

BREAUX ACT
Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

TASK FORCE MEETING
10 October 2019

Minutes

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonel Stephen Murphy convened the 99th meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:41 a.m. on October 10, 2019, in the Board Room of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DARM, 7400 Leake Ave., 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. The Task Force members introduced themselves as follows:

Col. Stephen Murphy (USACE), Chairperson
Mr. Darryl Clark (USFWS)
Mr. Kevin Norton (NRCS)
Mr. Bren Hasse (CPRA)
Mr. Charles Maguire (EPA)
Mr. Chris Doley (NOAA)

III. OPENING REMARKS

Colonel Murphy introduced himself, and asked Task Force members to introduce themselves. Col. Murphy asked for Task Force comments; Mr. McGuire expressed his enthusiasm for today's proceedings. Col. Murphy described his professional experience and perspective regarding coastal issues, and expressed his appreciation for the model and efficacy of the CWPPRA program.

Colonel Murphy announced that Kevin Norton (NRCS) is relinquishing his Task Force duties as he is being promoted within the NRCS. Colonel Murphy presented him with a CWPPRA commemorative coin and certificate acknowledging Mr. Norton's 12-year tenure of exemplary service on behalf of the USDA/ Secretary of Agriculture. Mr. Norton offered words of gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the CWPPRA process, and for the cooperation, leadership and friendships established therein.

Additionally, Colonel Murphy announced Darryl Clark's (USFWS) pending retirement, which will be officially recognized at the next Technical Committee meeting

Finally, Col. Murphy called upon Brad Inman (USACE) to iterate the recently devised Environmental Banking Guidelines. Mr. Inman provided an overview of the pertinent laws governing the establishment of Environmental Banking, and presented draft guidelines for the use, maintenance and oversight thereof. After approval by state and federal agencies responsible for existing environmental laws, the guidelines were published on the USACE regulatory page (website), making them available for a public comment period; very few public comments have

been received to date. Those will be compiled and sent to the Task Force members in order to determine how to proceed.

IV. AGENDA and MINUTES

Colonel Murphy asked if the Task Force had any changes to make to the agenda; none were proffered. Colonel Murphy called for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

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

Colonel Murphy iterated the procedure for public comment, and reminded attendees to sign in on the sheet designated for public record.

Colonel Murphy asked Mr. Inman to present the minutes of the last Task Force meeting (May 2019); Mr. Inman indicated that the minutes had previously been provided to the Task Force for their review, and recommended that the Task Force adopt the minutes. Colonel Murphy asked if the Task Force or the public had any questions regarding or changes to the minutes; none were proffered. Colonel Murphy called for a motion to accept the minutes.

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

V: TASK FORCE DECISIONS

Agenda Item #6 – Decision: CPRA And FWS Request Transfer of the Bayou Grand Cheniere Ridge and Marsh Creation Project (BA-173) to the State.

Bren Haase (CPRA) presented the request on behalf of the CPRA and the FWS. This project has unsuccessfully requested Phase 2 funding for multiple years. With a desire to see the project expedited, he hereby proposed its transfer to the state for funding, allowing for potential alternative funding sources. Mr. Clark verbalized support on behalf of the FWS.

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

Col. Murphy then called for a motion to initiate the transfer BA-173. Mr. Norton made a motion to transfer the project as presented; Mr. Clark seconded the motion, which passed without dissent.

Agenda item #7 –Report/ Decision: CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Update/Revisions (Kaitlyn Carriere, USACE)

Ms. Carriere began by explaining that the P&E subcommittee devised these changes in the language of the SOP pertaining specifically to Coastwide Projects (Appendix F). She declared that the Technical Committee approved the proposed changes in September 2019, and hereby recommends the changes to the Task Force for approval. She read the proposed language aloud and provided a written version.

Col. Murphy opened the floor for questions or comments from the Task Force. Mr. Maguire asked whether or not these changes would inhibit the ability of the Task Force to consider Coastwide

projects. Mr. Clark clarified that these changes place emphasis on the goal of wetland benefits. Mr. Hasse pointed out that an option to deviate from the SOP might be exercised in certain instances.

Col. Murphy called for questions or comments from the public; none were proffered.

