

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

**TASK FORCE MEETING**  
**11 October 2012**

**Minutes**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Colonel Edward Fleming convened the 82<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:40 a.m. on October 11, 2012, at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 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 who were present.

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

**III. OPENING REMARKS**

Colonel Fleming introduced himself, welcomed everyone, and asked the members of the Task Force to introduce themselves.

Colonel Fleming asked if the Task Force had any opening comments or changes to the agenda. There were no comments or changes to the agenda.

Colonel Fleming explained that the public would be given the opportunity to comment on agenda items and that each commenter should provide their name and affiliation so that their comments could be included in the official record.

**IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM JUNE 5, 2012 TASK FORCE MEETING**

Colonel Fleming asked the Task Force members if they had any comments on the minutes from the June 5, 2012 Task Force meeting. There were no comments.

*Mr. Honker made a motion to adopt the June 5, 2012 Task Force meeting minutes. Mr. Graves seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

## **V. TASK FORCE DECISIONS**

### **A. Agenda Item #4 – Report/Decision: Status of Unconstructed Projects**

Mr. Brad Inman, USACE, reported on the status of unconstructed CWPPRA projects that have been experiencing project delays and are considered “critical-watch,” as well as projects recommended for de-authorization, including:

- a. Critical-watch unconstructed projects:
  - Weeks Bay Marsh Creation/Shoreline Protection/Commercial Canal/FW Redirection (TV-19) (USACE)
  - Southwest Louisiana Gulf Shoreline Nourishment and Protection (ME-24) (USACE)
  - West Pointe a la Hache Outfall Management (BA-04c) (NRCS)
  - Bayou Sale Shoreline Protection (TV-20) (NRCS)
  - Small Freshwater Diversion to the Northwest Barataria Basin (BA-34) (EPA)
  - River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp (PO-29) (EPA)
- b. Unconstructed projects requested by the State to initiate discussion for possible de-authorization due to significant implementation delays related to technical, policy, or landowner issues in addition to inconsistencies with the 2012 State Master Plan:
  - Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization (TV-11b) (USACE)
  - Delta Building Diversion North of Fort St. Philip (BS-10) (USACE)
  - Avoca Island Diversion and Land Building (TE-49) (USACE)
  - Spanish Pass Diversion (MR-14) (USACE)
  - White Ditch Resurrection (BS-12) (NRCS)
  - Bohemia Mississippi River Reintroduction (BS-15) (EPA)
- c. Unconstructed project recommended by the Technical Committee to begin the de-authorization process:
  - Weeks Bay MC/SP/Commercial Canal/FW Redirection (TV-19) (USACE)

Mr. Inman reported that representatives from the Planning & Evaluation (P&E) Subcommittee, the State, and the local stakeholders met on Thursday, October 4, 2012 to discuss the Weeks Bay Project (TV-19). The Technical Committee recommended initiating de-authorization of this project. The Southwest Louisiana Gulf Shoreline Nourishment and Protection Project (ME-24) is not moving forward because of ongoing cost-share issues between the USACE and the State. The West Pointe a la Hache Outfall Management (BA-04c), Bayou Sale Shoreline Protection (TV-20), Small Freshwater Diversion to the Northwest Barataria Basin (BA-34), and River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp (PO-29) Projects have not met deadlines in the past, but corrective plans are in place for each of these projects and the P&E Subcommittee is satisfied that they are moving forward.

Mr. Bren Haase, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), reported that CWPPRA and the State do not have the resources to complete all of the current projects; therefore, the State has requested that CWPPRA initiate a discussion for possible de-authorization on those projects with policy and/or technical issues and which the State feels are using resources that could be more effective elsewhere. The fact that these projects are not consistent with the Master Plan is not the primary reason to begin de-authorization discussions, although this did factor into the review. The State would like to focus resources on those projects that they believe can be the most successful.

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

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Oneil Malbrough with Shaw Coastal, representing Iberia and Vermillion Parishes, stated that when the Atchafalaya River is high, a significant amount of freshwater moves down the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) from the Wax Lake Outlet to Weeks Bay. Terracing projects in other areas have reduced the amount of freshwater leaving the GIWW, thereby creating marsh and moving water further west. The Weeks Bay area is losing between 10 and 40 feet of shoreline each year. A significant amount of freshwater goes out of Weeks Bay instead of moving further west into the Mermentau Basin. The Weeks Bay Project has been planned for Iberia and Vermillion Parishes since PPL 3. A few years after this project was approved, it was moved from the NRCS to the USACE. The project had some problems, mainly with constructability due to oil and gas infrastructure in the area. The Parishes used Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) funds to investigate alternatives that could make the project easier to build. They decided on concrete sheet piles, similar to what NRCS used in Jefferson Parish for the Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection Project. This would cost \$12 million and is the cheapest way to stop freshwater from leaving the GIWW at Weeks Bay. However, it does not create marsh, which was the original intent of the Project. The Parishes have asked that the project be re-scoped and reevaluated based solely on the benefits of moving the freshwater west, without the marsh creation components and benefits. When Mr. Malbrough met with the Technical Committee, they seemed skeptical that the GIWW moves water westward. However, in Mr. Malbrough's opinion, this is obvious from looking at the location of the project, the location of the opening, and the salinity changes that have occurred in Weeks Bay. The cost of the Project would increase to \$18 million if the bulkheads had to be built strong enough to hold back dredged material. Additionally, dredging the material to place behind the bulkheads would be \$20 million, although the Parishes believe they should beneficially use the dredged material from USACE dredging in the GIWW. The Parishes are recommending the cheapest option. They believe that stopping the freshwater from flowing into Weeks Bay is more important than creating 250 acres of marsh in this area. The Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection Project was a success, and they think this project could also be successful.

