

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

**TASK FORCE MEETING**  
**3 October 2024**

**Minutes**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Colonel Cullen Jones convened the 112th meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:30 a.m. on October 3, 2024, in the Board Room of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DARM, 7400 Leake Ave., New Orleans, LA. The meeting was also made available via WebEx Meeting platform. 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:

Colonel Cullen Jones, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Chairperson  
Mr. Jeff Weller, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), for U.S. Department of Interior  
Mr. Britt Paul, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Mr. Wes LeBlanc, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), Acting \_  
Mr. Troy Hill, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA Region 6)  
Ms. Leslie Craig, NOAA, National Marine and Fisheries Services (NMFS) for the U.S. Department of Commerce

**III. OPENING REMARKS**

Colonel Cullen Jones introduced himself, as the 65<sup>th</sup> Commander of the New Orleans District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He asked Task Force members to introduce themselves; they did so in turn, and identified the state and federal agencies they represent. Colonel Jones asked for Task Force comments; none were proffered.

**IV. AGENDA and MINUTES**

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

Mr. Troy Hill made a motion to adopt the agenda, which Mr. Roy seconded; the motion passed without dissent.

Colonel Jones then iterated the procedure for public comment (virtually and in person) and reminded attendees to sign in on the sheet designated for public record.

Colonel Jones asked Ms. Vititoe to present the minutes of the last Task Force meeting (May 2024); she indicated that the minutes were previously provided to the Task Force for their review and recommended that the Task Force adopt the minutes. Colonel Jones asked if the Task Force

or the public had any questions regarding or changes to the minutes; none were proffered. Colonel Jones called for a motion to accept the minutes.

Mr. Paul made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented; Ms. Craig seconded the motion, which passed without dissent.

## **V: TASK FORCE DECISIONS**

### **Agenda Item #10 – Request for Project Scope Change for TE-171 Port Fourchon Marsh Creation Project (Dr. Patty Taylor, EPA)**

Dr. Taylor began by thanking the Task Force, her EPA team, and those in attendance both in person and virtually. She stated the Port Fourchon Marsh Creation Project, part of PPL 31, received Task Force approval for Phase I in January 2022 at cost under \$30 million which includes a contribution of 25% of construction costs, up to \$10 million by the Greater Lafourche Port Commission. Dr. Taylor stressed the significant stakeholder involvement, beneficial use of sediment material, sustainable borrow, as well as synergy to add to the investment of five other projects in the area, in addition to the Caminada Headlands projects. She is requesting the scope change because total costs and ratio of the total cost to the number of net acres benefited deviated more than 25% from the Phase 0 approved project, which was 605 acres at \$30 million. At the 30% design meeting in July 2024, 595 acres at a cost of \$66 million concerned fellow CWPPRA agencies. Design comments were incorporated, and the project footprint has been reduced by 34.60%, while increasing the cost by 53.75% from Phase 0 numbers. The 95% design meeting is scheduled for 7 October, 2024. In summary, Dr. Taylor stated EPA and CPRA request approval of a change in scope for the Port Fourchon Marsh Creation (TE-0171) Project. The proposed project is just under \$50 million, without the Port's contribution, \$40 million for CWPPRA, with the Port's contribution, for 543 acres at a cost of \$101,463 per net acre. Dr. Taylor proceeded to thank Dustin White, the Project Manager at CPRA, Chett Chiasson, of the Port, the design team and GIS, the Engineer of Record for the project.

Colonel Jones called for questions or comments from the Task Force and the public. Mr. Mart Black, Coastal Restoration Director for Terrebonne Parish expressed the support of this project by Terrebonne Parish and asked that it be voted on favorably. Colonel Jones then called for any additional questions or comments from the Task Force; none were proffered.

Colonel Jones then called for a motion to approve the request for a scope change for TE-171 Port Fourchon Marsh Creation Project, as presented. Mr. Hill made a motion to approve the scope change as presented; Mr. LeBlanc seconded the motion, which passed without dissent.