Col. Murphy called for a motion to accept the proposed changes in Appendix F applicable to Coastwide projects. Mr. Maguire made the motion, which Mr. Clark seconded; the motion passed without dissent.

Agenda Item #11 – Decision: Coastwide Nutria Control Program (CNCP/LA-03b) Project Life Extension (Quin Kinler, USACE)

Mr. Kinler began with a brief history of the CNCP, justification for incentive increases during the past 17 years, details of the 20-year decision matrix, and rationale for project life extension. The project has been subjected to the formal evaluation process, so Mr. Kinler provided specific projected costs and benefits. He asserted that without the incentive program, an estimated 40,000 acres would have been lost over its 17-year history; in actuality about 22,000 acres were lost. The program has spent approximately \$33.5 million, and realized a total reduction in loss of nearly 18,000 acres. Thus the actual cost of \$1,852/ acre (compared to an average of about \$90,000 - \$100,000/ acre for typical CWPPRA projects) is highly efficient. Without extension, an estimated loss of 76,000 acres over the next 20 years can be extrapolated. Conversely, if the project is extended, 60,000 acres will be saved. Projected future costs for years 21-40 (based on an annual harvest of 400,000 nutria, and allowing for inflation and incentive increases) are an estimated \$80 million. Cost per acre is still expected to be less than \$2,000/ acre. Since unused (i.e. previously approved) funding carries over each year within the CNCP, there will exist a \$24 million surplus at the end of the 20 year life; Mr. Kinler thus estimates a funding request of \$56 million to extend the program for 20 years; funding requests have been and will be made annually.

Mr. Kinler hereby requested approval of a 20-year project extension at a fully funded cost of \$79,639,292; funds remaining within the program of \$24,090,979 yield a net increase request of \$55,543,313.

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the CNCP project extension. Mr. Norton made the motion, which Mr. Haase seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Agenda Item #12 – Decision: Request of a Transfer of O&M to Monitoring for New Cut Dune and Marsh Restoration (TE-37) (Brad Crawford, EPA)

Mr. Crawford presented the request on behalf of EPA and CPRA, based on the Technical Committee recommendation. Mr. Crawford reported that all scheduled monitoring activities for the New Cut Dune and Marsh Restoration (TE-37) project have been completed. He hereby requested Task Force approval to transfer \$20,000 from the O&M budget (in which there is a surplus) to its Monitoring budget for completion of the final monitoring report.

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the transfer of funds from O&M to Monitoring for TE-37. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Norton seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Agenda Item #13 – Decision: Request for Transfer from Operations and Maintenance Funds to Monitoring Funds for the Point Au Fer Island Hydrologic Restoration (TE-22) Project, the Lake Chapeau Hydrologic Restoration and Marsh Creation (TE-26) Project, and the Little Vermilion Bay Sediment Trapping (TV-12) (TBD, CPRA)

Ms. Cecelia Linder (NOAA), CWPPRA program manager, presented the request as recommended by the Technical Committee. She explained that funds are needed for final recording for project close-out, and will not result in an increase in the current approved total project cost estimates.

She presented the projects as follows:

- a. Point Au Fer Island Hydrologic Restoration (TE-22) Project is requesting a transfer in available O&M funds to increase Monitoring funds by \$20,000. This would raise the approved monitoring budget for this PPL 3 project to \$132,833.
- b. Lake Chapeau Hydrologic Restoration and Marsh Creation (TE-26) Project is requesting a transfer in available O&M funds to increase Monitoring funds by \$160,500. This would raise the approved monitoring budget for this PPL 5 project to \$908,612.
- c. Little Vermilion Bay Sediment Trapping (TV-12) Project is requesting a transfer in available O&M funds to increase Monitoring funds by \$2,000. This would raise the approved monitoring budget for this PPL 5 project to \$145,476.

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the transfer of funds from O&M to Monitoring for TE-22, TE-26 and TV-12. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Clark seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Agenda item #14 – Decision: Annual Request for Incremental Funding for FY22 Administrative Costs for Cash Flow Projects (Jernice Cheavis, USACE)

Ms. Cheavis presented the request for funding approval as recommended by the Technical Committee in the amount of \$38,540. This is an FY22 incremental request for administrative tasks associated with cash flow projects beyond Increment 1. The list of individual project subtotals was provided in Task Force binders.

