

BREAUX ACT
Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

TASK FORCE MEETING
13 October 2010

Minutes

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonel Edward Fleming convened the 76th meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:45 a.m. on October 13, 2010, at the Lake Charles Civic Center, 900 Lake Shore Drive, Lake Charles, 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 who were present.

Mr. Jim Boggs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Mr. Christopher Doley, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Mr. Garrett Graves, State of Louisiana, Governor's Office of Coastal Activities (GOCA)
Colonel Edward Fleming, Chairman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Mr. Kevin Norton, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Mr. William Honker, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

III. OPENING REMARKS

Colonel Fleming welcomed everyone and asked the Task Force members to introduce themselves. Mr. Honker welcomed Colonel Fleming to the Task Force.

Colonel Fleming reviewed the agenda items and then opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Mr. Honker made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Mr. Norton seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 23, 2010 TASK FORCE MEETING

Colonel Fleming presented the meeting minutes and then opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming called for a motion to adopt the minutes from the June 23, 2010, Task Force meeting.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to adopt the minutes from the June 23, 2010, Task Force meeting. Mr. Norton seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

V. TASK FORCE DECISIONS

A. Agenda Item #9 – Report/Decision: De-authorization of the Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project

Mr. Thomas Holden, USACE, presented the Technical Committee’s recommendation for final de-authorization of the Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project, as requested by NRCS and the Louisiana Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration (OCPR). The Task Force initiated procedures to de-authorize the Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project on October 28, 2009. Notice of the pending de-authorization was sent on August 23, 2010, to the U.S. Congress, the State House and Senate Natural Resources Committee chairs, and to adjacent landowners. The notice was also disseminated via the Breaux Act *Newsflash*. There were no objections to de-authorization.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Norton made a motion to approve the Technical Committee’s recommendation for final de-authorization of the Brown Lake Hydrologic Restoration Project. Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

B. Agenda Item #10 - Decision: Fiscal Year (FY) 11 Planning Budget Approval, including the Project Priority List (PPL) 21 Process, and Presentation of FY11 Outreach Budget

a. Ms. Melanie Goodman, USACE, gave a brief overview of the Technical Committee’s recommendation for the proposed PPL 21 Planning Process Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). The recommended process includes selecting three nominees in the Barataria, Terrebonne, and Pontchartrain Basins, and two nominees in all other basins, except Atchafalaya, where only one nominee would be selected. If only one project is presented at the Regional Planning Team (RPT) meeting for the Mississippi River Delta Basin, then an additional nominee would be selected for the Breton Sound Basin. The process will be similar to previous years with the exception of including a special selection process for qualified coast-wide projects so that such projects do not have to compete with basin specific projects. There was discussion regarding eliminating the fall public PPL reporting meetings, but based on comments from the public, the Technical Committee no longer recommends eliminating these meetings.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation for the PPL 21 Planning Process Standard Operating Procedures as presented. Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

b. Ms. Susan Bergeron, CWPPRA Outreach, presented the CWPPRA Outreach Committee's requested FY11 Outreach Committee budget in the amount of \$452,400. The budget has been vetted through the Planning and Evaluation (P&E) Subcommittee and the Technical Committee. The website costs have been moved into the project construction budgets and \$15,000 was added for video and photo activities. The budget also includes \$6,600 for GOCA outreach activities.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the CWPPRA Outreach Committee budget for FY11 in the amount of \$452,400. Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

c. Mr. Holden presented the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve the FY11 Planning Program budget, which includes the Outreach Committee budget above, in the total amount of \$5,052,673. The P&E Subcommittee did its best to keep the FY11 Planning budget under \$5 million, as instructed, but some expenditures required an adjustment pushing the budget over \$5 million.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation for the FY11 Planning Program budget, which includes the Outreach Committee Budget of \$452,400, in the total amount of \$5,052,673. Mr. Norton seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Mr. Holden presented the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve the following change to the CWPPRA SOP:

Section 6a. (1) (c):

The responsibilities of the Technical Committee include the annual review of the outreach budget and the Public Outreach Committee’s strategic plan. These efforts should be undertaken concurrent with the annual planning budget in the spring and summer Technical Committee and Task Force meetings, respectively.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force.