### **Agenda item #11 – Request for Project Scope Change for the Breton West Landbridge Marsh Creation (West) River aux Chenes to Grand Lake (BS-38) project (Jason Kroll, NMFS)**

Mr. Kroll introduced himself as an engineer and project team member with National Marine Fisheries Service. He began thanking the Technical Committee and Planning and Evaluation Subcommittee's attendance at the NMFS Q&A session for the project. A change in scope for the Breton Landbridge Marsh Creation (West) River aux Chenes to Grand Lake (BS-38) Project is requested. A scope change was approved by the Technical Committee through an electronic vote and is required due to a reduction in the project's acreage, which reduces the

project's cost effectiveness by more than 2%. Marsh creation area alignments significantly changed from the Phase 2 authorized footprint due to deeper water depths found within the project area, while the costs of the base remain within the Phase 2 approved authorization.

Mr. Kroll then reviewed the iterations of the PPL 28 project with four marsh creation cells that aims to rebuild the land bridge from Delacroix and Bayou Terre aux Boeufs to River aux Chenes working synergistically with the BS-32 project. Initially in Phase 0, there were 423 acres in the for marsh creation cells, with 30 % design surveys water depths force a retreat of shorelines while maintaining 437 acres. At 95% design there was an opportunity to add and additional cell bringing the total acres to 561 while maintaining the lake dike features along the rim. Phase 2 requests were made in fall 2021, prior to the storms and inflation of 2022. BS-38 was part of a group of projects that were designed, costed and funded before the inflation issues and that had to go back to the Technical Committee and Task Force for adjustments. Fortunately, this project has received NFWF funding and some commitments from the state to complete marsh creation cell five. The CWPPRA portion is 448 acres still while maintaining the lake dike feature along Grand Lake. Some restructuring was required due to hurricane impacts deepening the area. There are 264 net acres that increased to \$120,000 from \$83,000 per net acre which is in league with other projects in the area and does requires Task Force approval.

Colonel Jones opened the floor for questions or comments from the Task Force, and from the public; none were proffered.

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the scope change of the Breton Landbridge Marsh Creation (West) River aux Chenes to Grand Lake (BS-38) Project as presented. Ms. Craig made the motion, which Mr. Paul seconded; the motion passed without dissent.

#### **Agenda Item #12 – Decision: Request for Final Deauthorization of TE-157 East Catfish Lake Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection (Kevin Roy, FWS).**

Mr. Roy explained the PPL 29 project was in the Terrebonne Basin west of Golden Meadow and was designed to create 306 acres of marsh and 12,500 linear feet of shoreline protection with a fully funded cost of \$42.2 million. He stated the project had not reached 30% design and is no longer considered consistent with the 2023 State Coastal Master Plan, and thus ineligible for cost share. To reduce the backlog in the Phase I hopper, this project will be seeking final deauthorization approval and be returning approximately \$2.3 to \$2.4 million of the \$3.4 million approved Phase I budget to the program. Mr. Roy stated a request to initiate the deauthorization was approved, letters were sent to the Congressional delegation and landowners, and no comments were received. FWS is requesting a recommendation for final approval of the deauthorization of the TE-157 project.

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the Request for Final Deauthorization of TE-157 East Catfish Lake Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection Project as presented. Mr. Weller made the motion, which Mr. Hill seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

#### **Agenda Item #13 – Decision: Request for a Monitoring Budget Increase for PO-33 Goose Point/Point Platte Marsh Creation. (Kevin Roy, FWS)**

Mr. Roy explained that with the previous agenda item funds were being returned, and with the current agenda item, funds were being requested. The PO-33 Project requires an increase of the monitoring budget. He described the PPL 13 project in the Pontchartrain Basin was part of the Big Branch national Wildlife Refuge, received funding in February 2007, and was constructed by January 2009. Mr. Roy stated the project created 417 acres of marsh in five cells and nourished 195 acres that were in danger of breaching to open water. The initial fully funded cost for monitoring was \$111,665, whereas the new estimate is \$229,390. Mr. Roy restated the request of \$117,725 for a monitoring budget increase is to fund remaining monitoring administration, a final land-water analysis, and final OM&M report in 2029 as well as IDC.

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the Request for a Monitoring Budget Increase for PO-33 Goose Point/Point Platte Marsh Creation as presented. Mr. LeBlanc made the motion, which Mr. Weller seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

**Agenda Item #14 – Decision: Request for a Monitoring Budget Increase for TV-21 East Marsh Island Marsh Creation (Mark Mouledous, CPRA).**

Mr. Mouledous began to introduce the budget increase for TV-21, however, developed issues with his audio. Mr. Brandon Champagne, CPRA, made the request for \$199,293 for a monitoring budget increase to complete the remaining planned monitoring activities which include data collection and final report for project closeout.