Colonel Murphy called for question or comments from the Task Force. Mr. Clark expressed his appreciation to Ms. Cheavis for her financial administration of the program. Mr. Haase concurred.

Colonel Murphy called for question or comments from the public; none were proffered.

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the incremental request for funding for FY22 administrative costs. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Clark seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Agenda Item #15 – Decision: Request for Funding for the CWPPRA Program’s Technical Services (Michelle Fischer, USGS)

On behalf of USGS and CPRA, Ms. Fischer requested funding for FY20 technical services for the CWPPRA program in the amount of \$214,546, as recommended by the Technical Committee. She explained that technical services include maintenance of the project information database, CWPPRA outreach and website content, LACoast.gov website maintenance and IT checks, and dual spatial support for end-phase projects.

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the funding request for FY20 technical services. Mr. Clark made the motion, which Mr. Doley seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Agenda item #16 – Decision: Request for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Incremental Funding (Kent Bollfrass, CPRA)

Kent Bollfrass presented the O&M incremental requests with an iteration of the larger “umbrella” amount, then he highlighted budget increases and incremental requests over \$100,000 under the sub-bullets (A and B) as follows:

Total FY22 incremental funding for O&M in the amount of \$1,660,162.

- a. PPL 9+ Projects requesting approval for FY22 O&M incremental funding in the amount of \$1,434,945 for the following projects:
 - New Cut Dune and Marsh Restoration (TE-37), PPL 9- Incremental Funding Request: \$1,426
 - Black Bayou Culvert Hydrologic Restoration (CS-29), PPL 9- Incremental Funding Request: \$36,239
 - GIWW-Perry Island Ridge West Bank Stabilization (CS-30), PPL 9- Incremental Funding Request: \$7,446
 - Freshwater Introduction South of Highway 82 (ME-16), PPL 9- Incremental Funding Request: \$15,664
 - Little Lake Shoreline Protection (BA-37), PPL 11- Incremental Funding Request: \$1,938
 - Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b), PPL 11- Incremental Funding Request: \$1,275,981 (approved previously – a typical annual request for administration)
 - Barataria Barrier Island Complex (BA-38), PPL 11- Incremental Funding Request: \$5,197
 - South White Lake Shoreline Protection (ME-22), PPL 12- Incremental Funding Request: \$9,000

- Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery System (BA-39), PPL 12- Incremental Funding Request: \$14,410
- Whiskey Island Back Barrier Marsh Creation (TE-50), PPL 13- Incremental Funding Request: \$7,464
- East Marsh Island Marsh Creation (TV-21), PPL 14- Incremental Funding Request: \$21,920
- Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation (BA-42), PPL 15- Incremental Funding Request: \$7,743
- West Belle Pass Barrier Headland Restoration (TE-52), PPL 16- Incremental Funding Request: \$6,139
- Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation (BA-48), PPL 17- Incremental Funding Request: \$10,687
- Grand Liard Marsh and Ridge Restoration (BA-68), PPL 18- Incremental Funding Request: \$7,025
- Coastwide Vegetative Planting (LA-39), PPL 20- Incremental Funding Request: \$6,666

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the funding request for FY22 Incremental Funding for O&M in the amount of \$1,434,945. Mr. McGuire made the motion, which Mr. Clark seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Mr. Bollfrass continued the request:

- b. PPL 1-8 Project requesting approval for FY22 O&M Incremental Funding in the total amount of \$225,217 for the following projects:
 - Freshwater Bayou Wetland Protection (ME-04), PPL 2- Incremental Funding amount: \$13,501
 - Cameron Creole Maintenance (CS-04a), PPL 3- Incremental Funding amount: \$106,293 (a typical annual request for inspection and structural operations contract)
 - Replace Sabine Refuge Water Control Structures (CS-23), PPL 3- Incremental Funding amount: \$52,885
 - Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization (ME-13), PPL 5- Incremental Funding amount: \$12,357
 - Black Bayou Hydrologic Restoration (CS-27), PPL 6- Incremental Funding amount: \$20,181
 - Sabine Refuge Marsh Creation Cycles 4 and 5 (CS-28-4-5), PPL 8- Incremental Funding amount: \$20,000