Mr. W.P. Edwards III, representing Vermilion Corporation and Vermillion Parish, stated that both Iberia and Vermillion Parishes consider this a vitally important project. The State's 2050 plan identified the project as a lynchpin project for this area. This project would help protect Weeks Island and protect shipping on the GIWW. The opening on the south side of the

GIWW is approximately 3,000 feet wide now, and there is another 1,000 feet in danger. This opening allows sediments from Weeks Bay to settle in the GIWW, which increases dredging requirements for the USACE. The GIWW ties directly into the Wax Lake Outlet, which connects to the Atchafalaya River. The Atchafalaya carries one-third of the Mississippi River, and Wax Lake Outlet carries one-third to one-half of the Atchafalaya River. There are only three other openings in the GIWW between the Atchafalaya River and this project, and if CWPPRA closes this 3,000-foot opening, freshwater will continue westward in the GIWW. There is no need to model this to know it. Mr. Edwards stated that he understands that the terracing project at the Jaws has created mudflats which are starting to vegetate. Two other projects in Vermilion Parish are trapping sediments, and they would trap more sediment if more water was sent that way. This project would be an effective river diversion that would carry Atchafalaya River water as far as 55 miles to the Little Vermillion Bay Sediment Trapping Project. The State is recommending projects in this area. It is very inexpensive. The only reason this project did not rank well when the benefit cost analysis was performed was because the technicians could not measure the benefits of freshwater. But CWPPRA and other agencies are building freshwater diversion projects all over the State, so Mr. Edwards indicated that he does not understand why they are having so much trouble measuring the benefits of this one. Finally, he noted that de-authorizations should be for failed projects. This is not a failed project. CWPPRA has spent hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars designing this project, and it is a viable project. It should not be thrown away.

Mr. Inman stated that at the meeting on October 4, 2012, local stakeholders presented some major potential changes, such as a scope change. He suggested that the USACE and State engineers may want to see if these changes fit within the CWPPRA guidelines. At this time, the recommendation from the P&E and the Technical Committee is to de-authorize, but those decisions were made prior to the meeting with the local stakeholders.

Mr. Graves stated that he has heard the comments on the revised project and its benefits. There are many projects in coastal Louisiana that have a lot of value. In the master planning process, the State identified hundreds of billions of dollars' worth of projects that had value, but all of these projects could not be included because the State recognizes that it has limited resources. Therefore, the State had to develop a priority process. Leaving projects in a limbo status is more precarious than making a decision one way or another. Citizens of the State make decisions based on these projects, such as whether they should continue to live somewhere and whether they should elevate their homes. They need a level of certainty about which projects will eventually be built in order to make such decisions, so CWPPRA and the State need to make definitive decisions. De-authorization does not mean that it is a bad project, but that it is not a priority at this time to this agency. Weeks Bay has been in the process for 11 years, and based upon the parameters of the CWPPRA program, it has not been selected. Mr. Graves asked what other project should be cut to be able to fund this one. If the Parishes know it will not be funded through CWPPRA, they can start to search for other funding streams. The technical experts in this case have recommended that this project move to de-authorization.

Mr. Honker stated that he understands that this project has very real challenges in terms of ever being funded through CWPPRA. There may be other funding sources. It appears to be a high priority for the Parish, but as a CWPPRA project, he has serious questions about whether it

will ever be built. As far as whether they make a decision today, he would defer to the Federal sponsor of the project and the State, but he does see this as a challenge. Mr. Norton and Mr. Doley agreed.

Colonel Fleming asked for the highlights of the meeting with the local stakeholders relevant to the Technical Committee's recommendation.

Mr. Haase responded that there were two issues associated with this project: constructability and the level of benefits. He believes that Shaw has addressed the constructability issue with the design of the concrete panels, but the level of benefits is still in question. He acknowledged that CWPPRA does have a problem with determining the benefits of freshwater diversions.

Colonel Fleming asked Mr. Inman to describe the process for de-authorizing a project.

Mr. Inman, Mr. Rick Hartman, NMFS, and Mr. Darryl Clark, USFWS, described the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) process. Based on other projects on the agenda for final de-authorization, the process could take about a year. Letters would be sent to stakeholders to solicit comments. Final de-authorization could occur at the January or June 2013 Task Force meeting. Mr. Hartman reminded the Task Force that there has been no formal request for a scope change, and the issue on the agenda is project de-authorization.

Mr. Graves stated that he does not wish to delay, and if they make the decision to initiate de-authorization today, they can decide not to de-authorize before the final de-authorization vote. He suggested structuring the motion so that no final decision would be made until June 2013, allowing for a presentation about the project changes at the January meeting.

Colonel Fleming asked for further comments from the Task Force or the public.

Mr. Edwards stated that he would like to hear discussion regarding why the Task Force is reluctant to catalogue projects that are viable, but not currently constructible as an alternative to de-authorization. Colonel Fleming responded that the Task Force does not currently have a suspension category. There has been some discussion about creating such a classification, but at this point it does not exist. Mr. Graves added that the Task Force will have the opportunity to discuss this option before final de-authorization.

*Mr. Honker made a motion to initiate de-authorization of the Weeks Bay MC/SP/Commercial Canal/FW Redirection (TV-19) Project, with the project team giving a presentation on the project at the January Task Force meeting and the Task Force not making a final decision until the June 2013 Task Force meeting. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

## **B. Agenda Item #5 – Report/Decision: Request to Extend the Sunset Clause for West Bay Sediment Diversion Project (MR-03)**

Mr. Josh Carson, USACE, provided a status update on the West Bay Project and Closure Plan. The closure design is still moving forward. The closure design is a semi-circle rock dike, with an approximate cost of \$12 million, which should have the least amount of operations and maintenance (O&M) requirements. The Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) report updates are complete. Approximately 25% +/- 15% of the shoaling in the Pilottown Anchorage Area (PAA) is attributable to the West Bay Diversion. There are currently 2.5 million cubic yards of material in the PAA, which is more material than ever in the past. The current cost to dredge is between \$10 and \$20 million. The USACE is ready to advertise the dredging and could be ready to bid later this month. At the Technical Committee meeting, a motion was made to extend the sunset clause in the 2008 motion authorizing funds for dredging and closure of the structure from FY12 to FY13. The USACE needs the Task Force to approve \$15 million for the next dredging cycle.

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

Mr. Norton asked to hear from the public regarding the West Bay Diversion. When the Task Force began the closure process in 2008, they did not have a clear idea of the contributions of West Bay to the PAA. They should have a discussion of how to deal with the information from ERDC in relation to the cost-share agreement.