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the request for a Monitoring Budget Increase for TV-21 East Marsh Island Marsh Creation Project as presented. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Hill seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

**Agenda item #15 – Decision: Request for a Transfer of Approved Monitoring to Approved O&M for the (BS-03a) Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Management Project (Angela Trahan, NRCS).**

Ms. Trahan presented the request for a Technical Committee recommendation for approval to transfer \$53,716.16 from approved monitoring to approved O&M to finalize engineering and design for the final O&M close out event. She then explained the project received approval for a two-year extension and will seek approval of project closeout with a cost increase to execute the final maintenance event at a later date.

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the transfer of \$53,716.16 from the Monitoring to Approved O&M budget for BS-03a Caernarvon Diversion Outfall Management Project as presented. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Ms. Craig seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

**Agenda Item #16 – Decision: Request for Funding for the CWPPRA Program’s Technical Services (Cole Ruckstuhl, USGS)**

Mr. Ruckstuhl presented the USGS and CPRA request for FY2025 technical services for the CWPPRA program in the amount of \$275,716. Examples of funding uses include LaCoast.gov website hosting, maintenance and security protocols, back-end databases, which allows multiagency sharing of information, public outreach, web content, fact sheets, and geospatial support of projects in engineering and design, construction, and end of life. He stated the amount is a slight increase to that of last year due to overhead, staff, as well as with hosting costs associated with LaCoast.gov.

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the Request for \$275,716 in Funding for Program Technical Services as presented. Mr. Hill made the motion, which Mr. LeBlanc seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

**Agenda item #17 – Decision: Annual Request for Incremental Funding for FY27 Administrative Costs for Cash Flow Projects (Jernice Cheavis, USACE)**

Ms. Cheavis pointed out that project-specific incremental funding requests for administrative services are provided in the Technical Committee binders, and hereby requested recommendation to the Task Force total funding approval in the amount of \$145,468. She explained that this was an increase from last year, as they were catching up on more projects. The cost reflected a grand total of multiple incremental requests across several projects beyond increment 1.

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve incremental funding of \$145,468 for FY27 Administrative Costs for Cash Flow Projects as presented. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Ms. Craig seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

**Agenda Item #18 – Decision: Request to revise the language of the 15 November 2023 Task Force electronic vote to approve to fund the 2024 Report to Congress in the amount of \$95,000. (Jernice Cheavis, USACE)**

Ms. Cheavis explained that clarifying language was needed to a previous Task Force approval. The Task Force will consider the Technical Committee’s recommendation to revise the language of the 15 November 2023 Task Force electronic vote to fund the 2024 Report to Congress. This revision is needed to ensure the voting language cites Planning Funds as the funding source for this effort and to document the increase to the overall FY24 Planning and Outreach Budget to \$5,095,000. This approval will eliminate any ambiguity.

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to revise the language of the 15 November 2023 Task Force electronic vote to fund the 2024 Report to Congress as approved. Mr. LeBlanc made the motion, which Mr. Weller seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

**Agenda Item #19 – Decision: Request for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Incremental Funding (Brandon Champagne, CPRA)**

The request for FY27 O&M incremental funding totals 4,869,200.72. Mr. Champagne presented the request as follows, highlighting specifically those exceeding \$100,000 in incremental funding.