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the funding request for FY22 O&M Incremental funding in the amount of \$225,217. Mr. Doley made the motion, which Mr. Norton seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Agenda Item #17 – Decision: Request for Monitoring Incremental Funding (Kent Bollfrass, CPRA)

Kent Bollfrass presented the incremental requests for Monitoring with an iteration of the larger “umbrella” amount, highlighting budget increases and incremental requests over \$100,000 under the sub-bullets (A and B) as follows:

Total FY22 Incremental Funding for Monitoring in the amount of \$10,950,645.

a. PPL 9+ Projects requesting approval for FY22 incremental funding in the amount of \$707,362 for the following projects:

- New Cut Dune and Marsh Restoration (TE-37), PPL 9-
Incremental Funding Request: \$20,000
- Black Bayou Culverts Hydrologic Restoration (CS-29), PPL 9-
Incremental Funding amount: \$78,142
- Freshwater Introduction South of Highway 82 (ME-16), PPL 9-
Incremental Funding amount: \$66,210
- Barataria Basin Landbridge Shoreline Protection, 3 (BA-27c), PPL 9-
Incremental Funding amount: \$5,339
- East Sabine Lake Hydrologic Restoration (CS-32), PPL 10-
Incremental Funding amount: \$53,168
- Grand-White Lakes Landbridge Protection (ME-19), PPL 10-
Incremental Funding amount: \$46,254
- Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b), PPL 11-
Incremental Funding amount: \$119,103 (a typical annual request)
- Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery System (BA-39), PPL 12-
Incremental Funding amount: \$13,745
- Whiskey Island Back Barrier Marsh Creation (TE-50), PPL 13-
Incremental Funding amount: \$30,000
- Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation (BA-42), PPL 15-
Incremental Funding amount: \$32,245
- Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation (BA-48), PPL 17-
Incremental Funding amount: \$34,020
- South Lake Lery Shoreline and Marsh Restoration (BS-16), PPL 17-
Incremental Funding amount: \$40,081
- Coastwide Vegetative Planting (LA-39), PPL 20-
Incremental Funding amount: \$53,922
- Bayou Bonfouca Marsh Creation (PO-104), PPL 20-
Incremental Funding amount: \$95,343
- Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery, 3 (BA-164), PPL 22-
Incremental Funding amount: \$19,790

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the funding request for FY22 Incremental funding for Monitoring in the amount of \$707,362. Mr. Clark made the motion, which Mr. Doley seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

- b. PPL 1-8 Project requesting approval for FY22 incremental funding in the amount of \$243,283 for the following projects:
- Freshwater Bayou Wetland Protection (ME-04), PPL 2- Incremental Funding amount: \$4,577
 - Point Au Fer Canal Plugs (TE-22), PPL 2- Incremental Funding amount: \$20,000
 - Lake Chapeau Sediment Input & Hydrologic Restoration (TE-26), PPL 3- Incremental Funding amount: \$160,500 (previously approved in agenda item 13b for monitoring budget and project close-out)
 - Cameron Creole Maintenance (CS-04a), PPL 3- Incremental Funding amount: \$39,592
 - Naomi Outfall Management (BA-03c), PPL 5- Incremental Funding amount: \$18,614

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the funding request for FY22 Incremental funding for Monitoring in the amount of \$243,283. Mr. Haase made the motion, which Mr. Clark seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

- c. Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) requesting approval for FY22 incremental funding in the total amount of \$10,000,000 (first year of being capped at 10 million dollars for funding for CRMS – a typical annual request)

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

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to approve the Incremental request in the amount of \$10,000,000. Mr. Maguire made the motion, which Mr. Clark seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

9. VI. INFORMATION

Agenda Item #3 – Report: Status of CWPPRA Program Funds and Projects (Jernice Cheavis, USACE)

Ms. Jernice Cheavis, USACE, presented an overview of CWPPRA funds, beginning with the Construction Program. The fully funded total Program Estimate since its inception to the present (authorized projects from PPLs 1 – 28) is \$2.951 billion. The total funded estimate (received since inception, and anticipated through FY2021) is \$2.097 billion, leaving a potential gap of \$854 million if the Program were to construct all projects to date. This gap will likely be reduced as future federal funding is appropriated for CWPPRA beyond 2021. Current Task Force-approved funding for projects in Phase I, Phase II, and O&M and Monitoring totals \$2.165 billion

(again in anticipation of future funding.) Authorized funding for each agency as requested currently totals \$1.860 billion, clearly not an over-commitment of the existing funded estimate.