Mr. Honker stated that, with the information from the ERDC study, the Task Force is faced with the issue of whether they should continue to pay 100% of dredging costs for the PAA. He does not believe that this is a good decision as wise stewards of public money. Obviously, the anchorage needs dredging soon, and under the current cost-share agreement, CWPPRA is responsible. Thus, he believes it is reasonable to pay for this round of dredging, but the Task Force needs to find a way to avoid paying for future dredging. The high cost of dredging was his incentive in voting to close the project, but he would be amenable to keeping the project open if there were no further dredging costs to CWPPRA.

Colonel Fleming stated that the ERDC report was released within the past six months. Before this report was available, indicating that the diversion is only responsible for approximately 25% of the shoaling, the expectation was that CWPPRA would continue with the agreements in place and conduct the required dredging. There is also shoaling induced in the Federal channel, which is the responsibility of the USACE, using regular O&M dredging funds. This has not been significant, but is something that the USACE has accepted for that portion of the River.

Mr. Graves stated that this has been one of the most complex issues with which the Task Force has dealt. They have to try to find balanced solutions to restore the coast while maintaining the navigation and fishing industries. The PAA must be dredged for safety reasons. To date, this has been funded by CWPPRA, but CWPPRA is a coastal restoration program. He does not think it is legal to pay for dredging beyond what is caused by the project, although paying for the current dredging cycle is defensible. Mr. Graves noted that diversion projects are

taking sediment out of the main navigation channel, thereby reducing USACE dredging requirements. CWPPRA also needs to study whether West Bay is the best investment of freshwater from the Mississippi River, or whether it should be going somewhere further north. Completing one additional dredging cycle buys CWPPRA and the State time to develop a long-term solution.

Colonel Fleming added that this dredging cycle will be beneficial to the project because the material will be placed in the receiving area. When the Task Force made the decision to close this diversion, they did not have all of the information they needed. The project is starting to produce benefits. The Task Force could consider keeping the project open, dredging 100% during this event, and then working out a maintenance solution for the future.

Mr. Honker noted that the project is about halfway through its project life. In his opinion, paying for this round of dredging would pay for CWPPRA's share of dredging for the rest of the project life.

Mr. Norton stated that he likes the West Bay Project, but in 2008 thought that the O&M dredging requirements were just too high for CWPPRA to handle. Based on the ERDC report, West Bay bears limited responsibility for the shoaling within the PAA. Therefore, he suggested that the Task Force pay for one final dredging operation and rescind the earlier decision to close the West Bay Diversion.

Colonel Fleming noted that the ERDC report said 25% plus or minus 15%. Mr. Graves noted that in the BCG report, the percentage was significantly below 25%.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the public.

Captain Mike Lorino, President of the Associated Branch Pilots, stated that it was very nice to hear that the Task Force is keeping in mind navigation on the Mississippi River. He stated that he is not sure if the agreement mentioned anything about a percentage. The agreement just states "if there is shoaling," and there is shoaling. Captain Lorino added that he is not for closing it or keeping it. He is concerned about dredging. He is very appreciative of CWPPRA agreeing to dredge one more time, but they must figure out a solution because West Bay does cause shoaling. The navigation industry is ready to work together to find a solution.

Mr. Sean Duffy, representing the Big River Coalition, stated that Captain Lorino addressed the navigation industry's concerns. Navigation simply wants the material out of the channel, out of the anchorage, and onto the coast. The cost per acre for this project is well below the cost per acre of some other projects where material is being pipelined for the same purposes. Navigation has tried to change the authorization, and maybe together they can get more Congressional support. The Mississippi River affects 31 states, thus wetlands loss affects those 31 states. They have designed a beneficial use plan that uses hopper dredges, which may be able to beneficially use material at close to the same cost as normal maintenance dredging. Mr. Duffy noted that the meeting logs for West Bay show that the people involved in the project from the beginning understood that there would be a real challenge with shoaling. The PAA has been on an approximately 3-year dredging cycle. CWPPRA has agreed to dredge one more time, but

there are ten years left in the project life of West Bay. The Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund could help with this issue. There is supposedly a \$7 billion surplus in the Trust Fund. Louisiana's portion of that could have been very useful for their cost-share for beneficial use projects. Finally, he noted that cost-share agreements are going to be very important in the future.

Mr. P.J. Hahn, Plaquemines Parish Government, thanked the Task Force for hopefully making the decision to keep West Bay open. He stated that this project was based on 12 years' worth of studies by some of the best scientists, but when it was first built, it did not work. Earl Armstrong, a cattle rancher in Plaquemines Parish, came up with the solution of adding shreds to make the project work. Now it is one of the only projects in Plaquemines Parish that is actually working, even after the hurricanes. It is an incredible diversion, it is working, and in the Parish's opinion, to close it now would be criminal. Sediment is something that every coastal parish in the State wants. They need this material, and they could do so much with a dredge to put it in the right places.

Mr. Edwards also commended the Task Force on making a motion to keep the project open. He could not fathom closing one of CWPPRA's best projects. If it took 12 years of engineering and design to get this project in place, then it is not time to de-authorize Weeks Bay yet.

David Muth, representing the National Wildlife Federation, stated that his organization has serious legal questions about the cost-share agreement. The idea that restoration funds should be used to solve navigation problems was never a good idea. When coastal restoration projects affect navigation, the restoration program always has to pay for effects, but the reverse is not true. Mississippi River and Tributaries projects have caused many coastal restoration problems, and this asymmetry needs to be addressed. He is very happy that they are considering keeping West Bay open. This round of dredging should buy CWPPRA enough credit to never have to dredge again.

Captain Lorino responded that the sediment that is being removed from the PAA is building wetlands. The money is being used for restoration, just in a different way.

Cynthia Duet, National Audubon Society, stated that the Task Force should have received a letter from the National Audubon Society last Friday. This letter highlighted legal arguments regarding the cost-share agreement. She suggested that the Task Force have their lawyers review the concept of a mutual mistake in contractual law. She asked for a response from the Task Force to the letter after their lawyers review it. She stated that the project is working, just not in the timeframe that it should have been.