- a. PPL9+ Projects requesting approval for FY27 O&M incremental funding in the total amount of \$4,512,483.72 for the following projects:
  - Cameron-Creole Freshwater Introduction (CS-49)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$63,526.00
  - Cameron-Creole Grand Bayou Marsh Creation (CS-54)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$8,821.00
  - Cameron Meadows Marsh Creation (CS-66)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$5,106.00
  - Rockefeller Refuge Shoreline Protection with LA-08 (ME-18)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$129,498.00
  - Grand-White Lake Landbridge Restoration (ME-19)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$639,965.00
  - South Grand Chenier Marsh Creation (ME-20)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$35,153.00
  - South White Lake Shoreline Protection (ME-22)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$12,485.00
  - Cole’s Bayou Marsh Creation (TV-63)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$15,707.00
  - Little Lake Shoreline Protection and Marsh Creation (BA-37)  
Incremental Funding Request (Federal S&A): \$4,466.00
  - West Belle Pass Headland Restoration (TE-52)  
Incremental Funding Request (Federal S&A): \$3,948.00
  - Bayou Decade Ridge Restoration (TE-138)  
Incremental Funding Request (Federal S&A): \$5,273.00
  - Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Restoration (BA-48)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$4,119.82
  - Grand Liard Marsh and Ridge Restoration (BA-68)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$3,967.79
  - Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery-Marsh Creation 3 (BA-164)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$25,932.00
  - Pass Chaland to Grand Bayou Pass Barrier Shoreline Restoration (BA-35)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$3,161.00
  - Pelican Island and Pass La Mer to Chaland Pass Restoration (BA-38)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$6,705.11
  - Bayou Bonfouca Marsh Creation (PO-104)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$175,430.00

- Northwest Turtle Bay Marsh Creation (BA-125)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$40,216.00
- Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$2,864,259.00
- Coastwide Vegetative Planting (LA-39)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$2,784.00
- CWPPRA Nav Aids and Signage (LA-0328)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$461,961.00

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the request for FY27 O&M incremental funding in the amount of \$4,869,200.72 for PPL 9 + projects as presented. Mr. Hill made the motion, which Ms. Craig seconded; the motion carried without dissent.

- b. PPL1-8 Projects requesting approval for FY27 O&M incremental funding in the total amount of \$356,717 for the following projects:
  - Cameron Creole Maintenance (CS-04a)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$300,646.00
  - Sabine Refuge Marsh Creation Cycles 4 & 5 (CS-28-4-5)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$8,152.00
  - Delta Wide Crevasses (MR-0009)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$47,919

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the FY27 O&M incremental funding in the total amount of \$356,717 for PPL 1 to 8 projects as presented. Mr. Paul made the motion, which Mr. Weller seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

**Agenda Item #20 – Decision: Request for Monitoring Incremental Funding (Brandon Champagne, CPRA)**

The total request for FY27 Monitoring incremental funding is \$11,685,853 and Monitoring budget increases in the amount of \$317,018. Mr. Champagne presented the requests as follows, highlighting those requests which exceed \$100,000:

- a. PPL9+ Projects requesting approval for FY27 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$1,425,474 and Monitoring budget increases in the total amount of \$317,018 for the following projects:
  - Coastwide Vegetative Planting (LA-39)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$93,664.00
  - Black Bayou Culverts Hydrologic Restoration (CS-29)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$44,155.00

- East Marsh Island Marsh Creation (TV-21)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$135,529.00  
Budget Increase Request: \$199,293.00
- Cameron-Creole Freshwater Introduction (CS-49)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$33,427.00
- Cameron-Creole Watershed Grand Bayou Marsh Creation (CS-54)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$99,655.00
- Cameron Meadows Marsh Creation and Terracing (CS-66)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$85,102.00
- Cole's Bayou Marsh Creation (TV-63)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$23,170.00
- South Grand Chenier Marsh Creation (ME-20)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$126,812.00
- Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization (ME-18)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$84,674.00
- Northwest Turtle Bay Marsh Creation (BA-125)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$52,520.00
- Lost Lake Marsh Creation and Hydrologic Restoration (TE-72)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$10,661.00
- Hydrologic Restoration and Vegetative Planting in the Lac des Allemands Swamp (BA-34-2)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$72,252.00
- Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation (BA-42)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$6,168.00
- Bayou Dupont Marsh and Ridge Creation (BA-48)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$3,903.00
- Bayou Dupont Sediment Delivery- Marsh Creation and Terracing #3 (BA-164)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$19,101
- South Lake Lery Marsh Creation and Shoreline Protection (BS-16)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$32,007
- Pass Chaland To Grand Bayou Pass Barrier Shoreline (BA-35)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$137,874.00
- Pelican Island and Pass la Mer to Chaland Pass (BA-0038)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$178,343.00
- Goose Point/Point Platte Marsh Creation (PO-33)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$54,829.00  
Budget Increase Request: \$117,725.00
- Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$131,628

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the FY27 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$1,425,474 and Monitoring budget increases in the total amount of \$317,018 for