As previously mentioned the Program Estimate is currently \$2,950,588,932 for PPL's 1 – 28. A recommendation will be made today by the Technical Committee to approve additional funding to extend the Coastwide Nutria Control Program, thus increasing the total Program Estimate by \$55,548,313. Additionally, the annual request for funding for Construction Program Technical Services would result in an increase of \$214,546. If both are approved, these budget increases bring the total program estimate to \$3,006,351,791.

The CWPPRA Program has an available balance of \$11,328,246 carried from the May Task Force meeting. The Program anticipates an estimate of DOI funding in the amount of \$77,181,566 (which will be allocated for the FY20 construction program.) Thus, the total available funds for requests presented at today's proceedings are \$88,509,812. The total of anticipated funding requests (which will be presented individually at this meeting) is \$12,863,893. If all funding requests are approved, the Program will move forward into FY20 with available funds totaling \$75,645,919.

CWPPRA has authorized 222 projects. The 157 active projects including 30 in Phase 1 Engineering and Design, 15 in Phase 2 Construction and 5 support projects. There are 95 projects that have been constructed and are now in final phases of Operations and Maintenance, or Monitoring, and 17 projects that have been closed financially. Additionally, CWPPRA has deauthorized 46 projects, transferred 8 projects, and placed 6 in the inactive category.

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

Agenda Item #4 – Report: Construction Update (Brad Inman, USACE)

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

Quin Kinler (NRCS) provided an update on the Coastwide Vegetative Plantings project. He began with an assertion that 28 vegetative planting projects have been completed thus far. He then highlighted a few specific sites by describing location, providing photos and explaining rationale of project features; highlighted projects were completed or are planned for imminent construction.

Darryl Clark (USFWS) then reported on the Cameron-Creole Grand Bayou Marsh Creation (CS-54) project. The project goal is the restoration of nearly 800 acres of brackish marsh in two cells of located on the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge (south cell) and on lands owned by Miami Corporation (north cell). This acreage includes adjacent DNR efforts, which happen to utilize the same contractor. The north cell (of the CWPPRA project) was completed in June 2018; the south cell was completed in the June 2019. He iterated construction costs, which were less than budgeted; the budgetary surplus will return to the CWPPRA program as available funds. The Task Force approved a 45-acre expansion in May 2019. Mr. Clark provided photographic evidence of construction and subsequent re-vegetation that is occurring. No questions or comments were proffered.

Kevin Roy (USFWS) presented a status update for the Northwest Turtle Bay marsh creation project (BA-125). Consisting of two marsh creation cells – one confined, the other semi-confined – the project is expected to restore and/or nourish 791 acres. Construction began in April 2019. The semi-confined cell is completed and the introduction of dredge material (from Turtle Bay) has commenced. Construction of the fully confined cell is ongoing; dredge material introduction therein is expected within weeks. The inspection firm provides drone-captured photographs and video to monitor dredge material movement and identify problematic issues (i.e. containment breaches). No questions or comments were proffered.

Ronny Paille (FWS) submitted current information regarding the Salvinia Weevil Propagation Facility (LA-284). He began with a reminder that Giant Salvinia is an invasive aquatic plant species from South America; a particular weevil native to the same location, feeds exclusively on the salvinia. This project (authorized by the Task Force in January 2017) seeks to propagate the weevil in ponds, and subsequently harvest and transfer infested salvinia plants to landowners experiencing salvinia overgrowth. Mr. Paille reported that most of the costs incurred thus far are associated with equipment purchases, because propagation ponds are being rented from UL-L rather than being constructed. Infested plants are harvested in 20-gallon (40-pound) totes – 520 and 421 of which were harvested in 2018 and 2019 respectively. USGS provides monitoring via aerial imagery and mapping; LSU monitors weevil concentrations at release sites. No questions or comments were proffered.