Colonel Fleming responded that the Task Force will take the letter under consideration and will treat it like all other correspondence in accordance with the SOP.

Chris Macaluso, representing the Louisiana Wildlife Federation, stated that the Louisiana Wildlife Federation adopted a resolution this year stating that they wanted to find a way to keep this diversion open. Closing it because the Task Force could not resolve the monetary issues

would set a dangerous precedent, whereas dredging this year, but finding an alternative way to move forward sets a very positive precedent. Offering to pay for this dredging cycle now as a credit is a very reasonable and fair conclusion to reach.

Mr. Norton stated that there is no shortage of passion around West Bay and what the diversion is accomplishing. This is an area of Louisiana that is really struggling. He appreciated the comments from both navigation and coastal restoration. He encouraged them to have this discussion together. If CWPPRA dredges now, the PAA will need to be dredged again in three years. This is not an issue to delay.

Mr. Graves stated that dumping this problem on the USACE is not a solution. The State has asked their Congressional delegation to include this in the next Water Resources Development Act. The Lower Mississippi River system is changing. With sea level rise and other changes in coastal Louisiana, solutions that worked in the past are not going to work in the future. Sediment is an incredible resource, and the State does not want to waste it. There may be better places to invest that sediment, and CWPPRA should investigate this so that they spend their dollars on projects with the highest priority. Mr. Graves thinks this is a good, balanced solution.

Colonel Fleming added that the USACE and the State are working to model good locations for diversions.

Mr. Weller asked if the Task Force needed to address the sunset clause. Colonel Fleming responded that if they vote to rescind the closure, the recommendation from the Technical Committee would be subsumed under that motion.

Mr. Kerry St. Pe, Director of the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, recommended that the State and other agencies prepare infrastructure to use the sediment. Rather than dumping sediment offshore, they should be using it beneficially inshore. He fully supports West Bay, but they need land masses built in the upper system. By building infrastructure to get sediment under levees and under roads, they could use the sediment at a reduced cost.

*Mr. Norton made a motion to rescind closure of the West Bay Sediment Diversion Project and authorize the West Bay Sediment Diversion Project to remain in operation for the remainder of its project life or until the Task Force de-authorizes the project. The motion stated that CWPPRA would dredge the PAA one final time, and this would fulfill CWPPRA's dredging responsibility for so long as the diversion remains open and operational. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

### **C. Agenda Item #9 – Report/Decision: Outreach Committee Quarterly Report and 2012 Outreach Budget**

Ms. Susan Testroet-Bergeron, CWPPRA Public Outreach Coordinator, gave the quarterly Outreach Committee Report. Many members attended the State of the Coast Conference. CWPPRA Outreach took members of Senator Landrieu's staff to the West Belle Pass Project.

Ms. Testroet-Bergeron thanked those at NOAA for making this trip possible, and noted that she would like to take more legislators and their representatives on tours of CWPPRA projects. CWPPRA Outreach also participated in a workshop with Louisiana University Marine Consortium to talk to teachers about wetlands loss. Cole Ruckstuhl participated in the Gulf of Mexico Foundation's Education Expeditions, and they also attended the Governor's Environmental Education Awards for Art and Language Arts. CWPPRA Outreach partnered with Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB) on a project to take the *Turning the Tide* film, produced by LPB in 2011, and divide the film into pieces with curriculum that can be used in the classroom. The lessons are designed for high school students. CWPPRA Outreach created a game in which students participate in a mock Task Force meeting. In the game, each student has a different role, including interested members of the public. Ms. Testroet-Bergeron especially thanked the public for attending events and showing their professionalism. The public has a very important part in the CWPPRA process, and this game is a way of showing students how they can be involved.

Other Outreach activities included the Dulac Community Dinner and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) National Hunting and Fishing Day in Woodworth. The latter event was covered by both television and print reporters. Outreach has been working with Bayou Land RC&D on their Louisiana Native Plant Initiative to encourage people to plant native plants. They have also been working with *Louisiana Sportsman*, and the magazine has included articles about CWPPRA. The latest issue of *WaterMarks* had information about jobs related to coastal restoration, and this issue has been very popular. Finally, Ms. Testroet-Bergeron has been working with the Oral History Project, and they have interviewed 11 people about their experiences in coastal Louisiana and why it is important to save the coast. Upcoming events include the USFWS Wild Things Festival, the Restore America's Estuaries Conference, and the Louisiana Science Teachers Association and Louisiana Teachers of Mathematics Conference.

Mr. Thomas Holden opened the floor to comments from the Task Force.

Mr. Honker thanked Ms. Testroet-Bergeron and the CWPPRA Outreach Committee for their work.

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

Mr. Kerry St. Pe stated that he really enjoys the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program's relationship with CWPPRA Outreach. Outreach includes formal education, outreach to the general public, and legislative education, but most agencies do not spend a lot of resources on these activities. It is good to see that CWPPRA recognizes the value of outreach activities and spends resources on educating the public. This is the main way that the public gets this information.

Ms. Christina Melton, a producer with LPB and the producer of *Turning the Tide*, stated that LPB's core mission is education. They have wanted to do a companion education guide, but did not have the resources on their own, so they were very appreciative of Ms. Testroet-Bergeron and CWPPRA Outreach. LPB has promoted the *Turning the Tide* film to 30,000 teachers

statewide, and is about to promote it to 50,000 more teachers nationwide. It has also been promoted on National Public Radio's website. They are getting tremendous positive feedback from teachers around the country, including Harvard Charter School in Boston. She thanked the Task Force for their support.

Mr. Inman informed the Task Force that the requested budget of \$452,400 for Outreach is the same amount as last year.

*Mr. Weller made a motion to approve the recommendation by the Technical Committee for a 2013 Outreach budget of \$452,400. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

#### **D. Agenda Item #12 – Decision: PPL 23 Process Approval**

Mr. Inman reported that at the June 5, 2012 Task Force meeting, the Task Force approved the PPL 23 Process with the condition that projects nominated be consistent with the 2012 State Master Plan. This language was added to the PPL 23 Process.