PPL9+ projects as presented. Mr. LeBlanc made the motion, which Ms. Craig seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

b. PPL1-8 Projects requesting approval for FY27 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$260,379 for the following projects:

- Cameron Creole Maintenance (CS-04a)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$202,705.00
- Replace Sabine Refuge Water Control Structures at Headquarters Canal, West Cove Canal, and Hog Island Gully (CS-23)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$48,243.00
- Delta Wide Crevasses (MR-09)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$9,431.00

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the FY27 Monitoring incremental funding in the total amount of \$260,379 for PPL1-8 projects. Mr. Hill made the motion, which Ms. Craig seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

Mr. Champagne presented the final incremental request as follows:

- c. Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) requesting approval for FY27 incremental funding in the total amount of \$10,000,000
  - Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (LA-30)  
Incremental Funding Request: \$10,000,000

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

Colonel Jones called for a motion to approve the FY27 incremental funding request in the total amount of \$10,000,000 for CRMS program. Mr. LeBlanc made the motion, which Mr. Hill seconded. The motion carried without dissent.

## **9. VI. INFORMATION**

### **Agenda Item #3 – Report: Electronic Vote (Jennifer Vititoe, USACE)**

Ms. Vititoe reported recent results of Technical Committee electronic voting:

- September 20, 2024 – the NMFS and CPRA received Technical Committee approval for a change in scope for the Breton West Landbridge Marsh Creation (West) River aux Chenes to Grand Lake (BS-38) project pursuant to Section 6.1. (2) (d) of the CWPPRA Standard Operating Procedures (ver. 28). [in Agenda Item #11].
- September 13, 2024 – the Technical Committee approved an electronic vote that was requested to revise the language of the 15 November 2023 Task Force electronic vote to approve to fund the 2024 Report to Congress in the amount of \$95,000. This revision is needed to ensure the voting language cites Planning Funds as the funding source for this effort and to document the increase to the overall FY24 Planning and Outreach Budget. [in Agenda Item #18].

**Agenda Item #4 – Report: Status of CWPPRA Program Funds and Projects (Jernice Cheavis, USACE)**

Ms. Jernice Cheavis, USACE, presented an overview of CWPPRA funds. The fully funded total Program Estimate since its inception to the present (authorized projects from PPLs 1 – 33) is \$3.422 billion, with \$2.9 billion committed from the trust fund. She explained the total funded estimate (received since inception, and anticipated through FY2026) is \$2.618 billion, with the federal portion received through FY2024 of \$2.52 billion. Current Task Force-approved funding for projects in Phase I, Phase II, and O&M and Monitoring totals \$2.7 billion, with the federal commitment at \$2.28 billion. Authorized funding for each agency as allocated currently totals \$2.372 billion. She mentioned the breakdown of federal and non-federal shares is depicted, which by law is a 15% contribution from the state. The funded estimate and current funded estimates are more aligned with recent funds received and funds committed; whereas the program estimate and current approved estimate are what the federal government share will have spent by the end of the projects’ lives and approved phases, respectively. Ms. Cheavis reviewed the federal funds received through FY24, \$2,52,487,050, with a federal cost share requirement of \$1,991,675,976.63, leaving \$60,811,073.37 available.

As Ms. Cheavis previously mentioned, the Program Estimate is currently \$3,422,357,549 for PPLs 1 – 33. A request will be made today for the Technical Committee to the annual request for funding for Construction Program Technical Services in the amount of \$275,716. Two project budget increases totaling \$317,018 will also be requested. If all are approved, these budget increases bring the total program estimate to \$3,422,950,283.

Ms. Cheavis stated the CWPPRA Program has \$55,651,034.18 of funding carried from the May 2024 Task Force meeting. The Program anticipates an estimate of FY25 DOI funding in the amount of \$92,110,726 (which will be allocated for the FY25 construction program.) Thus, the total available funds for requests presented at today’s proceedings are \$147,761,760. She went on to state the total of anticipated funding requests (which will be presented individually at this meeting) is \$20,517,771. If the funding requests are approved, the Program will move forward into December proceedings with available funds totaling \$133,331,959. CWPPRA has authorized 238 projects. The 133 active projects including 24 in Phase I Engineering and Design, 28 in Phase II Construction and 6 support projects. There are 75 projects that have been constructed and are now in O&M phase, and 40 projects that have been closed financially. Additionally, CWPPRA has deauthorized 49 projects, transferred 10 projects, and placed 6 in the inactive category. The 6 technical support programs include Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS), Monitoring Contingency Fund, Storm Recovery Procedures, Construction Program Technical Services, the Wetland Conservation Plan, and Programmatic Signage.