Donna Rogers gave an update on the Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization (ME-18) project, the construction of which began in May 2018. At an estimated cost of \$28.2 million, the project is subject to an 816-day contract time. Design of the breakwater includes a lightweight aggregate core (LWAC), geotech lining, bedding stone, and armor stone capping installed to a +3.5 elevation. The original 3-mile design (subsequently expanded by one-mile) also incorporates three demonstration areas of LWAC breakwater, rock breakwater and Oyster Ring (LA-08); the actual construction alignment had to be adjusted because of ongoing erosion. Unsuccessful tie-in to the rock breakwater demo area resulted in its deconstruction; the rock was repurposed for use as armor stone. Construction was halted in March 2019 due to problems of rock aggregate acquisition; construction resumed last week and is expected to continue until February 2020. Ms. Rogers concluded by presenting statistics regarding type and quantities of materials used, and declared that the project is nearly 2/3 completed. No questions or comments were proffered.

Patrick Williams provided the status update for Cole's Bayou Marsh Restoration (TV-60), construction of which was completed in September 2019. Construction costs were just under \$13.2 million. Mr. Williams described the project features as 415 acres of marsh creation (consisting of confined dredge material), and 9 water control structures (consisting of 22 culverts and 2 earthen plugs.) Mr. Williams declared that in the two marsh creation areas, there is (within three seasons) significant vegetative rebound; a few dikes have been gapped to restore tidal influence. Regarding the hydrologic features of the project, he detailed the water control structures – a series of culverts designed with one-way check valves – which seem to be functioning as designed to introduce freshwater from the north. Finally, he acknowledged project partners/ stakeholders. No questions or comments were proffered.

In conclusion, Mr. Inman pointed out that these projects illustrate not only the various techniques employed by CWPPRA, but the attempts to control construction costs, and the accomplishments possible owing to the partnerships/ cooperation of entities involved. He invited questions or comments; none were proffered.

Agenda Item #5 – Report: Status of Unconstructed Projects (Sarah Bradley, USACE)

On behalf of the Planning and Evaluation (P&E) Subcommittee, Ms. Bradley reported on the status of unconstructed CWPPRA projects. She began with a reminder that the subcommittee meets annually to assess Phase I projects, which were approved for funding more than three years ago. The assessment serves to inform, evaluate, and assist efforts, and place projects in various categories for further consideration. Ms. Bradley began by reporting that eight (8) projects are on schedule, two (2) projects are waiting for Phase II funding approval, one (1) project has been delayed, one (1) project is being recommended for transfer, four (4) have been placed on the “critical watch” category. Ms. Bradley provided details for the latter category as follows:

- North Catfish Lake Marsh Creation (TE-112) is a PPL-22 project for which the engineering services agreement was delayed. Now progressing, a notice to proceed for data collection has been issued; reports are expected by the end of this year. A 95% Design Review, and the Phase II funding requests (and approvals) are expected in 2020.
- Island Road Marsh Creation and Nourishment (TE-117) is a PPL 23 project. The 30% Design Review is expected to occur this fall. The potential for a change in scope exists; any actions deemed necessary will be presented to the Task Force for consideration.
- South Grand Chenier Marsh Creation (ME-20) is a PPL 11 project. Construction bids received in August 2018 were over budget; after modifications, the project will likely be re-bid in spring 2020.
- South Grand Chenier Marsh Creation – Baker Tract (ME- 32) is a PPL 23 project currently on hold pending landrights.

Ms. Bradley offered a reminder that the preceding update requires no action on the part of the Task Force at these proceedings. Additionally, Ms. Bradley mentioned a possible project transfer, the particulars of which will be presented as a later agenda item. She invited questions or comments; none were proffered.

Agenda Item #8 – Report: Outreach Committee Report (Jennifer Guidry, USGS)

Ms. Jennifer Guidry began the Public Outreach Committee by expressing appreciation for those who attended and contributed to the success of the dedication event yesterday in Jefferson Parish, during which food, music were provided, and a boat tour of a CWPPRA site (BA-125) was conducted.

