

BREAUX ACT
Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

TASK FORCE MEETING
12 April 2006

Minutes

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonel Richard Wagenaar convened the 62nd meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:35 a.m. on April 12, 2006 at the Estuarine Fisheries and Habitat Center, Conference Room 119, 646 Cajundome Boulevard, Lafayette, LA. 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. Listed below are the six Task Force members:

Mr. Donald Gohmert, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Mr. Rick Hartman, substituting for Dr. Erik Zobrist, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Mr. Gerry Duszynski, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), substituting for Ms. Sidney Coffee, State of Louisiana, Governor's Office of Coastal Activities (GOCA)
Mr. Sam Hamilton, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Mr. William Honker, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
Colonel Richard Wagenaar, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

III. OPENING REMARKS

Colonel Wagenaar expressed his appreciation to Mr. Jimmy Johnston, USGS, for sponsoring the annual crawfish boil.

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 2006 TASK FORCE MEETING

Colonel Wagenaar called for a motion to adopt the minutes from the February 8, 2006 Task Force Meeting.

Mr. Sam Hamilton moved to adopt the minutes and Mr. Bill Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

V. TASK FORCE DECISIONS

A. Discussion/Decision: Review of the “CWPPRA Educational Document” (Agenda Item #4)

Colonel Wagenaar said the intent of the Educational Document is to reinforce the success and strengths of the CWPPRA program in coastal restoration. Task Force approval of the final document is required. Once approved, members of the Task Force and their respective agencies can distribute the Educational Document as they see fit.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the Task Force:

Mr. Sam Hamilton said that he appreciates the hard work put into the document and supports final approval by the Task Force. He added that the CWPPRA program is putting projects on the ground and the Educational Document is important to tell the story of this successful program.

Mr. Rick Hartman said that the document was readable, user-friendly, and can be used to educate people about the program. He recommended that the document be approved. Mr. Donald Gohmert and Mr. Bill Honker agreed. The Task Force previously approved \$40,000 from the Programmatic Assessment budget to print 10,000 copies of the Educational Document.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public:

Mr. Judge Edwards, member of the Governor’s Coastal Restoration Advisory Committee and Vermilion Parish Coastal Restoration Advisory Committee, stated that he had not seen the Educational Document and asked if southwest Louisiana was equally represented in the document. Mr. Edwards also asked about the direction of CWPPRA. Colonel Wagenaar replied that the Educational Document looks at south Louisiana comprehensively and does not favor one area over another. Mr. Rick Hartman replied that the document does not look at the future direction of CWPPRA. The Task Force has discussed developing a Programmatic Assessment to address the future of CWPPRA and integration into the Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) and Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration (LaCPR) programs. Mr. Edwards added that he would like to see CWPPRA’s budget doubled or tripled rather than see much happen with LCA and expressed praise for the CWPPRA program.

Dr. John Lopez, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, agreed with Mr. Judge Edwards. Dr. Lopez has reviewed the document and thinks that the information presented shows the importance and need for additional funding for CWPPRA.

Mr. Bob Schroeder, C.H. Fenstermaker and Associates, asked when the document would be available to the public. Colonel Wagenaar replied that upon a Task Force motion at this meeting, the hard copy document could be ready in six weeks with the web version available much sooner.

Mr. Sam Hamilton made a motion to approve the “CWPPRA Educational Document” and distribute it for public and agency use in providing information on the CWPPRA program. Mr. Bill Honker seconded and the motion was passed by the Task Force.

B. Discussion/Decision: Programmatic Assessment (Agenda Item #4)

Colonel Wagenaar stated that the Programmatic Assessment is required to look at past successes and failures as well as determine the future direction of CWPPRA. This could be challenging with other major efforts such as the LCA, LaCPR, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, and Louisiana Recovery Authority also taking place. He proposed that the Technical Committee draft a plan and timeline for the Programmatic Assessment.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the Task Force:

Mr. Sam Hamilton stated that he liked the Colonel’s approach of having the Technical Committee develop a plan to ensure that we don’t head in the wrong direction. Mr. Gerry Duszynski stated that the Colonel didn’t mention the Energy Bill in the list of “moving parts”, he agreed with Colonel Wagenaar’s approach to have the Technical Committee draft a plan and timeline since we should first see where everything settles.