Mr. John Jurgensen, NRCS, reported that the P&E recommended three significant changes to the process, as follows:

1. Remove consistency with Coast 2050 and replace with 2012 State Master Plan consistency.
2. Update the number of nominees from each basin based on the most recent land loss data (1985 – 2010) from the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The Mississippi River Delta Basin was removed for consistency with the 2012 State Master Plan.
3. Change the Coastwide vote in March from face-to-face to an electronic vote.

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

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

*Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the recommendation by the Technical Committee to approve the PPL 23 Process as presented. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

#### **E. Agenda Item #14 – Decision: Annual Request for Incremental Funding for FY15 Administrative Costs for Cash Flow Projects**

Mr. Inman reported that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers requested annual funding approval in the amount of \$20,331 for administrative costs for cash flow projects. The Technical Committee made a recommendation to approve this request.

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

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

*Mr. Norton made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve incremental funding in the amount of \$20,331 for FY15 administrative costs for cash flow projects. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

#### **F. Agenda Item #15 – Decision: Request for Funding for the CWPPRA Program’s Technical Services**

Mr. Inman reported that USGS and CPRA requested funding for CWPPRA Program technical services in the amount of \$186,018. The Technical Committee recommended approval of the request. This is the same amount that was approved last year.

*Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve funding in the amount of \$186,018 for CWPPRA Technical Services. Mr. Graves seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

#### **G. Agenda Item #16 – Decision: Request for Monitoring Incremental Funding and Budget Increases**

Mr. Chris Allen, CPRA, reported that the following projects are requesting monitoring incremental funding and budget increases:

- a. PPL 9+ Projects requesting approval for FY15 incremental funding in the total amount of \$271,254 for the following projects:
  - Coastwide Plantings Phase II (LA-39), PPL 20, NRCS  
Incremental funding amount (FY13-15): \$57,143
  - Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b), PPL 11, NRCS  
Incremental funding amount (FY13-15): \$99,582
  - Whiskey Island Back Barrier Marsh Creation (TE-50), PPL 13, EPA  
Incremental funding amount (FY13-15): \$13,179
  - Mississippi River Sediment Delivery Bayou Dupont, (BA-39), PPL 12, EPA  
Incremental funding amount (FY13 - 15): \$85,133
  - Delta Management at Fort St. Philip (BS-11), PPL 10, USFWS  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$16,217
- b. PPL 1-8 Project requesting approval for FY15 incremental funding in the total amount of \$5,292:
  - Naomi Outfall Project (BA-03c), PPL 5, NRCS  
Incremental funding amount: \$5,292
- c. PPL 1-8 Projects requesting approval for a Monitoring budget increase of \$271,679 and FY15 incremental funding in the total amount of \$116,610:
  - Boston Canal/Vermilion Bay Bank Protection (TV-09), PPL 2, NRCS

- Budget increase amount: \$31,099
- Incremental funding amount (FY13 – FY15): \$31,099
- Sabine Refuge Marsh Creation Increment 3 (CS-28) PPL 8, USACE
  - Budget increase amount: \$240,580
  - Incremental funding amount (FY13 – FY15): \$85,511
- d. Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) - Wetlands requesting approval for FY15 incremental funding in the total amount of \$9,469,030:
  - Incremental funding (FY13 – FY15): \$9,469,030

Mr. Allen reported that the Boston Canal/Vermilion Bay Bank Protection (TV-09) and the Sabine Refuge Marsh Creation Increment 3 (CS-28) Projects need additional funding to finish. The Sabine Project's original budget did not include monitoring, and the project team intends to perform topographic surveys to determine settlement of the marsh platform.

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

Mr. Honker asked why the Task Force needs to approve FY15 funding in 2012. Mr. Allen responded they need three years of out-year funding to be able to put the bid out for the contractor.

Colonel Fleming noted that CWPPRA is spending a lot of money on CRMS.

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

The Task Force elected to vote on each Agenda 16 sub-item separately.

*Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$271,254 for PPL 9+ Projects. Mr. Graves seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

*Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve FY15 Monitoring incremental funding in the amount of \$5,292 for PPL 1-8 Projects. Mr. Norton seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

*Mr. Norton made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve a FY15 monitoring budget increase in the amount of \$271,679 and FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$116,610 for PPL 1-8 Projects. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

*Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$9,469,030 for CRMS. Mr. Graves seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

**H. Agenda Item #17 – Decision: Request for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Incremental Funding and Budget Increases**

Mr. Allen reported that the following projects are requesting O&M incremental funding and budget increases:

- a. PPL 9+ Projects requesting approval for the FY15 incremental funding in the total amount of \$4,065,214 for the following projects:
  - Lake Borgne Shoreline Protection (PO-30), PPL 10, EPA  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$4,790  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$1,132
  - Delta Management at Fort St. Phillip (BS-11), PPL 10, USFWS  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$442,392  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$18,433
  - Pass Chalard to Grand Bayou Pass Barrier Shoreline Restoration (BA-35), PPL 11, NMFS  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$4,556  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$1,245
  - Pelican Island and Pass La Mer to Chalard Pass (BA-38), PPL 11, NMFS  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$13,399  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$17,158
  - Mississippi River Sediment Delivery System – Bayou Dupont (BA-39), PPL 12, EPA  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$8,593  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$8,593
  - Goose Point, Point Platte Marsh Creation (PO-33), PPL 13, USFWS  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$258,602  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$10,775
  - Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b), PPL 11, NRCS  
Incremental funding amount: \$2,133,168
  - Coastwide Planting Program (LA-39), PPL 20, NRCS  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$1,124,682
  - Little Lake Shoreline Protection/Dedicated Dredging near Round Lake (BA-37), PPL 11, NMFS  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$1,554
  - Four Mile Canal Terracing and Sediment Trapping (TV-18), PPL 9, NMFS  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$1,000
  - Whiskey Island Back Barrier Marsh Creation (TE-50), PPL 13, EPA  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$10,360
  - New Cut Dune/Marsh Restoration (TE-37), PPL 9, EPA  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$4,782
- b. PPL 1-8 Projects requesting approval for FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$1,506,741 for the following projects:
  - Cote Blanche Hydrologic Restoration (TV-04), PPL 3, NRCS  
Incremental funding amount (FY15): \$1,500,000
  - Black Bayou Hydrologic Restoration (CS-27), PPL 6, NMFS  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$2,000