Mr. Norton asked what the summer meeting meant. Ms. Goodman responded that the second quarterly Technical Committee meeting is in the spring and the Task Force meeting is usually in June, which is in the summer. Mr. Norton proposed that the presented SOP change be modified to strike the word “summer” and just say spring since both meetings are technically in the spring.

Mr. Norton made a motion to revise the Technical Committee’s recommended change to the CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures by striking the word “summer”. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to approve the Technical Committee’s recommended change to the CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures, as modified by the previous motion. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

C. Agenda Item #11 –Decision: Annual Request for Incremental Funding for FY13 Administrative Costs for Cash Flow Projects

Ms. Gay Browning, USACE, presented the Technical Committee’s recommendation to approve the request for funding in the amount of \$37,190 for administrative costs for cash flow projects beyond Increment 1.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Norton made a motion to approve the Technical Committee’s recommendation to approve the request for FY13 incremental funding for administrative costs for cash flow projects in the amount of \$37,190. Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

D. Agenda Item #12 –Decision: Request for FY13 Project Specific Monitoring Funds for Cash Flow Projects, and FY13 Coast-wide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) Wetlands Monitoring Funds

Colonel Fleming reviewed the Technical Committee's recommendation for approval of the following FY13 incremental funding requests:

a. PPL 9+ Project specific FY13 monitoring funding totaling \$156,685:

- Coast-wide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b), PPL-11, NRCS Incremental funding in the amount of \$117,442.
- Grand-White Lakes Landbridge Protection (ME-19), PPL-10, USFWS Incremental funding in the amount of \$20,808.
- Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection, Phase 3 (BA-27c), PPL-9, NRCS Incremental funding in the amount of \$18,435.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation for PPL 9+ project specific FY13 monitoring funding for the Coast-wide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) in the amount of \$117,442; for the Grand-White Lakes Landbridge Protection Project (ME-19) in the amount of \$20,808; and for the Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection, Phase 3 (BA-27c) in the amount of \$18,435. Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

b. Colonel Fleming reviewed the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve CRMS FY13 monitoring funds in the amount of \$10,504,462.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation for CRMS FY13 monitoring funds in the amount of \$10,504,462. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

c. Colonel Fleming reviewed the Technical Committee's recommendation for approval of the following non-cash flow project monitoring budget increase and incremental funding:

- East Mud Lake Marsh Management (CS-20), PPL 2, NRCS, budget increase in the amount of \$405,938 and FY13 incremental funding in the amount of \$275,866, which includes \$89,211 to cover previously expended funds.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation for the East Mud Lake Marsh Management (CS-20) budget increase in the amount of \$405,938 and FY13 incremental funding in the amount of \$275,866, which includes \$89,211 to cover previously expended funds. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

E. Agenda Item #13 –Decision: Request for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Incremental Funding and Budget Increases

Mr. Holden presented the Technical Committee's recommendations to approve requests for total FY13 incremental O&M funding in the amount of \$2,661,498. The Technical Committee deferred making a recommendation on a request for an O&M budget increase of \$3,349,711 and incremental funding increase of \$3,356,181 for the Lake Borgne Shoreline Protection Project (PO-30) until additional engineering is conducted to demonstrate a cost-effective design.

- a. Mr. Holden reviewed the PPL 9+ projects requesting approval for FY13 incremental funding in the total amount of \$2,650,974 for the following projects:
- Four Mile Canal Sediment Trapping (TV-18), PPL-9, NMFS
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A only): \$1,000
 - Pass Chaland to Grand Bayou Pass Barrier Shoreline Restoration (BA-35), PPL-11, NMFS
Incremental funding amount (FY11 – FY13) (Federal S&A only): \$6,665
 - Coast-wide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b), PPL-11, NRCS
Incremental funding amount: \$2,643,309

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation for FY13 incremental funding for the Four Mile Canal Sediment Trapping Project (TV-18) in the amount of \$1,000; for the Pass Chaland to Grand Bayou Pass Barrier Shoreline Restoration Project (BA-35) in the amount of \$6,665; and for the Coast-wide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) in the amount of \$2,643,309. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

- b. Mr. Holden reviewed the PPL 1-8 projects requesting approval for FY13 incremental funding in the total amount of \$10,524 for the following projects:

