

BREAUX ACT
Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

TASK FORCE MEETING
25 October 2007

Minutes

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonel Alvin Lee convened the 67th meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:35 a.m. on October 25, 2007 at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, District Assembly Room, 7400 Leake Avenue, New Orleans, 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.

Ms. Sidney Coffee, State of Louisiana, Governor's Office of Coastal Activities (GOCA)
Mr. Jim Boggs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), substituting for Mr. Sam Hamilton,
USFWS
Mr. Rick Hartman, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), substituting for Mr. Dan Farrow,
NMFS
Mr. William Honker, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA)
Colonel Alvin Lee, Chairman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)
Mr. Kevin Norton, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

III. OPENING REMARKS

Colonel Lee introduced himself as the new Task Force Chairman. Since becoming District Commander three months ago Colonel Lee has had the opportunity to hear different perspectives on the challenges communities are facing regarding hurricane protection and ecosystem restoration.

Colonel Lee presented Ms. Julie LeBlanc, Corps, with a certificate of commendation for exemplary service to the CWPPRA Program from August 2001 to July 2007 as Program Manager and Planning and Evaluation Subcommittee (P&E) Chair representing the Corps.

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 2007 TASK FORCE MEETING

Colonel Lee called for a motion to adopt the minutes from the June 27, 2007 Task Force Meeting.

Mr. Honker moved to adopt the minutes, and Mr. Hartman seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

V. TASK FORCE DECISIONS

A. Decision: FY08 Planning Budget and FY08 Outreach Budget (Agenda Item #4)

Ms. Melanie Goodman, Corps, presented the Technical Committee's recommendation to the Task Force for approval of the FY08 Planning Budget in the amount of \$4,531,534 and the CWPPRA Outreach Committee's recommendation to approve the FY08 Outreach Committee Budget in the amount of \$464,470.

Mr. Hartman moved to accept the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve the FY08 Planning Budget in the amount \$4,531,534 and the CWPPRA Outreach Committee's recommendation to approve the FY08 Outreach Committee Budget in the amount of \$464,470. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

B. Decision: Requests for Funding for Administrative Costs for those Projects Beyond Increment 1 Funding (Agenda Item #5)

Ms. Gay Browning, Corps, presented the Technical Committee's recommendation to the Task Force for funding approval in the amount of \$17,119 for the Corps administrative costs for those projects beyond Phase II, Increment 1 funding.

Mr. Norton moved to accept the Technical Committee's recommendation for funding approval in the amount of \$17,119 for the Corps administrative costs for those projects beyond Phase II, Increment 1 funding. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

C. Decision: Request for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Funding (Agenda Item #6)

Ms. Goodman presented the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve requests for total O&M funding required in FY08 in the amount of \$3,368,508 for (a) PPL 1-8 projects requesting funding increases totaling \$1,070,503 (Cameron-Creole Maintenance Project, Cameron-Creole Plugs Project, East Mud Lake Marsh Management Project, Highway 384 Hydrologic Restoration Project, and Black Bayou Hydrologic Restoration Project) and (b) the approval of requests for PPL 9+ projects requesting FY11 O&M funding in the total amount of \$2,298,005 (Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection Project and the Coastwide Nutria Control Program).

Colonel Lee opened the floor to comments and questions from the Task Force:

Mr. Hartman pointed out that the Technical Committee evaluated the projects' cost-effectiveness and determined that these projects are achieving expected benefits.

Colonel Lee clarified that the Coastwide Nutria Control Program is an operational project that pays for the harvesting of nutria at \$5 per tail. Colonel Lee also affirmed Mr. Honker's question that the funding request for the nutria program is for an additional year.

Mr. Honker moved to approve the Technical Committee's recommendations to fund the requests for total O&M funding required in FY08 in the amount of \$3,368,508 for (a) PPL 1-8 projects requesting funding increases totaling \$1,070,503 (Cameron-Creole Maintenance Project, Cameron-Creole Plugs Project, East Mud Lake Marsh Management Project, Highway 384 Hydrologic Restoration Project, and Black Bayou Hydrologic Restoration Project) and (b) FY11 O&M funding for PPL 9+ projects requesting a total amount of \$2,298,005 (Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection Project and the Coastwide Nutria Control Program). Mr. Hartman seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

D. Report/Decision: Request for FY11 Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS)-Wetlands Monitoring Funds, and FY11 Project Specific Monitoring Funds for Projects on PPLs 9+ (Agenda Item #7)

Mr. Rick Raynie, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR), presented a status report on the CRMS program. CRMS currently has land rights for 98 percent of the sites. Site characterizations are complete for 384 sites, 256 sites are fully constructed, 80 sites are partially constructed, and 46 sites have been approved for construction. Sixty new benchmarks have been installed and tied into the LDNR network. Thirty-two additional benchmarks are expected to be in place by the end of the year. Once the final benchmarks are installed, the elevation data, water levels, and marsh elevations will be relative to a single datum.