- Point au Fer Canal Plugs (TE-22), PPL 2, NMFS  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$2,353
  - Lake Chapeau Sediment Input and Hydrologic Restoration (TE-26), PPL 3, NMFS  
Incremental funding amount (Federal S&A): \$2,388
- c. PPL 1-8 Projects requesting approval for an O&M budget increase of \$5,422,018 and FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$5,396,005:
- Freshwater Bayou Wetland Protection (ME-04), PPL 2, NRCS  
Budget Increase amount: \$2,450,664  
Incremental Funding amount: \$2,450,664
  - Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization (ME-13) PPL 5, NRCS  
Budget Increase amount: \$2,971,354  
Incremental Funding amount: \$2,945,341

Mr. Allen reported that the two Freshwater Bayou Projects are requesting additional O&M funds to cap the dikes and bring the elevation of the projects to 3.5 feet before the end of their project lives. At the Technical Committee meeting, there was discussion about whether CWPPRA should use funds for this purpose at this time because there is the possibility that they will have to remove the projects at the end of their project lives. Mr. Allen reported that, based on the cost effectiveness and the fact that the projects are authorized and funded, the CPRA recommends funding these. The estimated cost to maintain these projects for another 20 years after their project lives is \$6.5 million, whereas the estimated cost to remove these structures at Year 20 is \$26 million.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. Colonel Fleming asked when they need the money to award the contract. Mr. Allen responded soon.

Mr. Doley expressed his concern with the process and the timing. He is concerned about putting the rock in place when they may come to a situation where they have to remove the rock. He asked about the ecological consequences of delaying.

Mr. Quin Kinler, NRCS, responded that the ME-13 project has six years left of project life, so there should not be a 20-year life issue for this project. ME-04 has three years left of project life. Both structures were built to an elevation of 3.5 feet. There are limited sections where they are now at 0 to 1-foot elevation. The project team does not want to cap or lift the entire project, but they would like to bring the areas that have settled to 0 to 1-foot back up to 3 to 3.5 feet. Erosion is increasing in the areas where the rock has settled or been knocked off of the dike, and is as high as seven to eight feet per year in some places. This is in contrast to no erosion, and some accretion, in areas where the rock is still 3.5 feet high. If the sections are not capped, the area will lose the benefits that have been gained from this project.

Mr. Doley asked about the cost of a slight delay. Mr. Kinler responded that the erosion rates are about four feet per year, but can range from two to eight. The erosion rates will only increase over time.

Colonel Fleming asked what would happen if they waited until January to make a decision, particularly for ME-04. Mr. Kinler responded that the dike is not going to fall down. He noted that CWPPRA is continuing to fund other projects despite the uncertainty of whether the Program will be re-authorized past FY19. These two projects, if maintained through Year 20, can be more effective than some of the other projects that have been approved over the last eight years.

Mr. Norton added that it would be more efficient to award the two contracts together.

Mr. Honker stated that he shared Mr. Doley's concerns, and would prefer to wait until January to make this decision. This is an issue that should be discussed at the upcoming day-long meeting with the Task Force, the Technical Committee, and the P&E.

Mr. Graves noted that the 20-year project life of CWPPRA projects is an arbitrary figure. There are going to be projects that reach Year 20 and are continuing to provide benefits. CWPPRA has several options. One option is to transfer the project to the landowner, who in this case has stated that this option is unacceptable. The second option is removal of the project, but the cost estimate for that is in excess of \$25 million. O&M for another 20 years of maintenance is in the \$6.6 million range. Mr. Graves stated that he is in favor of the recommendation, but would defer to the Federal sponsor, NRCS, on waiting until January to make this decision.

Mr. Norton stated that NRCS is ready to proceed with this project. The surveys are complete and they are ready to move forward.

Mr. Doley stated that the position of NMFS is not particular to this project. CWPPRA needs to be conscientious when making these decisions, and delaying until January will allow the Task Force to look at the big picture.

Mr. Allen asked the Task Force what information he needed to present at the January meeting. Mr. Doley responded that the decision to defer this decision to January is not about this specific project. The information already provided about ME-04 and ME-13 is sufficient. Colonel Fleming agreed with Mr. Doley.

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

The Task Force elected to vote on each Agenda 16 sub-item separately.

*Mr. Honker made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$4,065,214 for PPL 9+ Projects. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

*Mr. Doley made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$1,506,741 for PPL 1-8 Projects. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

*Mr. Norton made a motion to defer the Technical Committee recommendation to approve an O&M budget increase of \$5,422,018 and FY15 incremental funding in the amount of \$5,396,005 for PPL 1-8 Projects until the January Task Force meeting. Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

**I. Agenda Item #18 – Decision: Request for Approval for Final De-authorization of the PPL 10 – Benneys Bay Diversion Project (MR-13)**

Mr. Inman reported that the USACE and CPRA requested approval for final de-authorization of the Benneys Bay Diversion Project (MR-13). The Technical Committee recommended approval for final de-authorization.

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

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

*Mr. Graves made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve final de-authorization of the Benneys Bay Diversion Project (MR-13). Mr. Honker seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.*

**J. Agenda Item #19 – Decision: Request for Approval for Final De-authorization of the PPL 9 – Little Pecan Hydrologic Restoration Project (ME-17)**

Mr. Inman reported that NRCS and CPRA requested approval for final de-authorization of the Little Pecan Hydrologic Restoration Project (ME-17). The Technical Committee recommended approval of final de-authorization.

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

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

*Mr. Graves made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve final de-authorization of the Little Pecan Hydrologic Restoration Project (ME-17). Mr. Honker 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. Susan Mabry, USACE, reported on the current CWPPRA budget. The current estimated total cost of PPL 1 through PPL 21 and Planning is \$2.56 billion. Anticipated Federal funding through FY19 is \$2.28 billion.