- Point au Fer Canal Plugs (TE-22), PPL-2, NMFS
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A only): \$2,205
- Lake Chapeau Sediment Input & Hydrologic Restoration (TE-26), PPL-3, NMFS
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A only): \$2,319
- Black Bayou Hydrologic Restoration (CS-27), PPL-6, NMFS
Incremental funding amount (FY11 – FY13) (Federal S&A only): \$6,000

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the PPL 1-8 projects FY13 incremental funding for the Point au Fer Canal Plugs Project (TE-22) in the amount of \$2,205; for the Lake Chapeau Sediment Input & Hydrologic Restoration Project (TE-26) in the amount of \$2,319; and for the Black Bayou Hydrologic Restoration Project (CS-27) in the amount of \$6,000. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

F. Agenda Item #14 –Decision: Request for Change in Scope and Construction Funding for the PPL 6 – North Lake Boudreaux Freshwater Introduction and Hydrologic Management Project (TE-32a)

The USFWS and the State Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, through the OCPD, are requesting Task Force approval for a change in scope and requested Phase II construction funding for the North Lake Boudreaux project to change the project features from benefitting 416 acres to 267 acres and to increase the estimated fully funded project cost 110%, from \$12,289,133 to \$25,766,765.

Mr. Ronny Paille, USFWS, gave an overview of the project. The project is a freshwater introduction to bring water from the Houma Navigation Canal to the Upper Lake Boudreaux marshes. Based on comments regarding liabilities, the plan is to separate out the forced drainage from the CWPPRA project features, with Terrebonne Parish handling the forced drainage. CWPPRA will cover the construction costs associated with the CWPPRA water-level rise impacts. The Parish levee needs to be seven feet high, but the CWPPRA project only requires a levee 1.5 feet high. CWPPRA will contribute approximately 21.4% of the costs based on the CWPPRA share of impacts associated with the levee height.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force.

Mr. Honker asked about the status of the Parish’s plans for the levee. Mr. Paille answered that initially, the project was to be done all together and has since been separated; therefore, the 95% design report includes the levee design and is mostly completed. The Parish used its own funding to pay the contractor, which is the same contractor that CWPPRA is using.

Mr. Boggs thanked Mr. Paille for his presentation and then proposed a motion that the Task Force hold additional construction funds in reserve, including three years of O&M, for this project and that the Technical Committee make a recommendation to the Task Force within one week (October 15th) and that the Task Force then take a vote within two weeks (October 22nd).

Mr. Graves reminded everyone that this project has been in the works since approximately 1997. He added that his office has received letters in support of this project from Senators Vitter and Landrieu in the past week. He understands concerns that the proper protocol be followed, but reminded everyone that it is important to move forward on the project. He thanked everyone for putting together a solution and noted that the possible collaboration with the Parish for this project is the type of partnering that CWPPRA should be focusing on. He added that the Gulf oil spill will yield another funding stream for possible incorporation into coastal restoration efforts. He pointed out that CWPPRA is one of the few venues with all of the players at the table and emphasized that it will be critical for future success to yield these new types of partnerships.

Mr. Doley echoed Mr. Graves' comments. He added that there is a need for CWPPRA to show flexibility in partnering with other entities. He asked about the funding to be set aside in the motion being proposed. Mr. Boggs responded that the motion anticipated the requested dollar amount, but the dollar amount should be finalized based on feedback from the Technical Committee.

Colonel Fleming stated that no large funding decisions are going to be made in the next two weeks so the delayed vote will not have any detrimental impacts.

Mr. Honker stated that he believes this motion is a good way to move forward since there has been a flurry of activity on this project in last couple of weeks. Going through this process is appropriate and is also a means of tidying up some loose ends.

Colonel Fleming added that this project has been identified by CWPPRA, the USACE, and the Parish as a good project and needs to move forward to construction.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Al Levron, Terrebonne Parish Manager, spoke in support of this project and stated that Terrebonne Parish stands ready to move forward upon a favorable vote.

Ms. Leslie Suazo, Terrebonne Parish Government, asked Mr. Honker for clarifications on the outstanding issues to be resolved. Mr. Honker replied that there are several items that need clarification, that the EPA feels this is a good project and that in terms of the CWPPRA process, there have to be some contingencies in place in the event that something happens to the Parish levee project, as well as other technical questions that the State is clarifying. He added that this delayed vote will allow time to resolve these concerns.