Additionally, the CRMS group has been collecting hydrographic data at 206 sites. Vegetation data has been sampled at 373 sites. In October 2007, surface elevation and accretion data was collected at 160 sites. By March 2008, 384 sites are expected to be sampled for surface elevation and accretion data. Soil properties have been collected at 154 sites. Coastwide aerial photography and satellite imagery was collected after the hurricanes in 2005. New imagery will be collected in the fall of 2008. Additionally, 64 operation, maintenance, and monitoring reports from 2004 and 2005 were finalized. Nineteen reports for 2007 will be completed this year.

Water levels for 120 sites, vegetation data for 218 sites (from 2006), and surface elevation data for 110 sites (from 2007) can be queried and downloaded from the LDNR SONRIS, USGS, and CWPPRA websites. Aerial imagery is currently available on the www.LaCoast.gov website. Land-water analyses for 355 sites are also available.

The CRMS group met with the Monitoring Workgroup in March 2007 to discuss the move from a rotational design to a fixed annual sampling design and the development of analytical tools. Teams were developed to focus on landscape, vegetation, hydrology, soils, and data delivery. The teams are creating an analytical framework and the tools to synthesize and report on the CRMS results at various scales. The CRMS group also met with each agency in July 2007 to ask for feedback to improve the CRMS tools. The CRMS group will prepare a report in the fall of 2008 on the first year of CRMS implementation.

With various parameters that represent collected data, the CRMS group is developing indices to represent critical processes occurring in the marsh. The tools will allow sites to be compared to other sites to help manage projects, develop ranges of values needed to sustain a marsh, and set goals for particular projects. CRMS can also help identify how a site compares to ideal conditions for a particular type of marsh. The CRMS website is being redesigned to allow better access and provide easier navigation to the data. A Google-type application will be used to display information for each site and to access the data immediately. These tools are expected to be available within the next three to six months.

Mr. Raynie requested that the Task Force approve the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve the CRMS FY11 monitoring request of \$4,4697,824.

Ms. Goodman stated that the Technical Committee was presented this information at the June 27th meeting and recommends the approval of the requests for (a) project specific FY11 monitoring funding for projects on PPLs 9+ in the amount of \$237,591 for the following projects: GIWW- Perry Ridge West Bank Stabilization (CS-30), Grand-White Lakes Landbridge Protection (ME-19), and Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) and (b) CRMS FY11 monitoring funds in the amount of \$4,697,824.

Colonel Lee opened the floor to comments and questions from the Task Force:

Mr. Honker asked if the money requested for the nutria program was for monitoring. Mr. Quin Kinler, NRCS, replied that there are two elements to the monitoring budget estimates: the cost of the helicopter survey to evaluate coastwide damage and the cost to prepare the annual report. They are asking for two years of funding because of an oversight last year in which FY08 funding was not requested. The current request is for FY08 and FY09 funding.

Mr. Boggs moved to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve the requests for (a) project specific FY11 monitoring funding for projects on PPLs 9+ in the amount of \$237,591 for the following projects: GIWW- Perry Ridge West Bank Stabilization (CS-30), Grand-White Lakes Landbridge Protection (ME-19), and Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) and (b) CRMS FY11 monitoring funds in the amount of \$4,697,824. Mr. Norton seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

E. Decision: 17th Priority Project List (Agenda Item #8)

Ms. Goodman announced that the Technical Committee recommends the approval of four construction projects (Bohemia Mississippi River Reintroduction Project, Caernarvon Outfall Management/Lake Lery Shoreline Protection Project, West Pointe a la Hache Marsh Creation Project, and Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation Project) and to either revote to choose one demonstration project or approve both demonstration projects (Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef Demonstration Project and the Sediment Containment System for Marsh Creation Demonstration Project).

Mr. Kevin Roy, USFWS, presented an overview of the project nomination process. Approximately 70 projects were nominated at the Regional Planning Team (RPT) meetings in January 2007. In February, the RPTs voted to select 20 nominee projects and six demonstration projects. The Technical Committee selected 10 candidate projects and three demonstration projects in March. The Environmental and Engineering Workgroups conducted site visits, determined project boundaries, performed Wetland Value Assessments (WVA), reviewed design and cost estimates, developed prioritization scores, and determined fully funded costs for engineering and design, construction, and 20 years of monitoring and O&M for each project. Mr. Roy summarized the 10 PPL 17 candidate projects and the three PPL 17 candidate demonstration projects.