Mr. Donald Gohmert stated that he thought a formal Programmatic Assessment document was a good idea to show others how both the program and completed projects are evaluated. He added that monitoring plans and adaptive management are currently used to assess the program every day. Mr. Rick Hartman confirmed that the Technical Committee was being asked to develop a plan for the development of a Programmatic Assessment. The committee would look at what would be in the plan and the various issues. Colonel Wagenaar agreed and stated that between now and the next Task Force meeting there may be some resolution of some of the issues currently before Congress.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public, however there were none.

Mr. Sam Hamilton made a motion that the Technical Committee would prepare a proposal (plan and schedule) for the development of a Programmatic Assessment for discussion at the next Task Force meeting. Mr. Bill Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

C. Discussion/Decision: PPL 16 Process (Agenda Item #5)

1. PPL 16 Process

Mr. Tom Podany said that the Technical Committee was asked to look at the potential of increasing the number of final PPL 16 projects selected for Phase I approval. Based on the available funding, the Technical Committee recommended that the current process of selecting up to four projects Phase I funding stand. The Task Force has the option to choose more than four projects.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to the Task Force for discussion:

Mr. Rick Hartman said that he agreed with the Technical Committee's recommendation and added that project construction is important. If more projects are selected for engineering and design, then there may not be enough funding available for construction. Mr. Bill Honker agreed with the four project limit as long as the Task Force has the option to fund more projects depending on the available budget.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public:

Mr. Judge Edwards, member of the Governor's Coastal Restoration Advisory Committee and Vermilion Parish Coastal Restoration Advisory Committee, asked if there was enough funding over the life of the program to fund all projects currently on the books. Ms. Julie LeBlanc confirmed that the total cost of all projects on PPLs 1-15 is \$1.84 billion; and the total projected funding into the program is \$2.4 billion. Mr. Edwards noted that one possible solution to the limited funding situation would be to allow the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) to construct CWPPRA projects. Mr. Edwards asked the Task Force to consider using CIAP funding to build CWPPRA projects. CWPPRA could then cover the operation and maintenance cost. Mr. Gerry Duszynski replied that it may be premature to engage the Task Force in this topic. Once the CIAP project list has been made available, then the Task Force can discuss how to integrate CWPPRA and CIAP.

Mr. Randy Moertle, Avery Island Inc. and McIlhenny Resources, said that he would like to see more projects selected for Phase I funding. He felt that if CWPPRA chose more projects for engineering and design, then it would be easier to roll Task Force approved projects through other funding sources. Mr. Rick Hartman noted that Mr. Moertle's comment was one of the reasons behind the consideration to increase the number of projects selected as candidates for the 16th Priority Project List.

Ms. Leslie Suazo, Director of Coastal Restoration for Terrebonne Parish, said that Terrebonne Parish will be submitting a list of ten projects, including the Houma Navigation Canal Lock project, to the State for CIAP. Of these ten projects, 4 have completed engineering and design phase, 4 are currently in engineering and design phase, and 2 are conceptual. She hopes that some CWPPRA projects can be taken to the next level through other funding sources such as CIAP or the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA). Ms. Suazo said that she also believes that the more projects we have in the pipeline the better.

Mr. Gerry Duszynski reminded the public that one of the reasons behind the cash flow process was to have a number of projects ready to go in case additional funds were available. There is a delicate balance to the number of projects that we should design and put on the shelf to wait for additional funding. At the same time, there may be false hope when many projects are designed but only a few are constructed.

Colonel Wagenaar proposed that the Technical Committee, in coordination with the State, research and discuss the CIAP issue and provide more information to the Task Force for

discussion. Mr. Bill Honker asked if CWPPRA would be open to providing operation and maintenance on projects that were built by some other funding source. He agreed with Colonel Wagenaar that the question should be referred to the Technical Committee. Mr. Rick Hartman stated that he believed the ball is in the State's court to make the request to the Technical Committee. Colonel Wagenaar thought it was worth some discussion at the Technical Committee level. He noted that some CIAP projects may even be constructed by individual parishes, so this would need to be considered as well.