Mr. Graves asked about issues raised regarding the O&M costs associated with this project and the hold harmless agreement. Mr. Levron responded that Terrebonne Parish currently

has a cooperative agreement with the State to indemnify the State and would accept indemnification of other agencies as needed. He added that the O&M will be handled by the Parish and that there should be no further cost to CWPPRA after construction.

Mr. Graves asked if this project would create any problematic precedent regarding third party agreements. Mr. Holden responded that they are working through a couple of points right now, but that in general, such issues are deferred to the Federal agency sponsor. Mr. Graves added that CWPPRA needs to be flexible in setting a path forward to have such agreements with parishes and other entities, needs to have a process in place for such agreements, and needs a degree of comfort with such partnerships.

Mr. Holden clarified that the funding is \$25,766,765 which is an increase from the previously approved funding amount for this project.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to hold additional construction funds in reserve, including three years of O&M, for the North Lake Boudreaux Project (TE-32a) and to hold a Technical Committee vote regarding recommendation within one week (October 15th) and then to hold a Task Force vote within one week of the vote (October 22nd). Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

G. Agenda Item #15 –Decision: Request for a Change in the Project Scope for the Bayou Dupont Ridge Creation and Marsh Restoration Project (BA-48) Due to an Estimated Budget Increase

Colonel Fleming presented the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve the request for a scope change to increase the estimated total project budget to not exceed \$42,500,000, so the project may proceed to 95% design. The NMFS and OCPR requested a change in the project scope due to an estimated budget increase over 89%. The Bayou Dupont Ridge Creation and Marsh Restoration Project was approved during PPL 17. The original approved total project cost is \$21,626,767. While the project area and features are largely the same, increases in the estimated unit dredge and mobilization costs have resulted in a Phase II estimate that is significantly higher than the Phase I fully funded cost estimate. While the estimated fully funded cost and updated wetland value assessment (WVA) are pending Engineering and Environmental Work Group review, NMFS and OCPR wish to proceed to 95% design in late October 2010 and proceed to a Phase II funding request for January 2011.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Boggs made a motion to approve the Technical Committee's recommendation for the request for a scope change to increase the estimated total project budget to not exceed \$42,500,000, so the Bayou Dupont Ridge Creation and Marsh Restoration Project (BA-48) may proceed to the 95% design. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

H. Agenda Item #16 –Decision: Request for Approval to Initiate De-authorization of the South Pecan Island Freshwater Introduction Project (ME-23)

Mr. Holden presented the Technical Committee’s recommendation to approve the initial de-authorization of the South Pecan Island Freshwater Introduction Project (ME-23). The OCP, the local sponsor, and NMFS, the Federal sponsor, requested approval to initiate the de-authorization of the South Pecan Island Freshwater Introduction Project (ME-23) based on a significant decrease in the project’s cost effectiveness.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

Mr. Norton made a motion to approve the request for initial de-authorization of the South Pecan Island Freshwater Introduction Project (ME-23). Mr. Boggs seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

VI. INFORMATION

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

Ms. Browning briefed the Task Force on the status of CWPPRA accounts in the Planning and Construction Programs and overall available and projected funding in the CWPPRA Program. The current approved Planning Program budget, as of October 2009, is \$5,400,736 and will increase by \$21,450 to \$5,422,186. There is \$540,804 currently available and with a clean up of 2009 funds, another \$80,000 is expected to be put back into the Program. FY10 extends until March 2011. There are still unexpended funds in FY10, which will be cleaned up by March 2011, at which time, FY11 funds will be in place.

Ms. Browning then discussed the current Construction Program funding. Total Federal funds into the program from 1992 to 2010 are \$962.2 million. The FY10 Federal funds received total \$79.6 million with another \$79.6 anticipated for FY11. Total obligations to date are \$919.5 million. Total expenditures to date, both Federal and non-Federal, are \$633.7 million. FY10 obligations were \$93.2 million and expenditures were \$109 million, which is the highest expenditures in one year since the Program began. At present, there are 147 active projects, 87 completed construction, 16 under construction, and 44 not yet started construction. Thirteen projects were scheduled to begin construction in FY10, seven of these projects began in FY10 and six were moved to different FYs. Nine projects will start in FY11. Of these nine, one is a non-cash flow with funding in place, one is a non-cash flow that may need additional funds, five are cash flow projects with already approved Phase II funding, and two cash flow projects will be requesting Phase II funds in January 2011.

