. Harvest method is by rifle (primarily), trapping, or a combination, but education efforts to promote sustainable methods are being employed.

Ms. Manuel reported that more than 6 million nutrias have been harvested out of coastal Louisiana since program inception. She provided harvest statistics by parish, along with herbivory assessment obtained by aerial survey conducted in April 2022. The survey reveals a reduction in damage overall, but she asserted that some of the damage sites have been converted to open water, so the nutrias migrate towards fresh vegetation. She indicated few sites that have recovered (where trappers have easy access). Site access is often a deterrent for trappers, so inaccessible areas tend to experience on-going damage.

In conclusion, Ms. Manuel reported efforts to promote the program and attract new and or younger participants through education and social media feeds. She directed those interested to the nutria.com website.

Mr. Wingate asked for question from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

#### **Agenda Item #9 – Report: Status of Unconstructed Projects (Kaitlyn Richard, USACE)**

Ms. Richard explained that the P&E subcommittee met in August 2022 (as it does annually) to assess unconstructed projects that are at least five years old. The goal is to identify projects with issues that should be addressed, especially those with issues critical enough to impede project progress. Ms. Richard provided a list of unconstructed CWPPRA projects, pointing out the following: 10 projects are on schedule for construction, 8 are awaiting Phase II funding; 2 are delayed due to unspecified issues; and 1 which will (in these proceedings) be recommended for final de-activation. None were identified for “critical watch.”

Mr. Wingate asked for question from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

**Agenda Item #22 -- Additional Agenda Items**

Mr. Wingate added an impromptu item in order to acknowledge the services of Jernice Cheavis, who is resigning her role with the CWPPRA Program, a role she has fulfilled with dedication since 2015. Mr. Wingate extolled Mr. Cheavis’s many contributions, especially her most recent work in budget reconciliation spoken of previously in these proceedings. Each Task Force member spoke with high praise for Ms. Cheavis as well, with regards to her professionalism, financial leadership, work ethic; all expressed sincere appreciation.

**VII. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Wingate called for any additional public comments; none were proffered.

**VIII. CLOSING**

Mr. Inman was called upon to iterate the following schedule of meetings:

**A. Announcement: Date of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meeting (Brad Inman, USACE)**

The Technical Committee meeting will be held December 8, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

**B. Announcement: Scheduled Dates of Future Program Meetings**

December 8, 2022	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	TBD
January 2023	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	TBD

**C. Adjournment**

*Mr. Wingate called for a motion to adjourn today’s proceedings. Mr. Kacir made the motion, which Mr. Roy seconded. The motion carried without dissent and the meeting was adjourned at 12:42 p.m.*