A. Region 1 – Pontchartrain Basin

i. Irish Bayou Wetland Creation and Shoreline Protection Project. Project features include installing 17,000 feet of rock dike to protect the Lake Pontchartrain shoreline and hydraulically dredging material from a nearby borrow site to create 121 acres of marsh. The project will benefit 191 acres over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$19.6 million.

B. Region 2 – Barataria, Breton Sound, and Mississippi River Delta Basins

i. Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation Project. Project features include creating a 17-acre bottomland hardwood ridge along Bayou Dupont and hydraulically dredging sediment from the Mississippi River to create 184 acres of marsh and nourish 103 acres of marsh. The project will benefit approximately 187 acres of marsh and ridge over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$21.6 million.

ii. Bayou Thunder Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection Project. Project features include extending the current breakwater system to protect an additional 1,500 feet of bay shoreline and hydraulically dredging sediment to create 175 acres of marsh and nourish an additional 173 acres of marsh. The project will benefit approximately 163 acres of marsh over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$20.9 million.

iii. Caernarvon Outfall Management/Lake Lery Shoreline Restoration Project. Project features include diverting approximately 10 percent of the Caernarvon outfall flow into the marshes north of Lake Lery and hydraulically dredging sediment to create/nourish 396 acres of marsh and restore 32,000 feet of the southern Lake Lery shoreline. The project will benefit approximately 652 acres of marsh over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$25.1 million.

iv. Bohemia Mississippi River Reintroduction Project. Project features include construction of an uncontrolled diversion with a maximum flow of 10,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) to reintroduce Mississippi River water into the bayou and the beneficial use of material excavated for the conveyance channel to create marsh. The project will benefit approximately 635 acres of marsh over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$6.9 million.

v. West Pointe a la Hache Marsh Creation Project. Project features include hydraulically dredging and pumping sediment from the Mississippi River to create and nourish 352 acres of marsh. The project will benefit approximately 203 acres of marsh over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$16.1 million.

vi. Pass a Loutre Restoration Project. Project features include dredging approximately 6.5 miles of the Pass a Loutre channel to restore flow to historic levels and using the dredged sediment to create 465 acres of marsh and construct 12 crevasses on the Pass a Loutre Wildlife Management Area. The project will benefit approximately 1,305 acres of marsh over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$26.6 million.

C. Region 3 – Atchafalaya, Tech/Vermilion, and Terrebonne Basins

i. Southeast Lake Boudreaux Marsh Creation and Terracing Project. Project features include dredging sediment from Lake Boudreaux to create approximately 257 acres of marsh and nourish 39 acres of marsh and constructing approximately 53,450 linear feet of terraces. The project will benefit approximately 231 acres of marsh over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$20.4 million.

ii. Beach and Back Barrier Marsh Restoration – East Island Project. Project features include hydraulically dredging sediment to create 160 acres of marsh on the bay side of East Island and beach nourishment. The project will benefit approximately 92 acres of barrier island habitats over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$19.5 million.

D. Region 4 – Calcasieu/Sabine and Mermentau Basins

i. East Cove Marsh Creation Project. The main project feature includes the beneficial use of dredge material from the Calcasieu Ship Channel to create marsh on the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. Approximately 509 acres of marsh would be created/protected over the 20-year project life. The fully funded cost estimate is \$18.4 million.

Mr. Roy also presented the three demonstration candidate projects for PPL 17.

A. Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef Project Demonstration. Demonstration features include evaluating the effectiveness of an Oysterbreak, a stackable light-weight structure, in reducing wave energy along the Gulf shoreline for use in areas where soils have poor load-bearing capacity and testing the effectiveness of the Oysterbreak as an oyster reef. The fully funded cost estimate is \$1.9 million.

B. Positive Displacement Pump Solution Project Demonstration. Demonstration features include determining the ability of a newly-patented type of pump to deliver a high-volume sediment slurry over long distances. The fully funded cost estimate is \$3.1 million.

C. Sediment Containment System for Marsh Creation Project Demonstration. Demonstration features include evaluating the effectiveness of a geo-textile fabric for use as a sediment fence to increase sediment retention within the outfall area of a diversion and to contain dredge material. The fully funded cost estimate is \$1.2 million.

Colonel Lee opened the floor to comments and questions from the Task Force:

Colonel Lee asked Mr. Roy how the demonstration projects were evaluated. Mr. Roy replied that the Technical Committee voted on the three candidate demonstration projects at the September 12th meeting. There was a tie between the top two projects: the Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef Demonstration Project and the Sediment Containment System for Marsh Creation Demonstration Project.