The current unencumbered Federal funding balance as of today is negative \$11.8 million, based on prior approvals. The FY11 Federal funding is estimated at \$79.6 million and there is a potential return of \$22 million, including Federal and non-Federal.

The available Federal plus non-Federal funding in the Construction Program, including the potential return of \$22 million and the estimated FY11 Federal and non-Federal funding prior to today, is estimated to be \$90 million. If today's requests of \$10.3 million are approved, then there will be an estimated \$79.7 million going into the January 2011 Phase I and Phase II approvals for PPL 20.

The total CWPPRA Program funding, Federal and non-Federal, from 1992 to 2010, with the previous authority, is \$1.2 billion, including the \$5 million per year planning budget. Based on Department of Interior projections through FY20, the total Program is estimated at \$2 billion 387.7 million. The total cost, at present, if all projects were constructed at the current estimates, for all projects on PPL 1 to 19, including planning, is \$2 billion 381.3 million. Based on the latest forecast in June, for the first time in three or four years, the Program shows as in the positive by approximately \$30 million.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force.

Mr. Doley asked if the anticipated return of \$22 million is from one project or several and asked about the timing for the returned funds. Ms. Browning answered that it is less than ten projects and that the timeframe depends on the project since some projects have grants that need to be closed and some have final invoicing. She added that all of the agencies are trying to clean their projects up.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

B. Agenda Item #4 – Report: Outreach Committee Quarterly Report

Ms. Bergeron presented the quarterly Public Outreach Committee Report. Since the last quarterly report, there have been approximately 4.7 million hits on the CWPPRA website. The Outreach Committee has partnered with the LSU Sea Grant to create the Louisiana Unified Coastal Community Calendar (LUCC) which is an interactive website calendar that gives information summaries, maps, etc. The Outreach Committee is also working on agency partnerships so that agencies can directly post to the calendar in an effort to avoid scheduling conflicts. The calendar is undergoing a beta test right now. Ms. Bergeron thanked those agencies participating and encouraged future use of the calendar.

The Outreach Committee had a math and science partnership project for a one-day coastal restoration training for math and science teachers from around the State. Ms. Bergeron explained that the feedback from this event was very positive. The Outreach Committee also participated in National Hunting and Fishing Day, at which they highlighted the nutria control program. Tomorrow is the 20th anniversary event to be held at the Cameron Creole National Wildlife Refuge. Everyone is invited and the event will highlight thirteen projects. Ms. Bergeron

explained that the 20th Anniversary Portfolio “Partners in Restoration” is currently being printed, but that a spiral bound version will be given out tomorrow.

Since the Gulf oil spill, the Outreach Committee has fielded some interesting inquiries and is working more with legislative delegates to make sure they are informed of CWPPRA happenings. Additionally, the oil spill has gotten more people interested in coastal restoration. Ms. Bergeron expressed appreciation at Task Force member efforts in the media to discuss coastal restoration. She added that the *Newsflash* is the only remaining item without the CWPPRA logo branding.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force.

Mr. Norton stated that NRCS had a tent near the CWPPRA tent at the National Hunting and Fishing Day event and expressed praise for Ms. Bergeron’s good work at promoting CWPPRA there. He asked if a Task Force vote would be necessary to change the email distribution description from the Breaux Act *Newsflash* to the CWPPRA logo since branding for CWPPRA is important. Ms. Goodman answered that the Task Force could make a decision, but that usually the agency representatives on the Outreach Committee would discuss this and then perhaps an informal blessing could be given by the Technical Committee and Task Force.

Mr. Honker and Mr. Boggs supported Mr. Norton’s suggestion to change the email communication branding. Colonel Fleming suggested the Outreach Committee investigate and provide additional information before the Task Force makes a final decision.