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

**Agenda Item #5 – Report: Construction Update (Jennifer Vitioe, USACE)**

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

Ms. Kristen Ramsey (FWS) presented the construction update for the New Orleans Landbridge Shoreline Stabilization and Marsh Creation (PO-169) project. She began by thanking

her project team Joe Wyble, Jacques Boudreaux and David Chambers. She showed the location of the PPL 24 project and described features of the 253 acres in three marsh creation with of two borrow sites. Phase 2 construction was approved in February 2019 and in February 2023 a 25-acre extension was approved in marsh creation area two. The project will result in approximately 3 miles of shoreline protection and contributing to the preservation of the New Orleans Landbridge. In Marsh creation area three, noticeable mudflats and vegetation were noted, before the dredge company defaulted. Surveys were conducted, heat maps developed, to determine the non-uniformity of the fill elevation. More fill is required because 61% is below the one-foot elevation. All cells are completed, however, additional fill is needed at approximately \$1.2 M. Demob has occurred, but they will return in the fall to complete Marsh Creation area three. Marsh creation areas one and two are solid and vegetated, with project completion anticipated by December 2024. Phase 2 was funded at \$18.5 M, with \$15.9 M for construction and \$2.6 M contingency; \$14.4 M has been spent leaving approximately \$1.2 M.

Ms. Donna Rogers (NMFS) presented the construction update for No Name Bayou Marsh Creation Project (CS-78). She thanked her project team Travis Moore, Joanne Tribou, Jacques Boudreaux, and Jason Kroll. Ms. Rogers then described the PPL 24 project located in Cameron Parish. Construction began in July 2024 with a cost of \$14.8 M and a contract time of 455 days. She then presented a series of drawings describing the project goals of 466 acres of marsh creation in four cells. Ms. Rodgers concluded with aerial photographs of the project depicting the nearly completed internal dikes that suffered minimal hurricane impacts.

Mr. Robert DuBois, (FWS) presented the construction update for the Mid-Breton Land Bridge Marsh Creation and Terracing Project (BS-32). Mr. Dubois began describing the project goals to create 312 acres of marsh in four marsh creation areas in Plaquemines Parish in the amount of \$27,185,568 Phase 2 construction costs plus contingency. A project scope change reduced the acres in April 2023. The construction contract was awarded in the amount of \$25,524,854 in May 2023 with construction beginning September 2023. An expansion request was granted in February 2024 with completion anticipated in July 2025. Mr. DuBois showed arial photos of the project under construction.

Mr. Kevin Roy (FWS) provided an update on the Grand Bayou Ridge and Restoration Project (BA-217). He began by thanking the project team Tye Fitzgerald, Adam Linson, Connor Hannan. Next, a map showing the location of the project in the eastern Barataria Basin along the Mississippi River. Mr. Roy continued describing the project features of marsh creation in two cells totaling 249 acres, and nine acres of ridge restoration. Next, he reviewed the history of the project, which just began construction. In January of 2024, it received Phase 2 construction funds, in March, bids were advertised, with the bid opening in April. The base bid was not awarded because there was a deficit in construction funds. In May 2024, the Task Force approved a construction budget increase if \$4,802,184 to allow for the contract to be awarded. Mr. Roy continued to explain there are state funds available for this project in the amount of \$12.1 M, and an additional \$1 M from the Office of Coastal Management. This base bid represents the CWPPRA portion of the project. The additional funding made possible the Alternate 1, which is marsh creation area 3, adding 73 acres to the project. In June 2024, the construction contract was awarded to Weeks Marine, with the Notice to Proceed issued August 6, 2024. The base bid for the CWPPRA project is \$46,516,900 with a construction budget, including contingency of \$52,016,900. Mr. Roy continued with photographs of the project of the construction that has recently commenced. Pre-construction surveys are underway, with the magnetometer surveys revealing an undocumented pipeline. Mechanical dredging for the containment dikes and the first

lift of the ridges is scheduled to begin the later part of October. In March, the hydraulic dredging will begin in the river, with project completion anticipated in September 2025.