Mr. Honker raised a concern that CWPPRA could be potentially using demonstration project funding to create a market for one specific company that has a patent on the technology used in the demonstration projects. Mr. Tom Podany, Corps, replied that this issue has been discussed in the past, but it was determined that it is valuable to test new techniques as demonstration projects. The Engineering Workgroup is aware of similar technologies and has evaluated that the technologies presented are the best candidates.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Irish Bayou Wetland Creation and Shoreline Protection Project. No public comments were made.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation Project:

Ms. Marnie Winter, Jefferson Parish, expressed her support for the Bayou Dupont Project because the river sediments would restore the ridge and natural hydrology. The project would also protect the west bank of Jefferson, Plaquemines, and Orleans Parishes.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Bayou Thunder Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection Project. No public comments were made.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Caernarvon Outfall Management/Lake Lery Shoreline Restoration Project. No public comments were made.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Bohemia Mississippi River Reintroduction Project. No public comments were made.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the West Pointe a la Hache Marsh Creation Project:

Mr. Honker noted that the NRCS would likely be the Federal sponsor for this project.

Mr. Kerry St. Pé, Director of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program (BTNEP), supports all of the sediment diversion projects.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Pass a Loutre Restoration Project:

Mr. Mike Carloss, Program Manager of Coastal Operations for the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), discussed land loss in the Mississippi River Delta. Between 18 and 20 square miles of land loss occurred after Hurricane Katrina, which is a significant part of this project. Mr. Carloss pointed out that Pass a Loutre has been filling up since the 1980s. Maintaining the channel may be an issue due to lack of funds. Mr. Carloss hopes to work with the Corps to find other sources of funding. The project should still be implemented, even if the Corp is not involved. Mr. Carloss said that CWPPRA has a good system for evaluating and prioritizing projects. This project ranked very high and if the ranking system were being used appropriately, this project should be toward the top. Three agencies did not vote for the Pass a Loutre Project and three agencies rated the project very high. If one more agency had voted for this project, it would have been selected. Mr. Carloss hopes that this project will be a candidate project next year and encourages the three agencies who did not vote in favor of the project to get in touch with the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries or the Corps.

Mr. Ken Litzenberger, USFWS, is the project leader for the Delta National Wildlife Refuge to the north of Pass a Loutre. He hopes the Task Force will consider this project because it is a big “bang for your buck” in terms of acreage versus cost.

Mr. Billy Nungesser, Plaquemines Parish President, echoed Mr. Carloss’ comments on the ranking system. The cost-benefit of this project is favorable and Plaquemines Parish is in full support. Mr. Nungesser also expressed his disappointment that LDNR did not vote for this project. This project is crucial to bringing the marsh and wildlife back to the mouth of the river.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Boudreaux Marsh Creation and Terracing Project. No public comments were made.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Beach and Back Barrier Marsh Restoration Project. No public comments were made.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the East Cove Marsh Creation Project. No public comments were made.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for public comments on the Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef:

Mr. Guthrie Perry, Program Manager at the Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge with LDWF, noted that shoreline erosion is a major concern in the refuge. Mr. Perry hopes that a Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) project will be put in place at the refuge next year. He has observed the implementation of a test scenario of a bio-engineered oyster reef and would like to see a test of the technique along the refuge shoreline.

Colonel Lee asked if the Technical Committee has recommended a location for the demonstration project. Ms. Goodman responded that the location has not been decided yet. If the project were to be selected, the PPL Project Delivery Team would consider cost, land rights issues, infrastructure, and appropriate conditions to evaluate potential locations.

Mr. Randy Moertle, representing Avery Island Incorporated McIlhenny Company, stated that Vermilion Bay is experiencing a problem with the destruction of historic oyster reefs by oyster fishermen. Mr. Moertle is extremely concerned and would like to see someone address the problem. Mr. Hartman responded that it may be a regulatory issue. Ms. Goodman stated that she would follow up with Mr. Judge Edwards and the Corps Regulatory Division on this issue.

Colonel Lee opened the floor to public comments on the Sediment Containment System Demonstration Project. No public comments were made.

In response to Colonel Lee opening the floor to comments from the Technical Committee, Mr. Darryl Clark, USFWS, added that the Federal and State sponsors or any demonstration projects have the freedom to shop around for similar techniques to be used; they are not tied to a certain proprietary techniques.

Ms. Goodman reiterated that the Task Force authorized the Technical Committee to make a recommendation for up to four projects on PPL 17 and to authorize demonstration projects up to \$2 million. There was a tie between the Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef and the Sediment Containment System Demonstration Projects. The Task Force may choose to select one project or move forward with both. No demonstration projects were selected during PPLs 14 and 15, and one demonstration project was selected last year. The total cost for the two demonstration projects is over \$3 million, which exceeds the recommended amount. Mr. Hartman added that in the past three years, CWPPRA has only approved one demonstration project. On behalf of the Technical Committee, Mr. Hartman recommends that both demonstration projects be funded because they both have merit.