Ms. Guidry announced that the Public Outreach Committee has devised and approved its strategic plan, the goals of which are to promote 1) public awareness and support of CWPPRA programs and its projects, 2) general understanding of the value of wetlands and the repercussions of coastal land loss and rising sea levels, and 3) general understanding of CWPPRA restoration strategies and process. She provided a diagrammatic depiction of target audiences – national/ state/local stakeholders, partner industries, environmental scientists, and educators – as a “roadmap” for future outreach efforts. Product development plans include social media strategies,

various public events, and a how-to guide for residents interested in submitting projects for the CWPPRA process.

Ms. Guidry summarized an extensive timeline of outreach events since May 2019. Various activities included target audiences iterated previously, and included educational outreach as well as direct project experience for staff.

Several changes to CWPPRA publications have been made to enhance circulation. Previously published bimonthly, the online *Landmarks* issues will become a monthly newsletter. *Watermarks*, a biannual publication, is very well received at outreach events. The popular full-size vintage posters have been made available as postcards for convenient (and potentially broader) dissemination. Social media outreach encompass forums on Facebook, a blog site, Instagram and Twitter.

Ms. Guidry introduced the Coastal Restoration Leadership Program being piloted in a UL freshman seminar class. Sponsored by the office of the First Year Experience at UL Lafayette, Ms. Guidry presents topics relevant to students, who are (mostly) local; class response indicates they are interested and engaged. Ms. Guidry invited prospective guest speakers to participate; CPRA Representatives recently provided an overview of that organization, and the professional opportunities therein.

Finally, Ms. Guidry spoke of upcoming events, including CWPPRA's 30-year anniversary celebration, EPA's 50th anniversary commemoration, as well as other activity days, festivals and conferences. Future plans also include working with GOMA on a Paddle the Gulf Initiative, working with CODOFIL to create a French version of the children's activity book, and expanding outreach activities to include endangered, threatened, **and** invasive species education.

Colonel Murphy called for questions or comments from the Task Force. Mr. Clark commended the Outreach Committee for the scope of their efforts, and specifically for the thoughtful organization of the dedication event yesterday. Mr. Hasse concurred, acknowledging the activity and energy of the Outreach Committee. He asked about acquisition of the posters; Ms. Guidry stated that they are available today, and offered to send a supply to CPRA offices for distribution.

Colonel Murphy called for public questions or comments; none were proffered.

After a ten-minute recess, Colonel Murphy presented Ms. Guidry with a commemorative CWPPRA coin in appreciation for outreach efforts.

Agenda Item #9 – Report: Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (Sarai Piazza, USGS)

Ms. Sarai Piazza presented the report on CRMS, beginning with the noted impacts of Hurricane Barry across the coast. The network of CRMS stations – about 390 of them – enabled mapping of maximum storm surge, which were generally located in Teche-Vermilion Basin and in Terrebonne Basins. There was marsh damage, marsh removal, and in some areas, marsh deposition; direct mechanical removal also occurred at several of the sites. In areas where the marsh was actually removed and the elevation is no longer sufficient to support vegetative growth, open-water plots are predicted. In areas where re-vegetation rebound could occur, the potential

for undesirable vegetative species composition/ competition is also likely. Cost implications are expected, as equipment and associated structures are repaired and replaced.

Ms. Piazza summarized efforts of the analytical teams to eliminate redundant data collection, modifying the data equipment at several sites, and making adjustments to the database and website accordingly.

Regarding the helicopter survey, Ms. Piazza stated that since its inception, the CRMS program has funded two helicopter surveys to delineate fresh, intermediate, brackish and saline marsh. The 2021 survey has been postponed pending the successful acquisition of funds from other state and non-government sources.

Regarding the 2018 coastwide aerial photography – the high-resolution aerial photography on which the basis for the land water classifications at CRMS sites and CWPPRA projects are made – those data were delivered, and the automated land-water processing is complete. Analysts are working on the manual corrections for land-water classifications at all sites and at the CWPPRA projects that are slated in the typical schedule. Publication as official USGS products and data releases is expected by the end of June of 2020. Until then the data can be obtained by request. As with the helicopter survey, partners for funding the 2021 coastwide imagery collection are being sought.