The FY13 Planning budget is \$4.6 million, with an Outreach placeholder of \$452,400, bringing the total Planning budget to \$5 million. \$429,162 is available from FY12 funds. The CWPPRA Program received \$74 million in FY12. Total Federal funds into the Construction Program through FY13 are \$1.1 billion. Total expenditures are \$850 million. Total anticipated funding into the Construction Program through FY12 is \$1.3 billion. The current cost of approved projects and planning is \$1.5 billion. With unused funds of \$25 million and today's requests to de-authorize, the currently approved cost estimate will decrease to \$1.4 billion. The Program currently has available funds of \$86.3 million; with the increases on the agenda, the available funds will decrease to \$70 million.

In FY12, four projects began construction, two projects completed construction, and two projects are anticipated to be de-authorized. In FY13, 11 projects are scheduled to start construction, including one non-cash flow project and eight cash flow projects approved and funded for Phase II.

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

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

#### **B. Agenda Item #6 – Report: Task Force Electronic Vote Approval for the PPL 9 – Black Bayou Culverts Hydrologic Restoration Project (CS-29) Requested O&M Incremental Funding and Budget Increase**

Mr. Inman reported that NRCS and CPRA requested approval for O&M incremental funding and a budget increase of \$636,747 for the Black Bayou Culverts Hydrologic Restoration Project (CS-29). The Technical Committee voted at the September 12, 2012 meeting to recommend the proposal for Task Force electronic vote approval. The Task Force subsequently voted to approve the requested O&M incremental funding and budget increase by electronic vote on October 3, 2012.

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

Mr. Norton thanked the Task Force.

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

#### **C. Agenda Item #7 – Report: Decision Structure for Project Reaching 20-Year Life Span**

Mr. Inman reported that at the June 5, 2012 meeting, the Task Force directed the P&E Subcommittee to review current CWPPRA policies and procedures to make recommendations on procedures to evaluate, extend, de-authorize, terminate, or otherwise alter the disposition of projects approaching or meeting the end of their 20-year lifecycle, as well as other issues related to the 20-year lifecycle. The P&E developed four options for projects at Year 20. These include: 1) extension of project life; 2) project closeout; 3) transfer of O&M responsibility; and 4) project closeout with removal of project features/structures. The P&E assumes that most projects will be closed out. CWPPRA agencies are examining what they want to do with each of their projects. This process is ongoing. The P&E recommends maintaining the 20-year life because it has worked well for the Program.

Another issue that the P&E examined was maintaining projects based on the potential to receive funding from FEMA in case of storm damage. The P&E believes that for most projects this is not the best decision. The P&E and the Technical Committee want to have a workshop to look at some of these projects and issues in detail. The first project reaching the end of its 20-year life is in 2014.

Colonel Fleming opened the floor to comments from the Task Force. Colonel Fleming stated that the Task Force, Technical Committee, and P&E Subcommittee have made tentative arrangements to have a one-day workshop in January.

Mr. Honker stated that he definitely thinks that doing a working session is appropriate. They should also examine and discuss whether there is something that they should be doing at the beginning of projects that they have not been doing that could be helpful at project closeout.

Mr. Doley stated that he agrees with Mr. Honker. They need to look at the current decision making process, taking into consideration the fact that if they are not reauthorized, they may have a funding stream that ends in FY19 with a large O&M responsibility.

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

#### **D. Agenda Item #8 – Report: 2012 Report to Congress**

Ms. Karen McCormick reported on the 2012 Report to Congress. USGS, USFWS, EPA, and CPRA have been leading the 2012 Report to Congress efforts. Ms. McCormick reported that they have done three drafts of the Report to Congress. She believes that they have put a good document together. They are currently waiting on Task Force comments, and would like to have those comments by October 22 to allow USGS to finalize the Report as quickly as possible.

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

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

## **E. Agenda Item #10 – Report: Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) Report**

Ms. Dona Weifenbach, USGS, reported on CRMS milestones since the June Task Force meeting. CRMS data was included in the Report to Congress. They have completed 13 Operations, Maintenance, and Monitoring reports and submitted them for review by Federal partners. They have also completed annual project review meetings with Federal sponsors in anticipation of monitoring funding requests. CRMS data was used for PPL 22 Wetlands Value Assessments (WVA). CRMS presented CWPPRA data at the National Wetlands Research Center brown bag lunch and at Nicholls State graduate seminars. They have published the Hydrologic Index Open File Report; the Submergence Vulnerability Index Open File Report is in final review and should be ready by the end of the year. CRMS data is included in papers in two academic journals. They have scheduled coast-wide photography, and the data from this will be available in April 2013. CRMS is being used as a model for wetlands monitoring for the Gulf of Mexico Monitoring Plan.

The CRMS contractor performed damage assessments at CRMS sites following Hurricane Isaac from the Pontchartrain Basin to the Teche-Vermilion Basin. The contractor photographed the impacts. Damages to infrastructure included missing boardwalks, RSETS, and continuous recorders. Biological impacts included the presence of oil, wrack, and trash.

Ms. Weifenbach presented graphics with peak water levels during Hurricane Isaac at CRMS sites. Most of the high water was recorded east of the storm. Plaquemines Parish recorded water levels up to 12 feet. The Biloxi Marshes and Pontchartrain Basin had peak water levels of six to eight feet. All real-time sites remained up and running throughout the storm. The real-time gages showed the signature of the storm and the amount of time areas needed to dewater.

CRMS recently completed website updates which added functionality to the CRMS website. Google is no longer providing free maps to Federal entities, so CRMS had to change to a different mapping interface. The same functions are available, but it looks slightly different. At the same time, CRMS updated some tables and changed them to timelines. For example, users can now see how marsh in a particular area has changed over time. All of the changes will be presented in detail at the next CRMS training.

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

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

## **F. Agenda Item #11 – Report: Coastwide Nutria Control Program – Annual Report**

Ms. Jennifer Manuel, LDWF, reported on the Coastwide Nutria Control Program. This is a project that is funded by CWPPRA through NRCS and CRPA. It is implemented by LDWF and their contractor, Coastal Environments, Inc. The project area encompasses the entirety of the Louisiana coast south of I-10 and I-12. The goal is to remove 400,000 nutria per year.