Mr. Hartman moved to approve parts (a) and (b) as one motion. Ms. Coffee seconded. Mr. Honker clarified the motion as the approval of the Technical Committee's recommendation for (a) Phase I funding approval in the amount of \$7,660,313 for four candidate projects: Bohemia Mississippi River Reintroduction Project (\$1,395,699), Caernarvon Outfall Management/Lake Lery Shoreline Protection Project (\$2,665,993), West Pointe a la Hache Marsh Creation Project, (\$1,620,740), and Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation Project (\$2,013,881) and (b) Phase I funding approval in the amount of \$3,145,165 for two demonstration projects: Bio-Engineered Oyster Reef Demonstration Project (\$1,981,822) and Sediment Containment System for Marsh Creation Demonstration Project (\$1,163,343). The motion was passed by the Task Force.

F. Decision: Project Deauthorization Requests (Agenda Item #9)

Ms. Goodman stated that the P&E Subcommittee evaluated the status of unconstructed projects to either move them forward or recommend deauthorization. Ms. Goodman described why each of the four projects was recommended for deauthorization by the P&E Subcommittee.

The Mississippi River Reintroduction into Bayou Lafourche Project has uncertain benefits and the State wants to pursue this project independently. The Labranche Wetlands Terracing, Planting, and Shoreline Protection Project lacks landowner support to be implemented. The Opportunistic Use of Bonnet Carre Spillway Project has a level of uncertainty

of benefits and a lack of support for the flow of water through the Bonnet Carre from the Mississippi River into Lake Pontchartrain. The Myrtle Grove Siphon Project is being replaced by another Myrtle Grove Diversion Project. Two projects have already returned funds and two would return over \$4 million to the Construction Program. The Technical Committee recommends that all four projects be deauthorized as advised by the P&E Subcommittee.

Colonel Lee opened the floor to comments from the public:

Mr. Oneil Malbrough, representing Jefferson Parish, questioned the deauthorization of the Myrtle Grove Siphon Project, which originally came from a project proposed by Jefferson Parish. The CWPPRA project proposed a larger diversion (4,000 to 10,000 cfs). The Parish is in support of the largest sediment diversion in Myrtle Grove as it is a part of the Parish's Master Plan. It is difficult to support a deauthorization without the commitment of the other Myrtle Grove project. Mr. Malbrough asked the Task Force to hold off on deauthorizing the project until the other Myrtle Grove project moves forward. Mr. Podany responded that the Myrtle Grove Sediment Diversion Project is likely to be transferred to the LCA once the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) passes. LDNR is almost complete with the hydrologic modeling, which will help to evaluate the benefits. Work is being performed as the WRDA authorization and possible transition from CWPPRA to LCA approaches. Colonel Lee added that the WRDA bill was submitted to the President two days ago and he has 10 days to act. Mr. Gerry Duszynski, LDNR, confirmed that LDNR will continue to work on the Myrtle Grove Sediment Diversion Project until the transition occurs and that the State and Federal agencies are committed to the larger Myrtle Grove Project. Mr. Malbrough replied that it has been 12 years since the project was first approved in PPL 5. The community needs to see a project move forward quickly.

Mr. Kerry St. Pé, BTNEP Director, said that originally the Myrtle Grove project proposed a 50,000 cfs diversion. Now the latest plans show only a 15,000 cfs diversion, which he supports. However, he has heard of plans to return to a much larger diversion, which Mr. St. Pé believes many people would not support.

Mr. Hartman stated that NMFS is a Federal sponsor for the Myrtle Grove Project and he can confirm that the funds for engineering, design, and construction have been returned. While Mr. Hartman understands Jefferson Parish's concerns, he believes the project is no longer feasible to continue with CWPPRA funds. In practicality, there is no benefit to keep the Myrtle Grove Siphon Project on the books. Mr. Honker echoed Mr. Hartman's stance that deauthorization is appropriate.

Mr. Norton moved to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation to deauthorize the Mississippi River Reintroduction into Bayou Lafourche Project; Labranche Wetlands Terracing, Planting and Shoreline Projection Project; Opportunistic Use of Bonnet Carre Spillway Project; and the Myrtle Grove Siphon Project. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

G. Decision: Project Transfer Request: Bayou Lamoque Freshwater Diversion Project (BS-13) (Agenda Item #10)

Ms. Goodman presented the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve the request to transfer the Bayou Lamoque Project from the CWPPRA Program to CIAP. The State requested the transfer because the project is a Tier 1 project in the State's Draft CIAP Plan and the State is currently designing the project to be executed under that plan. The Corps and EPA, who are the Federal sponsors, concur with the transfer.

Mr. Hartman moved to approve the project transfer request for the Bayou Lamoque Freshwater Diversion Project from the CWPPRA Program to the CIAP Program. Ms. Coffee seconded. The motion was approved by the Task Force.