Ms. Goodman suggested soliciting public input on this matter since the email distribution list affects the public. Ms. Bergeron stated that the logo on the email distribution can easily be changed and added that she will discuss this proposal with the Outreach Committee and that the Task Force members can express their opinions on the matter through their Outreach Committee representatives.

Ms. Bergeron added that the Outreach Committee is working on developing videos and that the Committee needs an update from project managers when they have projects beginning construction.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public.

Ms. Carolyn Woosley, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, asked if the Outreach Committee could emphasize in its materials that the Louisiana coast consists of two coastal plains, the Deltaic and Chenier Plains, so that the public could become aware of the importance of the Chenier Plain since it is only one of three on Earth. She added that marketing this information is important because both are unique, of strategic importance to the Nation, and are endangered.

C. Agenda Item #5 – Report: Final Report of the Monitoring Work Group Review of CRMS and the overall CWPPRA Monitoring Program

Dr. John Foret, NMFS, provided a status on the programmatic review of CRMS and the overall CWPPRA Monitoring Program. The report in the Task Force binders is marked “draft” because not all comments have been received from the agencies; therefore, the report is not yet finalized. He asked that comments be sent in as soon as possible. The report incorporates the four action items that the team was asked to evaluate.

Action Item 1 - Determine if there is potential for programmatic cost savings by reducing the frequency of some monitoring efforts, reducing the number of stations, etc. The Work Group found that statistically, monitoring efforts and stations should not be reduced. He noted that while hydrologic data is the most expensive data to acquire, it is also the most called upon for use. The main cost is getting the crew to the site, so that once they are at the site, there is little additional cost to gathering extra data. The State is looking into cost saving measures, such as using in house technicians to collect elevation data versus contracting those efforts out. He gave an overview of the per unit per year cost to gather the five major criteria of data, in addition to overall costs spent on CRMS and total monitoring programs, including project specific monitoring. CRMS is only funded until 2013, but by extrapolating to 2019, cost estimates were determined. The extrapolated cost for CRMS and project specific monitoring spent to 2019 is \$151 million. Using 8.8% and assuming no CRMS conducted, the estimate to 2019 is \$121 to \$160 million. The current expenditures for monitoring are at 5.9% of project costs, which is below the estimated 8.8%, but in the future, it is expected to approach the 8.8%. He also clarified that at the last Technical Committee meeting, he incorrectly stated that the State’s monitoring contribution as \$7 million, when the correct number is \$3.5 million.

Action Item 2 - Evaluate alternatives to improve monitoring input into decision-making. By CWPPRA project, determine if current data collection is adequate to determine if the project has met, or is on a trajectory toward meeting, its goals so that the decision making process can be an informed one. Where data collection is inadequate for that purpose, identify and evaluate alternatives to remedy that shortcoming. The Work Group met with Federal project sponsors. Few recommendations represented any overall significant increase in monitoring and most dealt with project specific monitoring. Based on a summary of the agency feedback, approximately 78% of projects are being monitored adequately. If a project’s life exceeded the funding limitation, then the project was ranked as inadequate. Therefore, each agency will have to determine if they wish to request more money for monitoring to meet these shortcomings.

Action Item 3 - Identify potential partners and level of support for sharing of CRMS funding responsibility. OCPD and the Louisiana Applied Coastal Engineering and Science (LACES) Program has pledged \$3.5 million for FY09 to FY13. Louisiana Coastal Area (LCA) has six projects in the monitoring-adaptive monitoring phase which could represent a ten year supplement to the CWPPRA Monitoring Program. Additionally, the LCA Science and Technology Program (S&T) is working on a cost share agreement with the State for as much as \$1 million per year for up to ten years toward coastal monitoring efforts.

Action Item 4 - Evaluate existing level of use by various agencies. The Work Group found a wide margin in how the data is being used and in the audience of users, which range from agencies to landowners. Agencies use the data mostly for planning and engineering and design for new restoration projects while academics and consultants are the largest user group.

Additionally, the scientific community is using CRMS data to support research to further coastal restoration science. CWPPRA agencies represented 11% of the 2009 use and USGS came in at 12.5%.