Mr. Donald Gohmert said that the Task Force should give some sense of support for the idea of sharing in these projects, particularly CWPPRA projects, and look at all options. The Holly Beach project is a good demonstration that value can be added by sharing resources and money. He suggested that the Task Force should be very positive in saying yes to the State and parishes.

Colonel Wagenaar asked if there was a motion to accept the Technical Committee's recommendation to leave the number of projects selected for Phase I funding under PPL16 at four. Mr. Rick Hartman made the motion. Mr. Sam Hamilton seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Colonel Wagenaar framed a recommendation to ask the Technical Committee to discuss the potential for using CIAP or other funding sources to build CWPPRA projects and then using CWPPRA funds for O&M. The Technical Committee should plan to brief the Task Force at the next Task Force meeting on this discussion. After this Technical Committee briefing, the Task Force would be better prepared to respond to the issue if the State officially requests using CIAP funds to construct CWPPRA projects. Mr. Bill Honker made the motion and Mr. Donald Gohmert seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

2. Discussion of Demonstration Projects

Colonel Wagenaar said that there is currently a cap of \$2 million on the total annual amount that can be allocated to demonstration projects. The Task Force generally approves PPL candidates for Phase I engineering and design, leaving insufficient funds for demonstration projects. The Technical Committee was asked to look at this issue and make a recommendation to the Task Force.

Mr. Tom Podany stated that the Technical Committee projected that there would be about \$70 million (Federal) available in FY07 for Phase I and II funding and demonstration projects. This is \$11 million more than was available in FY06. The last demonstration project was funded under PPL 13. There needs to be some way of ensuring that the demonstration program is still viable. The Technical Committee recommended that the Task Force consider funding at least one demonstration project under PPL 16 at \$1 million or less, provided funds are available after funding Phase II construction and Phase I engineering and design.

Mr. Rick Hartman believed a way to show a strong commitment to funding demonstration projects would be to fund \$1 - \$2 million of demonstration projects prior to

selection and funding of Phases I and II projects. This would ensure that the money would be there for a demonstration program.

Mr. Sam Hamilton said that there is a backlog of projects and because emphasis has been on project construction, the demonstration program may have been unintentionally ignored. Each CWPPRA project is, in a way, a demonstration project. The strength of the CWPPRA program is being able to take these projects beyond the footprint of one particular project. It is important to have successful, high quality demonstration projects that can be used if any of these other funding sources become a reality. Mr. Hamilton advocated that up to \$2 million be dedicated to demonstration projects.

Mr. Donald Gohmert agreed with Mr. Hamilton that demonstration projects should be looked at up front because they allow for testing of new technology and techniques. Mr. Gohmert added that instead of limiting funding to \$2 million, the Task Force should select those demonstration projects that have the greatest merit in relation to the money available for project construction. Mr. Bill Honker agreed and felt that the Task Force should establish the goal of selecting at least one good quality demonstration project each year. Mr. Gerry Duszynski added that the Task Force should not be required to choose one each year, but rather let quality guide the selection process. Mr. Hamilton stated that there is a SOP of how we evaluate/screen demo projects and that is the filter through which we should run the projects.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public:

Dr. Jenneke Visser, Chairman of the CWPPRA Academic Advisory Group (AAG), thought it was a good idea to look at funding the demonstration projects first. Dr. Visser stated that she likes the evaluation process for the most part, but cites one problem; once projects come to the Environmental Work Group there is a large variation in how well developed the ideas are. There should be a more level playing ground before ideas compete against each other. Currently the nomination and approval are based on a one-page description of the demonstration project. In addition, it may be helpful if the demonstration projects had to go through design before being approved for implementation.

Mr. Judge Edwards, member of the Governor's Coastal Restoration Advisory Committee and Vermillion Parish Coastal Restoration Advisory Committee, disagreed with Dr. Visser, and stated that demonstration projects are about concepts and ideas and should not be too detail-oriented at the beginning. The ideas can be given to an agency and then to the Engineering or Environmental Work Group for further development. Mr. Edwards does not believe that demonstration project costs need to be \$1 million; in some cases there could be successful demonstration projects for \$100,000 or \$200,000. Demonstration projects add to the restoration tools we have to work with.