H. Decision: Raccoon Island Shoreline Protection/Marsh Creation Project (TE-48) (Agenda Item #11)

Mr. Norton stated that NRCS and LDNR are requesting approval to transfer \$319,255 from the construction budget of Phase A (breakwaters) to the Engineering and Design (E&D) budget of Phase B (marsh creation). Construction funds for Phase B will be requested at the next Task Force meeting.

Colonel Lee opened the floor to questions and comments from the Task Force:

Mr. Honker asked if this is one or two projects. Ms. Goodman confirmed that this is a single project with two components that are funded individually. She also stated that the request to move funds follows the Standard Operating Procedure for transferring funds from one part of a project to another.

Mr. Boggs moved to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation to transfer \$319,255 from the Phase A budget to Phase B for the Raccoon Island Shoreline Protection/Marsh Creation Project. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

I. Decision: GIWW Bank Restoration of Critical Areas Project (TE-43) (Agenda Item #12)

Mr. Britt Paul, NRCS, stated that NRCS and LDNR are requesting approval for a change in project scope for the GIWW Bank Restoration of Critical Areas Project (TE-43). Part of the project was submitted for Phase II approval last year. When it did not receive funding from CWPPRA, the project was selected as a CIAP project. The change in scope removes the CIAP portion and keeps the remainder as a CWPPRA project. Mr. Hartman asked if part of the original scope was removed because it was not deemed necessary. Mr. Paul responded that the project was scaled down.

Mr. Honker moved to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation to change the project scope for the GIWW Bank Restoration of Critical Areas Project. Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

J. Discussion/Decision: Impacts of Converting PPL 1-8 to Cash Flow (Agenda Item #14)

Ms. Goodman briefed the Task Force on the impacts of converting PPL 1-8 projects to cash flow. These projects were fully funded through 20 years of O&M and are approved in phases (Phase I for E&D and Phase II for construction and O&M). The Technical Committee determined that the maximum amount of funds that could potentially become available was \$31.6 million from O&M, \$21.5 million from construction, and \$4.8 million from monitoring. It would take time to move funds from their previous obligations so they could be unencumbered to use for another project. Also, the Technical Committee determined that the cost share and land rights agreements balanced with the amount that would be freed up for construction was not worth the effort. Ms. Goodman stated that the Technical Committee does not recommend converting PPL 1-8 projects to cash flow.

Colonel Lee opened the floor to questions and comments from the Task Force:

Mr. Hartman advised that the \$21.5 million in construction funds should be addressed within the next year if any of the projects become deauthorized. Mr. Honker asked about the construction approval for the five projects included in the \$21.5 million. Ms. Goodman responded that the projects have construction funding, but not approval. If non-cash flow projects are deauthorized, funds would be returned to the Construction Program.

Mr. Norton moved to accept the Technical Committee's recommendation to not convert PPL 1 through 8 projects to cash flow. Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was approved by the Task Force.

VI. INFORMATION

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

Ms. Gay Browning, Corps, stated that the Task Force approved \$5.2 million for the FY07 Planning Budget on October 18, 2006. The Technical Committee is recommending approval of \$5 million for the FY08 Planning Budget, which would result in a surplus of \$1.2 million. To date, \$714 million in Federal funds have been received into the Construction Program. Total obligations are \$628 million, and total expenditures are \$369 million. There are 143 active projects: 74 have completed construction, 17 are currently under construction, and 52 have not yet started construction. Twenty-two projects are scheduled to begin construction in FY08. As of October 11, 2007, the unencumbered balance in the Construction Program is negative \$532,204. The FY08 Federal funding for the Construction Program is estimated to be \$76.3 million. Including the non-Federal cost share, the total FY08 funds are estimated to be \$89.2 million. The total for all funding requests on the agenda is \$14.9 million. There are \$89.2 million in available funding (Federal and non-Federal) prior to any Task Force decisions.

Ms. Goodman stated that the current unobligated balance is \$152.7 million. Currently, there are \$860 million in set aside funds. There is \$678,432 in available funds, which includes a surplus of \$1,181,636 in the Planning Program and the \$532,204 shortfall in the Construction Program. If the Technical Committee's funding recommendations were approved today (including FY08 anticipated funding), there would be \$74.2 million in the Construction Program to approve new Phase II projects. If the demonstration projects are not approved there would be

\$77.4 million in the Construction Program. The total program funding (Federal and non-Federal) with previous authority (FY92 to FY09) is \$1.2 billion. Based on the Department of Interior projections through FY16 and the straight-line projections for FY17-20, the total program funding is estimated to be \$2.45 billion, which includes \$5 million per year for the Planning Program. The total cost for all projects on PPLs 1-16, including the Planning Program, is \$1.95 billion. The total program funds (Federal and non-Federal) over the life of the program (FY92-FY20) are \$2,449.8 million, while the 20 years of funding required for projects that have already been approved for construction is \$1,113.5 million. The remaining balance of \$1,336.3 million indicates that the program has not been over-committed.