Dr. Foret will send an email later this week to solicit comments from the agencies to ensure that all comments are incorporated into the final report. He does not plan to make another presentation on this report since no major changes are anticipated as a result of any outstanding comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

D. Agenda Item #6 – Report: Status of the PPL 1 – West Bay Sediment Diversion Project (MR-03)

Mr. Travis Creel, USACE, provided a brief history and status update on the West Bay Work Plan and Closure Plan. CWPPRA is required to dredge three reaches of the Pilottown Anchorage Area: the upper, middle, and lower reaches. The upper reach is dredged to negative 48 feet, the middle reach to negative 44 feet, and the lower reach to negative 41 feet. In August 2009, the upper reach was dredged to negative 48 feet and it is still cleaned out. The middle reach was dredged to negative 44 feet and has shoaled in to above 41 feet, but is still pretty well clean. The lower reach was dredged to negative 41 feet and is already shoaled in to 30 to 40 feet. The dredging agreement includes three feet of over-depth to reduce the frequency of dredging so the current depths are still within the agreed depths.

The West Bay Diversion and dredge sites were created in 2004. There were dredge events in 2006 and in 2009. Over the years, approximately \$20 million has been spent and approximately 500 acres have been created. There is currently a twelve month approved work plan to investigate the shoaling in the Anchorage Area. The first six month report was presented in January and the second six month report is underway.

The closure plan has a \$400,000 budget and the closure options currently are estimated to cost \$10 to \$20 million. They are currently getting a contract in place to gather geotechnical data for the closure alternatives and potential use of the Anchorage Area dredge material. There are currently three closure options: 1) semi-circle rock dike closure, 2) pumped in earthen ring closure, and 3) pumped in earthen plug closure. The first option would require tying a rock dike into the banks with geotextile under the rock. The second option would be the same configuration as the first, but would use material from the Anchorage Area. The third option would fill in the cut with material from the Anchorage Area and then tie to the banks and existing foreshore dike.

The Closure Plan was intended to be implemented during this low water mark, but additional real estate and environmental requirements have caused delays. A channel easement

and disposal easement currently exist, but the earthen or rock closures would require tying into the banks and therefore additional real estate to the north and south would be needed. The earthen plug would require modification to the channel easement to include a disposal easement.

The initial six-month effort has been stretched to nine months due to delays related to the Gulf oil spill. The final report will be given to the Technical Committee and Task Force in June 2011. Two data collection trips were conducted instead of the intended three trips because the final data effort would not have happened before the report was due. Low and high water data trips were conducted.

The anticipated schedule is to gather geotechnical data, develop a new supplemental Environmental Assessment and then conduct real estate acquisition in the summer of 2011. Closure construction would then happen in fall or winter of 2011.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. There were no comments.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public. There were no comments.

E. Agenda Item #7 – Report: Status of Unconstructed Projects

The P&E Subcommittee reported on the status of unconstructed CWPPRA projects that have been experiencing project delays. The P&E Subcommittee also reported on milestones established for several projects.

- a. BA-38 Barataria Barrier Shoreline, Pelican Island to Chalant Pass (CU2) Status Update
- b. TV-19 Weeks Bay Marsh Creation and Shore Protection/Commercial Canal Freshwater Redirection Status Update
- c. ME-21a Grand Lake Shoreline Protection, Tebo Point Update

Mr. Creel reported that for the Weeks Bay Project, Iberia Parish has received \$100,000 from the U.S. Minerals Management Service (MMS) and that Vermilion Parish is waiting for its \$100,000 grant. It is anticipated that a draft feasibility report with alternatives will be ready for CWPPRA review sometime in the winter. Another update will be provided at the December Technical Committee meeting.

Mr. Holden reported that for the Grand Lake, Tebo Point Project, Mr. Chad Courville was given a status update before today's meeting. Some progress has been made between the council for both sides, the State and USACE, on the indemnification issue. The deviation report on the indemnification is being finalized and then final comments will be passed to the State at the end of this week. Once the State's comments are received back, the report will be passed up the vertical USACE ladder and then the project can advance to Phase I and then possibly to Phase II, at which time they can determine how this agreement may apply to other projects.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force.

