

BREAUX ACT
Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

TASK FORCE MEETING
4 June 2013

Minutes

I. INTRODUCTION

Colonel Richard Hansen convened the 84th meeting of the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force. The meeting began at 9:30 a.m. on June 4, 2013, at the Estuarine Fisheries and Habitat Center in Lafayette, 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 Richard Hansen, Chairman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
Ms. Jane Watson, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), sitting in for Mr. William Honker
Mr. Jeffrey Weller, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Mr. Jerome Zeringue, State of Louisiana, Governor's Office of Coastal Activities (GOCA), sitting in for Mr. Garret Graves
Mr. Christopher Doley, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Mr. Britt Paul, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), sitting in for Mr. Kevin Norton

III. OPENING REMARKS

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

Colonel Hansen asked if the Task Force had any opening comments or changes to the agenda.

Colonel Hansen 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.

Mr. Paul made a motion to adopt the agenda as written. Mr. Zeringue seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

IV. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FROM JANUARY 24, 2013 TASK FORCE MEETING

Mr. Brad Inman, USACE, indicated that the minutes from the January 24, 2013 Task Force Meeting had been sent to the Task Force members, and any changes had been incorporated. Colonel Hansen asked the Task Force members if they had any comments on the minutes. There were no comments.

The Task Force adopted the January 24, 2013 Task Force meeting minutes.

V. TASK FORCE DECISIONS

A. Agenda Item #9 – Decision: FY14 Planning Budget Approval, including the Project Priority List (PPL) 24 Process, and Presentation of Fiscal Year (FY) 14 Outreach Budget (Process, Size, Funding, etc.)

Mr. Inman, representing the Planning and Evaluation (P&E) Subcommittee, presented the recommended FY14 PPL 24 process. Changes between the PPL 23 process and the PPL 24 process are minimal; language was added to emphasize consistency with the State Master Plan and to clarify that if a demonstration project does not show technical merit, it can be dropped from further consideration at the April Technical Committee meeting. The Technical Committee recommended approval of the PPL 24 process as presented.

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

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

Mr. Scott Wilson, United States Geological Survey (USGS), presented the proposed FY14 Outreach budget of \$445,800. This budget includes participation by all of the CWPPRA agencies in outreach efforts, all outreach events such as education efforts, dedication ceremonies, and conferences, photo and video projects, articles for the *Louisiana Sportsman* and other publications, *Watermarks*, staff time, and the CWPPRA website.

Mr. Inman noted that the Technical Committee voted to recommend approval of this budget.

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

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

Ms. Susan Mabry, USACE, presented the proposed FY14 Planning budget of \$4,607,483. This figure is in addition to the Outreach budget. Mr. Inman noted that this is a slight reduction from what was approved by the Technical Committee because Louisiana Coastal Protection and

Restoration Authority (CPRA) requested to remove a line item under Supplemental Tasks for Core Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Support in the CPRA Planning budget in the amount of \$10,995. The Technical Committee voted by email on May 6, 2013 to approve this requested Planning budget decrease.

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

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

Mr. Paul made a motion to approve the PPL 24 process as presented by Mr. Inman. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Mr. Doley made a motion to approve the FY14 Outreach budget in the amount of \$445,800. Mr. Paul seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Mr. Doley made a motion to approve the FY14 Planning budget of \$4,607,483 as stated by Ms. Mabry. Mr. Paul seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

B. Agenda Item #10 – Report/Decision: 20-Year Life Decision Matrix

Mr. John Jurgensen, NRCS, presented the 20-Year Life Decision Matrix on behalf of the P&E Subcommittee. The CWPPRA Program is in Year 23 of existence. Project lives are 20 years. Recognizing that the Program needed a mechanism to evaluate projects at the end of their project lives, at the January 23, 2013 20-Year Life (20YL) Workshop, the Task Force directed the P&E Subcommittee to develop a decision matrix to assess project closeout activities. The Technical Committee and P&E Subcommittee have evaluated and discussed the first two projects nearing their 20-year lives, as well as other projects, to demonstrate that the matrix can be used for all four of the different 20YL options: extension of project life, closeout, transfer of responsibility, and closeout with removal of features.

The P&E Subcommittee developed a flowchart to guide project sponsors how to proceed for each individual project. The goal is to start this decision process as projects reach Year 15. Several questions need to be answered: Is there sufficient justification to support project extension? Does the project have monitoring data to support that? Does the project have maintenance requirements? If the answers to all of these questions are “yes,” then CWPPRA should keep the project in place, either through CWPPRA itself or via a transfer to another agency. If the answer to any of the three questions is “no,” then the project sponsors need to explore project closeout. The project sponsor would need to decide whether or not to leave project features in place by examining the liabilities of project features and the cost of removing features.