In conclusion, Ms. Piazza announced that the USGS director specifically asked the CRMS program to provide information that could be used in a display at an upcoming international conference in Australia. An entity comprised of 105 different countries, GEO is holding the week-long conference to share data about Earth observation. On behalf of the CWPPRA, CRMS has submitted information to be included in a large display. Ms. Piazza acknowledged Mr. Brian Lezina for a quote that will be included. A copy of the display will be provided to the CWPPRA Outreach Committee for use at their discretion.

Colonel Murphy called for Task Force questions or comments. Mr. Clark asked for clarification about postponing the helicopter survey/ aerial photography collection. Ms. Piazza specified that the helicopter survey had been postponed.

Colonel Murphy called for questions or comments from the public. Susan Testroet-Bergeron (BTNEP director) requested time and cost information for the helicopter surveys, and offered help to identify end users of the data who maybe a source of backing. Ms. Piazza accepted the offer and concurred, asserting that several relevant NGOs had already been apprised of the need.

Agenda Item #10 – Report: Coastwide Nutria Control Program – Annual Report (Jennifer Manuel, LDWF)

Ms. Manuel presented the annual report on the Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b), for which an approval of extension is being sought at these proceedings. She began by acknowledging Catherine Normand, who previously worked in the program. Ms. Manuel then summarized the funding mechanism therein.

Ms. Manuel proceeded with the programs background. The program’s goal of annually removing 400,000 nutria from the marsh was set in 2002 in order to significantly reduce nutria-

induced marsh damage. The initial incentive payment to trappers was \$4 a tail; it was increased after Hurricane Katrina to \$5 a tail, when harvest declined. In 2019, it was increased to \$6 a tail. A mobile collection station makes its way across the coast, within the set program boundary; additional collection sites have been added as necessary.

Typically, about 400 people enroll in the program each year, and about 61 percent actually turn in tails. Most individuals turn in less than 250 nutria tails; a few turn in 10,000 tails or more. Most of the nutria are harvested from its preferred habitat – fresh marsh – as opposed to fewer harvested from intermediate or brackish marsh, and very few from saltwater marsh; some are harvested from agricultural lands, especially crawfish ponds. Highest harvest CNCP participation occurs typically in January and February, at the end of deer and waterfowl seasons. Harvest method is by rifle (primarily), trapping, or a combination.

In total, during 17 seasons of this program, approximately 5.3 million nutria were harvested out of coastal Louisiana. Terrebonne Parish is probably the most impacted parish by nutria herbivory, where nearly 30% of the harvest occurred. Annual helicopter surveys reveal areas of minor, moderate and severe damage; an estimated 14,652 acres were damaged across the coast this year – a reduction of 11% since 2018; this reduction may be attributed to marsh which has been converted to open water. Damage in Cameron Parish is trending upward, although damage sites are dynamic as nutria populations move and fluctuate. Ms. Manuel reviewed a graph indicating that nutria harvest correlates directly with levels of damage. While marsh damage overall has been significantly reduced since program inception, a depressed harvest in most recent years prompted the latest increase in incentive payments.

In conclusion, Ms. Manuel directed those interested to the nutria.com website.

Colonel Murphy asked for question from the Task Force and the public; none were proffered.

Agenda Item #18 -- Additional Agenda Items

Colonel Murphy deferred this item, as no changes were previously proposed.

VII. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Colonel Murphy called for any additional public comments; none were proffered.

VIII. CLOSING

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

A. Announcement: Date of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meeting (Brad Inman, USACE) The Technical Committee meeting will be held December 5, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. at the Tulane River and Coastal Center at 1370 Port of New Orleans Place.

B. Announcement: Scheduled Dates of Future Program Meetings

December 5, 2019	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	New Orleans
January 2020	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	TBD

C. Adjournment

Colonel Murphy called for Task Force questions regarding upcoming meetings; none were proffered.

Colonel Murphy called for a motion to adjourn today's proceedings. Mr. Clark made the motion, which Mr. Norton seconded. The motion carried without dissent and the meeting was adjourned at 12:16 p.m.