Mr. Norton asked for a timeline on the Tebo Point Project. Mr. Holden responded that they anticipate six months to resolve this issue and hope to sign a cost share agreement then, but that it really depends on the higher USACE levels.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Chad Courville, Miami Corporation, thanked the USACE and the State. He pointed out that this project has been drawn out for a long time and that at some point, an alternate means of constructing this project may need to be sought. He suggested a six-month time limit on resolving the cost share agreement issues, at which time alternatives be considered.

F. Agenda Item #8 – Report: Coast-wide Nutria Control Program (CNCP) – Annual Report

Mr. Edmond Mouton, with the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, presented the annual report on the (LA-03b) CNCP. The program is funded by CWPPRA and has been ongoing for eight years. The sponsors are NRCS and OCPR. The project area extends south of I-10 from Texas to Baton Rouge and south of I-12 from Baton Rouge to Slidell and from Slidell to Mississippi south of I-10. The program goal is to remove 400,000 nutria per year via a payment incentive for tails returned.

There is an application process to be part of the program and then upon approval, a card is issued which gives an area where the individual is allowed to trap. The total number of tails collected for the 2009-2010 season was 445,963 and \$2,229,815 was paid out. There were 306 participants in the program and it was the first season where the 400,000 mark was surpassed.

The 2010 Vegetative Damage Survey yielded 8,475 acres of nutria damage coast-wide which is a 58 percent decrease from 2009 (20,333 acres). The 2009-2010 season had 11 total damage sites which were all classified as minor damage. The nine recovered sites in 2010 had a combined acreage of 1,914. Between 2008 and 2010, the damage has become less severe and covered less acreage.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force.

Mr. Boggs congratulated Mr. Mouton for eight successful years. Mr. Honker agreed and asked what happens to the collected tails. Mr. Mouton replied that they are bagged, labeled and then taken to a biohazard waste management facility for proper disposal.

Ms. Goodman asked where the carcasses go. Mr. Mouton replied that some are used for fur, but not many due to depressed fur prices. He said that participants have three options: to throw the carcass into a waterway, place them in woody vegetation, or place them in a marsh. He added that flyovers are conducted during the trapping season to ensure that carcasses are not left out. Participants are also not allowed to use lead ammunition so as not to impact bald eagles.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public.

Ms. Woosley asked why there is so little nutria trapping activity in the southwestern part of the State, within the Chenier Plain, why the map does not extend this far, and asked if there is an economic opportunity for Cameron Parish here. Mr. Mouton answered that population numbers in the southwest part of the State have been drastically reduced over time. He added that damage is not being seen in this area and that even though the flyovers extend from Texas to Mississippi, there has been no significant damage in that area and therefore it is not shown on the damage map. Ms. Woosley asked if there has been a rise in muskrat populations back to pre-nutria levels. Mr. Mouton answered that there has been some in localized areas and that they have also seen some increased feral swine impacts.

VII. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS

There were no additional agenda items.

VIII. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no additional public comments.

IX. CLOSING

A. Announcement: Dates of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meetings

Ms. Goodman announced that the CWPPRA 20th Anniversary Fall Dedication Ceremony will be held October 14, 2010 at 10:00 a.m. at the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge Complex, 1428 Highway 27, Bell City, Louisiana. The Technical Committee meeting has been rescheduled to December 8, 2010.

B. Announcement: Scheduled Dates of Future Program Meetings

2010			
October 14, 2010	10:00 a.m.	Dedication Ceremony	Bell City
November 16, 2010	7:00 p.m.	PPL 20 Public Meeting	Abbeville
November 17, 2010	7:00 p.m.	PPL 20 Public Meeting	New Orleans
December 1, 2010	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	Baton Rouge
December 8, 2010			
2011			
January 18, 2011	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans
January 25, 2011	1:00 p.m.	Region IV Planning Team Meeting	Rockefeller Refuge
January 26, 2011	9:00 a.m.	Region III Planning Team Meeting	Houma
January 27, 2011	9:00 a.m.	Region II Planning Team Meeting	New Orleans
January 27, 2011	1:00 p.m.	Region 1 Planning Team Meeting	New Orleans
April 19, 2011	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	New Orleans
June 1, 2011	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	Lafayette
September 20, 2011	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	Baton Rouge

C. Adjournment

Colonel Fleming called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Honker so moved and Mr. Doley seconded. Colonel Fleming adjourned the meeting at 12:15 a.m.