Mr. Mike Nichols (NRCS) provided an update on the LaBranche Marsh Creation Project (PO-75). He described the project location in St. Charles Parish adjacent to PO-17. Both PO-75, with 725 acres of created marsh and PO-133 with 75 acres cell 1 and 650 acres in cell 2, were combined into one \$43 M project. Approximately 6.2 million cubic yards of material was utilized and the project is nearing completion. Mr. Nichols explained all of the dikes, tidal creeks and tidal ponds have been constructed, with nearly 75% of the material placed. He proceeded to show a map of the project depicting the features. Mr. Nichols then presented a series of images of the project including the final lift of the containment dikes, the RM White dredge, and the area being filled to the design height. He then discussed the impacts of Hurricane Francine, which travelled over the project area. The project fared well, despite the large amount of water, wave action and erosion damaging some of the containment dikes. Mr. Nichols then reported repair work is underway. He concluded with a report on the birds satisfaction with the project area and a summary of the project numbers, 55,000 linear feet of containment dikes and 6,680 linear feet of tidal channels. By pumping 50,000 to 60,000 cubic yards a day, project completion is anticipated by the end of 2024.

In conclusion, Colonel Jones thanked the presenters and invited questions or comments; none were proffered.

#### **Agenda Item #6 – Report: Outreach Committee Report (Lauren Leonpacher, USGS)**

Ms. Leonpacher summarized activities, products and events conducted by the Outreach Committee from May 2024 to October 2024. She thanked those involved with the Dedication Ceremony in May, highlighting the high turnout. Ms. Leonpacher highlighted one of the educational components of Outreach at Corporal Middlebrook Elementary School in Lafayette, her alma mater. A teacher training workshop was conducted at UNO covering the most recent Watermarks360. The Outreach team was able to join a few WVA site visits providing the opportunity for media coverage. She then reviewed the NRCS hosted Southern Regional Cooperative Soil Survey and the Coastal Expo conferences that were attended. Ms. Leonpacher then reviewed the increases in social media and electronic outreach. With nearly 2000 Newsflash subscribers and about 5,000 followers, and 16,000 posts viewed on Facebook, CWPPRA's numbers continually improve. The Wetlands writing contest had 209 submissions of uplifting and inspirational short stories, poetry or personal narratives. Ms. Leonpacher then highlighted the recent success of Watermarks360 with nearly 25% of website users based out of state, some international, and almost 2.3 million page views. The upcoming Watermarks360 will focus on the Cameron-Creole Freshwater Introduction project with an engineering component and is tentatively titled *Moving Water*. She reported that the Nicholls Coastal Center is progressing well and the CWPPRA content was finalized in August. Ms. Leonpacher concluded her presentation with a list of upcoming activities including the RAE Conference in DC, Wild Things at Big Branch, Ocean Commotion as well as various festivals between now and December.

Colonel Jones complimented Ms. Leonpacher and the outreach team for their efforts and contributions. He opened the floor to comments or questions; none were proffered.

#### **Agenda Item #7 – Report: Coastwide Reference Monitoring System (Leigh Anne Sharp, USGS)**

Ms. Sharp began with a programmatic update, reporting that her USGS counterpart Ms. Sarai Pizza has move on and Ms. Rachel Villani has taken over many of those duties with Mr. Dave Hewitt assisting. In April the elevation change in accretion was completed while vegetation data is being collected currently and spatial data begins collection next week.

Reviewing data, the drought caused some settling, some elevation loss, but not as much as anticipated. Ms. Sharp then presented data depicting a lower Barataria site that experience a high elevation gain that then settled slightly. She then discussed the Terrebonne brackish marsh site, where a loss of nearly four centimeters was experienced. Following with an interior Mermentau site, a settlement of approximately 10 cm was noted, most likely because it was floating. Finally, the Calcasieu Sabine site that was identified as one of the worst because it is a floating salt marsh was able to maintain the elevation. It was able to settle down, dry out and revegetate.