Mr. Honker asked for an estimate for total construction costs for the 13 cash flow projects that have not yet been approved for Phase II funding. Ms. Goodman replied that no estimates have been compiled yet, but she expects construction costs to be approximately \$250 million.

B. Report: Status of Unconstructed Projects (Agenda Item # 13)

Ms. Goodman stated that the P&E Subcommittee was tasked to evaluate the status of unconstructed CWPPRA projects that have been experiencing project delays. This report fulfills the Technical Committee's recommendation to brief the Task Force biannually on unconstructed projects that have missed project milestones. Colonel Wagenaar requested a briefing on five projects: West Point a la Hache Outfall Management Project, Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project, Periodic Introduction of Sediment and Nutrients at Selected Diversion Sites Project, Mississippi River Sediment Trap Project, and Benny's Bay Diversion Project.

1. West Point a la Hache Outfall Management Project (BA-04c), PPL-3, NRCS – Mr. Paul described that the project was originally an outfall management project, but after some modeling and evaluation it was deemed that those features were not feasible. The NRCS and LDNR are looking to change the scope to modify the siphon to achieve some benefits. A new WVA and revised cost estimate will be submitted for review. A request for a scope change should occur later this spring.

2. Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project (CS-09), PPL-2, NRCS – Mr. Paul stated that a new WVA was conducted and sent out for review. If the project is approved, construction should begin in the spring.

3. Periodic Introduction of Sediment and Nutrients at Selected Diversion Sites Demonstration Project (MR-11), PPL-9, USACE – Ms. Joanie Lanier, Corps, stated that this demonstration site is associated with an existing freshwater diversion project to combine the benefits of sediment nourishment with freshwater nourishment. Ms. Lanier explained the proposed location of the project is limited to an existing freshwater diversion site. Davis Pond was considered, but was ruled out because introduced sediment would hinder the purpose of the freshwater diversion. An issue at Caernarvon is that it is very costly to get sediment on-site. Revised cost estimates are being prepared to see if the project is feasible with the limited funds available. Mr. Honker asked how much money is currently in the budget for this project. Ms. Lanier responded that about \$1.5 or \$2 million is in the budget and that she gave the cost engineers a constraint of about \$750,000. There is an opportunity to possibly receive some dredge material from the New

Orleans Harbor Project. Ms. Goodman added that this is a scale issue because there are limited funds to test the project in addition to funds needed for engineering and design.

Mr. Honker recommended that the budget be re-evaluated since the original demonstration project was approved nearly eight years ago.

Mr. Hartman questioned whether this project still meets the definition of a demonstration project as this technology does not appear to be feasible.

Ms. Goodman added that the Corps is reviewing the feasibility of the project at this scale and comparing the benefits to the costs. Ultimately the recommendation will probably be to deauthorize the project. A report documenting the findings of this project will be completed by mid-November. The report will make a recommendation for what scale is needed for this demonstration project. Mr. Harman noted that it would be valuable to know the costs for a similar project.

Mr. Clark stated that demonstration projects may request additional funds. Also, benefits do not need to be calculated for demonstration projects. The project is constructed and then the effectiveness is evaluated. Mr. Clark recommended that the project status be reported to the Technical Committee before a final decision is made.

4. Mississippi River Sediment Trap Project (MR-12), PPL-12, USACE – Ms. Lanier stated that the goal of this project is to develop a cost-effective plan to beneficially use maintenance dredging on the Mississippi River with a sediment trap that is 4-miles long, 1,500 feet wide, and 65 feet deep. There has been some debate on where to place the sediment trap. Maintenance operations occur downriver, which makes this location more cost-effective. There are oyster conflicts and other impediments further upriver that would increase costs. While the proposed location of the sediment trap may not be the best, it still has merit as it will provide a way to get material to the Barataria Basin.

Mr. Honker stated that he likes this project in concept and hopes to see it tried if it is deemed feasible and affordable.

5. Benney's Bay Diversion Project (MR-13), PPL-10, USACE – Ms. Goodman reported that this project has been completed to the 95 percent design review level. A major issue is that this project would induce shoaling in the navigation channel of the Mississippi River, and there is a debate about who should be responsible for removing the sediment that enters the Mississippi as a result of this project. At the last Task Force Meeting Colonel Wagenaar indicated that this is a real issue and someone needs to pay for it. Ms. Goodman believes his statement was misinterpreted to indicate that the Corps would pay for the removal of the sediment through the Operations Division. However, any increase to the O&M budget to maintain the Mississippi River needs to be congressionally mandated. CWPPRA would then be responsible for the cost to remove the excess material. Another discussion with the State needs to occur to determine whether or not to move forward with the 95 percent design.