Colonel Wagenaar stated that CWPPRA is in the business of coastal restoration and protection. We should be careful about the balance between demonstration projects and viable projects that achieve something on the ground. He added, however, that those who submit demonstration projects must take some ownership of their projects and cannot place all their hopes in CWPPRA.

Colonel Wagenaar framed a recommendation that the Task Force consider funding, upon review, at least one credible demonstration project annually with estimates not to exceed \$2 million. Mr. Rick Hartman made the motion and Mr. Bill Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

VI. INFORMATION

A. Status of Breaux Act Program Funds and Projects (Agenda Item #3)

Ms. Gay Browning stated that the FY06 Planning Budget was approved for \$5.1 million, and there is a current surplus of \$320,570. Since inception of the program, the Construction Program has received a total of \$643 million in Federal funds. Obligations to date total \$576 million; total expenditures are \$278 million. There are 138 active projects: 67 have completed construction, 17 are under construction, and 54 have not yet started construction. Three projects were approved for Phase II funding in February 2006 for \$61.1 million with an Increment I funding approval of \$58.2 million. Four projects were approved for Phase I funding in February 2006 totaling \$4.6 million. Ten projects are scheduled to begin construction in FY06. Twenty three are scheduled to begin construction in FY07 (only four of which already have construction approval). The estimated \$58 million in Federal funds for FY06 has not been received.

Ms. Julie LeBlanc stated that the cumulative obligations since inception of the program total \$608.6 million. The current unobligated balance is \$167.1 million. Once the FY06 funding has been received, the unencumbered balance (Federal) will be \$135,000. Future projections estimate the program will receive a total of \$2.4 billion (Federal and non-Federal) through 2020 including \$5 million per year for planning. The total cost for all projects on PPLs 1-15 is \$1.84 billion. Approximately \$883 million is needed for construction and 20-years of operation and maintenance for the approved phase of all projects (total cost of PPLs 1-8 projects and the total cost for the approved phase of the projects on PPL9 and above).

B. Report: Report of the Technical Committee’s Selection of PPL 16 Candidate Projects (Agenda Item #6)

Mr. Tom Podany reported that the Technical Committee met on the March 15th and selected ten candidate projects out of nineteen nominees for further evaluation on PPL 16. The Technical Committee also recommended three out of six demonstration projects be evaluated in further detail. The list of candidate projects and demonstration candidate projects selected by the Technical Committee are listed below:

| Region | Basin | Type¹ | Project |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------------|---|
| 1 | Pontchartrain | MC | Alligator Bend Marsh Restoration and Shoreline Protection Project |
| 3 | Terrebonne | MC/TR | Madison Bay Marsh Creation and Terracing Project |
| 3 | Terrebonne | BI | West Belle Pass Barrier Headland Restoration Project |
| 2 | Barataria | SP/MC | Jean Lafitte Shoreline Protection and Marsh Creation Project |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|-------|---|
| 4 | Mermentau | MC | Southwest LA Gulf Shoreline Restoration Project |
| 2 | Breton Sound | MC/SP | Breton Landbridge Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection Project |
| 3 | Teche-Vermilion | SP | Vermilion Bay Shoreline Beach Restoration/Vegetative Planting and Maintenance Project |
| 1 | Pontchartrain | DV | Mississippi River Reintroduction at Violet (Violet Siphon Enlargement) and Marsh Creation Project |
| 2 | Barataria | MC | Grand Liard Ridge and Fringe Marsh Restoration Project |
| 3 | Atchafalaya | DV/MC | Deer Island Pass Re-Alignment Project |

¹ MC=marsh creation, TR=terracing, BI=barrier island, SP=shoreline protection, DV=freshwater diversion

| Demonstration Projects | |
|---|--|
| Enhancement of Barrier Island Vegetation Demo | |
| Nourishment of Permanently Flooded Cypress Swamps Through Dedicated Dredging Demo | |
| Sediment Containment System for Marsh Creation Demo | |

Mr. Sam Hamilton asked how the Technical Committee balanced the number of projects in all parts of the coastal zone. Mr. Tom Podany replied that the committee tries to balance things based on areas in most need. There are more nominees in those basins that have the greatest loss. There is a conscious effort to make sure that projects are not focused in one particular basin unless projects in that basin seem to be particularly good.