Hunters apply to be part of the program, and approved applications are input into a database. Last season the program had 285 active participants who turned in 354,000 tails worth \$1.7 million. Each year the program receives approximately 330,000 nutria tails. The number of acres damaged by nutria has continued to drop since the inception of the program.

The 2011-2012 winter was mild, so the program had the highest harvest in January. Most nutria were harvested in fresh marsh. 31% of participants turned in over 800 tails. Rifle hunting accounted for two-thirds of the harvest, with about one-third trapped and a few taken with a shotgun. Terrebonne Parish had the highest number of tails turned in to the program, with St. Mary, Lafourche, and Plaquemines also harvesting large numbers.

Every April, the program does a coast-wide survey to document nutria damage. The surveys are performed via a helicopter outfitted with floats to allow surveyors to land in the marsh to document damage. Surveyors fly almost 2,400 miles, which is usually a two-week process. The number of sites with nutria damage decreased from 94 in 2002 to 11 in 2012, and most of these have minor damage. The total number of damaged acres decreased 33% from 2011 to 2012 to 1,129 acres. Most of the damage sites are in northwestern Terrebonne Parish. LDWF has been able to document recovery in areas where nutria have been removed. There are currently few nutria in the western part of the State.

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

Mr. Graves asked for information on efforts to promote the beneficial use of nutria carcasses. Mr. Edmond Mouton, LDWF, responded that they work with the Louisiana Fur Advisory Council to actively promote the use of nutria fur. Most of the fur that is used is exported to China. The Council is trying to get these individuals interested in purchasing over 100,000 pelts. They also assisted the Marsh Dog company in the development of nutria dog biscuits. The company is concerned that they will not have enough nutria meat to supply the demand for their product. He stated that the Nutria Control Program is always open to helping people in these efforts, although their purpose is coastal restoration.

Mr. Hartman noted that there is a website that sells nutria items such as jewelry.

Mr. Graves stated that with over 300,000 carcasses taken and only 14,000 used for fur and meat, only a small percentage of the carcasses are currently being used. This could be an economic opportunity for the State.

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

### **G. Agenda Item #13 – Report/Discussion: Status of the PPL 10 – Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Stabilization Project (ME-18)**

Dr. John Foret, NMFS project manager of Rockefeller Refuge, gave an overview of this project and presented the results of the test sections constructed under CIAP. The Rockefeller Refuge is located in Vermilion and Cameron Parishes. The long-term erosion rate in this area is

about 38 feet per year. The Rockefeller Project was originally authorized under CWPPRA to stop land loss in this area. It originally consisted of protecting 9.2 miles at an estimated cost of \$95 million. In 2007, the project was transferred to CIAP and three test sections were constructed to compare different methods of protecting the shoreline.

The first alternative was a reef breakwater, which had to be built low and wide due to the poor soil loadbearing capabilities. This was built at average Gulf elevation. The second alternative was a reef breakwater with a lightweight aggregate core (LWAC), which because of the lighter weight, could be built to an elevation of 3.5 feet. The third alternative was to add gravel to the shoreline, which did not work because the gravel started moving westward with the Gulf as soon as it was placed.

The project team learned important lessons from these test sections. Surveys must be completed immediately prior to construction because the baseline is moving north very rapidly. Settlement rates were approximately six inches, which was much lower than the 24 inches anticipated. The reef breakwater with LWAC protected the shoreline the best, with less than three feet of land loss behind this structure as well as increased vegetation. This is the recommended alternative.

Within the original 9.2 mile segment, a breach has occurred into the Price Lake unit of the Rockefeller Refuge. There is now open exchange into the Gulf of Mexico. Approximately 790 acres are threatened with conversion to open water.

The current cost estimate for 9.2 miles of the reef breakwater with LWAC is \$89.1 million. This cost is too high for the CWPPRA Program. If the project was reduced to five miles, the construction cost would be \$48 million, with a cost of \$325,000 to complete Phase I. If the project was reduced to two miles around the Price Lake breach, the construction cost would be \$20 million and completing Phase I would cost \$280,000. The project team will need to decide on an alternative and then request a change in scope. The scope change will require a new WVA and a new cost analysis. Then they will complete the 30% and 95% reviews and then request Phase II funding. Additionally, since the project was transferred to CIAP, NMFS no longer has an active Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR) with the USACE. NMFS will need a new MIPR before they can continue with Phase I of the project.

Mr. Hartman added that NMFS is in discussions with the local sponsor about whether they should construct five miles or two miles. When the previous MIPR expired, NMFS returned approximately \$800,000 to CWPPRA. There is no additional cost to CWPPRA to get to 95% design because the cost to complete Phase I will be less than \$800,000.

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

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

## **VII. ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

There were no additional agenda items.

## **VIII. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Graves thanked the USACE for their position on the West Bay Diversion Project.

## **IX. CLOSING**

### **A. Announcement: Date of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meeting**

Mr. Inman announced that the PPL 22 Public Meetings will be held November 14, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. at the Abbeville Courthouse, Courtroom #1, in Abbeville, Louisiana and November 15, 2012, at 7:00 p.m. at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, District Assembly Room, in New Orleans, Louisiana. The next Technical Committee meeting will be held December 12, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. at the State Library of Louisiana, Seminar Center, 701 North 4th Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

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

#### **FY2013**

November 14, 2012	7:00 p.m.	PPL 23 Public Meeting	Abbeville
November 15, 2012	7:00 p.m.	PPL 23 Public Meeting	New Orleans
December 12, 2012	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee Meeting	Baton Rouge
January 24, 2013	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans
January 29, 2013	1:00 p.m.	Region IV Planning Team Meeting	Abbeville
January 30, 2013	9:00 a.m.	Region III Planning Team Meeting	Morgan City
January 31, 2013	9:00 a.m.	Region II Planning Team Meeting	New Orleans
January 31, 2013	1:00 p.m.	Region I Planning Team Meeting	New Orleans

### **C. Adjournment**

Colonel Fleming called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Honker so moved and Mr. Norton seconded. Colonel Fleming adjourned the meeting at 1:35 p.m.