In response to Colonel Lee opening the floor to comments from the public, Mr. St. Pé, BTNEP, commented on the Mississippi River Sediment Trap Project. Mr. St. Pé believes this project was conceived to answer several questions: What is our ability to harvest sediment from the river, can we use the sediment beneficially, and can we expect the sediment to be replenished? Mr. St. Pé thought the project would be located further upstream to benefit the Empire and Buras regions. It was not predetermined that the sediment would be shipped to the barrier islands. Mr. St. Pé believes the concept of this project is good, but it has not moved forward because the proposed location is controversial. BTNEP would support a change in project location. Mr. St. Pé also noted that the oyster and land rights issues are valid for any project, but the State and LDNR have instituted measures to deal with those issues.

Colonel Lee opened the floor for comments and questions from the Task Force:

Colonel Lee asked for clarification for the locations of the sediment traps. Ms. Lanier responded that the sediment trap was proposed to be located at the Head of Passes because that is where the river starts to widen and the sediment starts to drop out. The engineers who prepared the report stated that this location was the best of three alternatives.

Mr. Norton was encouraged to see the Task Force exercise a level of accountability as they review unconstructed projects.

Colonel Lee expressed interest in hearing the Task Force members' opinions on new locations for the Mississippi River Sediment Trap Project. Mr. Honker agreed with Mr. St. Pé that if the sediment trap were located further upriver, there would be more accessible areas for the sediment. While the Head of Passes area may be best from a sediment trap standpoint, a location further upstream might actually be more effective from a beneficial use standpoint. Ms. Coffee agreed with Mr. Honker and added that she wants to see a location that gives the most benefit to the system, not just the most convenience. Colonel Lee reported that LDNR Secretary Scott Angelle mentioned that LDNR has some opportunities for beneficial use of dredging materials.

Ms. Goodman reiterated that delayed and unconstructed projects will be reviewed and presented to the Task Force twice a year (spring and fall). Colonel Lee stated that these five projects should be reviewed at every meeting. Mr. Norton advised that other projects should be reviewed at each meeting, not just the five mentioned today. Mr. Hartman stated that the Technical Committee chose the spring and fall meetings for the unconstructed projects briefings because those meetings have less agenda items. Ms. Goodman contributed that the projects presented today are the most critical of the delayed projects.

In a discussion on the Benney's Bay Diversion Project, Mr. Boggs stated that the USFWS fully supports the project and encouraged the Corps and LDNR to work through the challenges and construct the project. Colonel Lee asked how much sediment is expected to increase due to the project. Ms. Goodman replied that approximately 500,000 cubic yards of sediment are projected to accumulate every two years in the navigation channel, which would cost approximately \$6.5 million for removal. CWPPRA would pay the full cost to dredge the

material, except for a stretch where the Corps normally dredges. Along that stretch, CWPPRA would only pay the incremental increase for the extra material associated with the project.

Colonel Lee summarized that the status of unconstructed projects will be reviewed twice a year (spring and fall) and additional critical projects should be added to the list for discussion.

The Corps will re-evaluate the Mississippi River Sediment Trap Project location and provide additional information at the next Task Force meeting.

Mr. Norton will present the status of the Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project and the West Point a la Hache Outfall Management Project at the next Task Force Meeting.

Mr. Honker requested that the Task Force make a decision on the Periodic Introduction of Sediment and Nutrients at Selected Diversion Sites Demonstration Project at the next meeting

Ms. Coffee requested that the Benney's Bay Project be included on the agenda for the next Task Force meeting.

C. Report: Public Outreach Committee Quarterly Report (Agenda Item # 15)

Mr. André Williams, CWPPRA Public Outreach Staff, presented the Public Outreach Committee Quarterly Report. Mr. Williams extended an invitation to the October 26th dedication to highlight six CWPPRA projects in St. Mary and Terrebonne Parishes. Tours of the New Cut Dune, West Lake Boudreaux, and the Raccoon Island projects will be held after the dedication ceremony.

VII. Additional Agenda Items

No additional agenda items were presented.

VIII. Request for Public Comments

No additional public comments were made.

IX. CLOSING

A. Announcement: Dates of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meetings

Ms. Goodman announced that the next Technical Committee meeting will be held January 16, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. at the LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Louisiana Room, 2000 Quail Dr., Baton Rouge, LA. Phase II approval for projects eligible for construction will occur at that meeting. On February 13, 2008 the Task Force will make final decisions on the Phase II project approvals. PPL 18 projects will be reviewed during the four RPT meetings on February 19-21, 2008.

B. Adjournment

Colonel Lee adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.