Mr. Gerry Duszynski asked when the Technical Committee was going to vote on the PPL 16 candidates. Voting would take place at the Technical Committee meeting on September 13, 2006. The Task Force will make a final decision, considering the Technical Committee's recommendation, on October 18, 2006.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public, however there were none.

C. Discussion: FY07 Planning Budget Development (Process, Size, Funding, etc) (Agenda Item #7)

Mr. Tom Podany asked the Task Force to provide guidance on the FY07 Planning Budget. The draft budget includes funding to complete PPL 16, initiation of PPL 17, program and project management, and project evaluation. Should the Technical Committee approach the 17th PPL process in the same manner/scope as PPL 16?

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the Task Force:

Mr. Rick Hartman replied that based on the comments from Mr. Judge Edwards earlier, and considering the PPL16 evaluation process was just recently altered, the PPL16 approach should stay the same and 10 candidates should be selected under PPL17.

Colonel Wagenaar noted that the committee should have an understanding of what is happening in the other programs (CIAP, LaCPR, LCA, etc.) so that we can integrate CWPPRA projects with these efforts. Colonel Wagenaar asked the Technical Committee to consider the most current information as the projects for 2007 move forward because the full effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita are not yet known.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public:

Dr. John Lopez, Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, agreed with Colonel Wagenaar's comment regarding integration. He suggested creating a central repository for mapping of projects from all programs so that at least the footprints of all the projects are available to everyone.

D. Report: Construction of New Cut Dune and Marsh Creation Project and the Delta Management at Fort St. Phillip Project (Agenda Item #8)

1. New Cut Dune and Marsh Creation Project

Mr. Chris Williams, LDNR, briefed the Task Force on the status of the New Cut Dune and Marsh Creation project (TE-37). Bids should be received by April 19, 2006 and construction should begin in June 2006. Colonel Wagenaar asked that the Task Force be notified as soon as bids are received and construction begins.

2. Delta Management at Fort St. Philip Project

Mr. Kevin Roy, USFWS, announced that a construction contract has been awarded for the Delta Management at Fort St. Philip project (BS-11). The LDNR should issue a notice to proceed in a couple of weeks. Mr. Roy added that construction will begin in May 2006 and will be completed this summer, within the 120-day construction window.

E. Report: Update on the Status of FEMA Claims for CWPPRA Projects (Agenda Item #9)

Mr. Garrett Broussard, LDNR, said that 151 CWPPRA, WRDA, and State projects have been assessed for FEMA claims. Projects were assessed according to structural damage and not wetland damage. Of the 151 projects, 19 were considered damaged. All 19 claims have been submitted to FEMA, three of which (Holly Beach Sand Management, Highway 384 and Pecan Island Freshwater Introduction, a State-only project) have been submitted to the regional office for final project worksheets. Mr. Broussard stated that the total amount associated with these projects ranges from \$20 – \$31 million. Most of the damage comes from the barrier islands, Holly Beach Sand Management and Cameron-Creole Maintenance.

Colonel Wagenaar asked if FEMA had given any indication as to what the outcome of the claim requests might be. Mr. Garrett Broussard replied that most of the projects fit into FEMA guidelines, but the FEMA representative is not making any promises. Colonel Wagenaar asked what other options could be explored in the event that FEMA does not come through. Mr. Broussard said that the majority of these projects have CWPPRA maintenance funds that could

be used, but not every project has enough available funding. Mr. Broussard added that FEMA has agreed to reimburse to some extent, but that these projects need to be corrected regardless.

Mr. Gerry Duszynski said that over the years, FEMA has done a good job of reimbursing for damage to structural components, but not necessarily with barrier islands projects. The FEMA representative is also working with a number of buildings in New Orleans, so the CWPPRA project claims may not be priority. Mr. Duszynski added that FEMA feels that CWPPRA has built projects without maintenance money set aside. If CWPPRA plans on doing maintenance for a project, then FEMA tends to look at funding to rebuild those particular projects more favorably.