Ms. Sharp continued describing Hurricane Francine damage assessment. Damage to CRMS infrastructure included four missing hydro stations and four stations with four by four and two by ten lumber snapped. There was deposition of large stick sediment and wrack piles as well as erosion, but not as much as with Hurricane Ida. She then continued describing damage to specific CRMS sites one of which endured RSET damage, and another that is demonstrating the process of deposition that will be followed by land loss, unless there is some intervention. The hydro station that endured the most damage was near Davis Pond because of the path the storm followed. Ms. Sharp then noted that the intact barrier islands protected the area that was nearer the storm while the areas at a greater distance endured damage that was more severe. The worrisome brown marsh identified earlier in the summer, remained after the storm, which was good news. One interesting finding was one CRMS site in the south near Isles Dernieres remained despite the marsh having eroded for quite some time and is still capturing data. She went on to describe the maximum water elevations detected was between six and eight feet in central Terrebonne.

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

#### **Agenda Item #8 – Report: Coastwide Nutria Control Program – Annual Report (Jennifer Manuel, LDWF)**

Ms. Manuel presented the annual report on the Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b) beginning 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 registration process and tracking information is conducted online. The trapping season is defined as November 20 to March 30 each year. The initial incentive payment to trappers was increased to \$6 a tail in 2019 to encourage participation. A mobile collection station makes its way across the coast, within the set program boundary; additional collection sites have been added as necessary.

Because of the cancellation of the October 2023 Task Force meeting, Ms. Manuel explained she was presenting the current year and past year’s information. She provided comparative statistical data from seasons 2019—2024. Fluctuations in participation have been influenced in those years by the Covid stay-at-home mandates, by the subsequent economic downturn, and by Hurricane Ida respectively. 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, but education efforts to promote sustainable methods are being employed.

Ms. Manuel reported that more than 6 million nutrias have been harvested out of coastal Louisiana since program inception. She provided harvest statistics by parish, along with herbivory assessment obtained by aerial survey conducted in April 2024. The survey reveals a reduction in damage overall, but she asserted that some of the damage sites have been converted to open water, so the nutrias migrate towards fresh vegetation. She indicated few sites that have recovered (where trappers have easy access). Site access is often a deterrent for trappers, so inaccessible areas tend to experience on-going damage.

In conclusion, Ms. Manuel reported efforts to promote the program and attract new and or younger participants through education and social media feeds. She directed those interested to the nutria.com website.

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

#### **Agenda Item #9 – Report: Status of Unconstructed Projects (Jennifer Vititoe, USACE)**

Ms. Vititoe explained that the P&E subcommittee met in July 2024 (as it does annually) to assess unconstructed projects that are at least three years old. The goal is to identify projects with issues that should be addressed, especially those with issues critical enough to impede project progress. Ms. Vititoe provided a list of eight unconstructed CWPPRA projects that were identified as “critical watch.”

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

#### **Agenda Item #21 – Report: Priority Project List 34, Projects for Consideration (Jennifer Vititoe, USACE)**

Ms. Vititoe explained that per the PPL34 process, the Technical Committee selects up to ten projects for consideration. Because of landowner issues impacting access, project evaluation, and the ability to conduct engineering and design activities in Phase 1, two candidate projects have been removed from consideration. Southeast Lafitte Marsh Creation and West Dupre Cut Marsh Creation were removed from consideration as PPL 34 candidates.

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

#### **Agenda Item #22 -- Additional Agenda Items**

No additional agenda items were proffered.

### **VII. REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

Mr. Mart Black, Coastal Restoration Director, Terrebonne Parish inquired as to when decisions would be made regarding projects with land rights issues. Dr. Von Hoven replied that projects will be reevaluated at the end of March 2025.

## VIII. CLOSING

Ms. Vititoe was called upon to iterate the following schedule of meetings:

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

The Technical Committee meeting will be held December 12, 2024 at 9:30 a.m.

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

|                   |           |                     |             |
|-------------------|-----------|---------------------|-------------|
| December 12, 2024 | 9:30 a.m. | Technical Committee | New Orleans |
| January 23, 2025  | 9:30 a.m. | Task Force          | Lafayette   |

**C. Adjournment**

Colonel Jones called for a motion to adjourn today's proceedings. Mr. Hill made the motion, which Mr. Paul seconded. The motion carried without dissent and the meeting was adjourned at 11:46 p.m.