Mr. Bill Honker asked how the process of getting these funds would work, provided FEMA approves the claims. Mr. Garrett Broussard replied that the money comes through the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness once rebuilding has begun. Mr. Gerry Duszynski added that rebuilding plans should be prepared once the authorization to rebuild has been given; and then request reimbursement from FEMA.

Colonel Wagenaar asked what the State's plan would be if FEMA does not come through with the funding. Do we continue with the efforts to rebuild, or do we write-off the damaged CWPPRA projects? Mr. Gerry Duszynski replied that once FEMA's decision comes through, then there would have to be a project-by-project discussion to determine the next steps.

Mr. Rick Hartman stated that LDNR could prepare an estimate and recommendation to reinvest CWPPRA money for those projects that have structures that have been rendered inoperable, once FEMA's position is known.

Colonel Wagenaar said that he doubts FEMA will come through with 100% of the money. If the CWPPRA projects are credible, viable, successful and fully operational, then why would the State not put this at the top of their list for CIAP funds? Colonel Wagenaar asked the Technical Committee to discuss using CWPPRA O&M funding for emergency repairs and report back at the next Task Force meeting. He asked the State to come back to the next Task Force meeting to provide a more comprehensive brief on the situation. Mr. Garrett Broussard said that the he should have all the answers from FEMA within a month.

Mr. Gerry Duszynski said that there are two different sets of projects: PPL 1-8 with 20 years of O&M funding in-hand and PPL 9 and above with rolling three-year amounts in hand. He believes that it is a good idea for the Technical Committee to have a discussion about how much should be invested to keep these projects going. Mr. Donald Gohmert suggested trying to define what O&M is in the framework of a natural disaster. We should not define maintenance to include repair for a natural disaster. Mr. Duszynski said that we must ask what the ramifications are if we do not get a project back to the operational condition. In some cases, there are signed landowner agreements to deal with.

Mr. Donald Gohmert said that every one of the areas with projects faired better than those areas without projects. We must keep pressing because it is an important issue.

Mr. Sam Hamilton asked if the decisions were made at the FEMA regional level or at headquarters. Mr. Garrett Broussard replied that it was at the regional level, and if FEMA disapproved of the projects, appeals could be made to FEMA's main office.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public:

Mr. Bob Schroeder, C.H. Fenstermaker and Associates, said he thought that someone should look into using Public Law 84-99 funds as a potential source of funding. Public Law 84-99 provides Federal funds for the repair of damaged Federal projects, particularly flood control. Mr. Tom Podany replied that this option was considered, but after initial review it was decided that CWPPRA would be ineligible for Public Law 8499 funding. This option could be revisited. Colonel Wagenaar asked that the Task Force get an opinion from the Corps lawyers about Public Law 84-99 funds.

F. Report: Public Outreach Committee Report (Agenda Item #10)

Ms. Gabrielle Bodin, CWPPRA Outreach Coordinator, said the latest issue of *WaterMarks*, Louisiana's Wetlands After the Storms, had been provided to Task Force members along with other materials from the Outreach Committee. Currently the Outreach Committee is getting requests for classroom sets to educate children about what is going on in Louisiana and has begun work of the next issue, Louisiana's Sportsman's Issue. Ms. Bodin said that the Outreach Committee is reprinting copies of past popular issues to use for conferences and teacher workshops. The Outreach Committee has been contacted by both the *Arizona Republic* and the television program, *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, to provide pictures and information regarding products produced by the Committee. Ms. Bodin added that the Outreach Committee has multiple educational CDs for various ages in the classroom. The Committee has distributed materials throughout Louisiana, most recently at the New Orleans Boat Show, where there were an estimated 15,400 visitors. Ms. Bodin thanked the USACE, NRCS, and the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program for assisting with that exhibit. Ms. Bodin introduced Ms. Heidi Hitter, the new Educational Coordinator.

VII. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS (Agenda Item #11)

Mr. Bill Honker presented an informal update on the Bayou Lafourche project. The 30 percent design status has been reached and the report has been sent to the Technical Committee. This project is a 50/50 cost share. The Task Force will have to make a decision on whether to approve funding beyond 30% design. Mr. Gerry Duszynski added that the State would like to keep things moving; a contractor is on board and the State will continue with design.

Colonel Wagenaar announced that there has not been any change in the status of the latest WRDA. He asked that the LaCPR managers from the State and the Corps provide a 30-minute update on the comprehensive project at the next quarterly Task Force meeting.

Colonel Wagenaar said the State would like to move the Myrtle Grove Diversion project to the LCA program. In order for this move to take place, the project must first be de-authorized under CWPPRA. The de-authorization process, as stated in the Standard Operating Procedures

(SOP), will take at least two Task Force meetings and require public notice. Colonel Wagenaar asked that the Task Force get the initial steps underway at the next Task Force meeting. Mr. Gerry Duszynski said that he had some questions about the procedure of the transition and the Task Force may want to hear about the specifics of the project before there is a discussion about de-authorization. Colonel Wagenaar agreed that an update on the Myrtle Grove project should be given at the next Task Force meeting.

Colonel Wagenaar asked Ms. Julie LeBlanc to briefly go over the de-authorization procedure. Mr. Hartman commented that the reason de-authorization requires two Task Force meetings is to allow the public to object or otherwise comment on the action before it is final. Ms. LeBlanc briefed the Task Force on the de-authorization process. According to the SOP, there are six steps for de-authorization of a project:

- 1) A Federal sponsor and the local sponsor agree that it is necessary to de-authorize a project, they submit a letter to the Technical Committee explaining the reasons for de-authorization,
- 2) The Technical Committee forwards the Task Force a recommendation concerning de-authorization,
- 3) Upon submittal of the request, all parties shall suspend future obligations and expenditures,
- 4) Upon receiving preliminary approval from the Task Force, letters are sent to the stakeholders and other relevant participants giving notice that a final decision for de-authorization will be made at the next Task Force meeting,
- 5) When the Task Force determines the project should be abandoned and no longer pursued, action is taken, and
- 6) Once the project is de-authorized it is characterized as de-authorized and closed.

Mr. Tom Podany added that one other option is that the local State sponsor or the lead Federal agency can go directly to the Task Force instead of the Technical Committee. Colonel Wagenaar said that his preference is to make sure that the Task Force is briefed on Myrtle Grove first. Mr. Bill Honker said that this would likely not be the last time CWPPRA would relinquish authority over a project and he suggested a standard procedure for transferring projects to another authority.

Colonel Wagenaar opened the floor to comments from the public:

Ms. Cynthia Duet, ARCADIS, asked if the de-authorization process was a CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedure requirement and if it could it be modified for those projects that are listed in LCA near-term plan. Colonel Wagenaar said one of solid foundation points of CWPPRA is public involvement. The Task Force should be cautious of chipping away at that foundation, but the Task Force should look at it as a transfer versus a closeout. Mr. Gerry Duszynski suggested that the Technical Committee work on some proposed language for project transfers which could be different from when the Task Force is abandoning a project concept. Mr. Rick Hartman stated that the whole reason to allow the locals to comment is to allow their views to be heard. Plaquemines Parish may not want this project to move to LCA, given the uncertainty of the funding status of LCA.

VIII. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Charlotte Randolph, Lafourche Parish President, asked if the Task Force had agreed to narrow the scope of the PPL 16 candidates to four. Colonel Wagenaar replied that the Task Force had agreed to follow the Technical Committee's recommendation to leave it at four, keeping in mind that the Task Force always has the option to increase it based on available funding.

Ms. Charlotte Randolph spoke on behalf of Parishes Against Coastal Erosion (PACE) and said that PACE was looking at CIAP funding for some projects currently in CWPPRA. Colonel Wagenaar replied that an action item was sent to the Technical Committee to address if CWPPRA would address O&M on projects built using CIAP funding.

IX. CLOSING

A. Dates and Locations of Upcoming CWPPRA Meetings

Colonel Wagenaar said he would like to once again, express his gratitude and kudos to the team that put the Educational Document together. Mr. Tom Podany announced that the next Task Force meeting is scheduled for July 12, 2006 at 9:30 a.m. in Baton Rouge.

B. Adjournment

Colonel Wagenaar adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:45 a.m.