In general, CWPPRA should be able to walk away from marsh creation projects and other projects that do not contain hard features or require maintenance. The process is expected to include a closeout report and return unused funds to the Program. Other types of projects with

hard features would likely require a report that outlines the risks of leaving the features in place and the cost of removal, including potential mitigation requirements. The Task Force will then decide whether or not to fund removal of project features. If the Task Force decides to remove project features, a funding decision may be necessary to increase the budget of the project.

The most desirable option for the CWPPRA Program would be transferring a project to another entity such as a non-governmental organization (NGO), State agency, or Parish. This process would include a closeout report and reconciliation of project funds.

The final option for CWPPRA would be to continue the project within the CWPPRA Program. If no additional funds are required, then the project would just remain in the Program. If the Task Force does not agree to this action, then the project sponsors would need to start again at Step One in the decision matrix.

Mr. Jurgensen noted that it is anticipated that project sponsors will present the recommendations for their projects at the April Technical Committee meeting.

Mr. Inman thanked Mr. Jurgensen and the other members of the P&E Subcommittee. He noted that developing this decision matrix has been a long process. The Technical Committee recommended that the Task Force adopt this matrix process.

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

Colonel Hansen opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Charles Broussard, a resident of Vermilion Parish, stated that the CWPPRA Program has been very beneficial to Vermilion Parish.

Mr. Mike Turley, Wayfarer Environmental, asked if CWPPRA had conducted a legal analysis of transferring liability to a receiving agency. Mr. Inman responded that the USACE, CPRA, and other agencies included legal representatives in the 20YL Workshop. They expect that each project will be different, and individual legal issues will have to be resolved by the legal offices of the Federal sponsor of each project. He noted that the CWPPRA Program has evolved over its 23 years of existence and language in various landowner agreements and other contracts have changed.

Mr. Scott Wandell, USACE, presented the decision matrix process for the Bayou LaBranche Wetland Creation Project (PO-17). The USACE worked closely with CPRA to develop a plan to close out this project. A site visit is planned to determine the condition of the project, but the project team does not currently anticipate removal of any project features. A vegetation survey and elevation survey are also planned. A final operations, maintenance, and monitoring (OM&M) report will be conducted in 2014, which is consistent with the three-year OM&M schedule because the last report was prepared in 2011. The project team estimated that approximately \$116,000 would be needed in additional funding for these closeout activities. This funding request has already been approved. Pending survey and site visit results, the

USACE will submit a public notice that the project has reached the end of its life and will prepare a final accounting of all project funds. The final action will be Task Force approval of project closeout in 2014.

Mr. Inman stated that since this is the first project to reach the end of its life, the P&E Subcommittee suggests that the Task Force make a formal motion to approve the proposed path forward for the record. He noted that any unique findings from the site visit and vegetation and elevation surveys will be reported to the Task Force, however, the USACE fully anticipates close out of this project in 2014.

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

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

Mr. Darryl Clark, USFWS, presented the proposed path forward for the Cameron Prairie Refuge Protection Project (ME-09). This project is a typical foreshore rock dike located 0 to 50 feet from the shoreline along 2.5 miles of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). It protects 247 acres of fresh marsh and is located on the Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. The project has done so well that the vegetation is actually accreting to the rock. In 2001, the USACE installed warning signs at the request of the towing industry. However, Mr. Clark noted that the rock is not in the navigation channel and is not a hazard to navigation; the only problems occurred when barge operators tried to dock along the bank of the GIWW. The project has about \$175,000 remaining in its budget. The cost of removing this project would be \$7.4 million. There has been no maintenance required in 19 years. Benefits of the project will continue without maintenance. There is no justification for project life extension. The landowner, USFWS, does not have funds for maintenance and therefore does not want CWPPRA to transfer the project to USFWS. However, they have no problem with the project remaining on their property. There is very little risk and liability of leaving project features in place, and those features will continue to protect 247 acres on the National Wildlife Refuge. Mr. Clark noted that the cost of removal is 8.7 times the cost to construct the project. USFWS recommends the project be closed out and the remaining funds be returned to the CWPPRA Program in 2014.

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

Colonel Hansen opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Broussard stated that he owns land on both sides of the GIWW. This land was eroding, but now the project is building land back. He thanked the Task Force.

Mr. Inman informed the Task Force that the Technical Committee recommended the path forward presented by Mr. Clark.

Mr. Paul made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve the 20-Year Life Decision Matrix developed by the P&E Subcommittee. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Mr. Doley made a motion to approve the path forward for the Bayou LaBranche Wetland Creation Project (PO-17) as outlined by Mr. Wandell. Ms. Watson seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Mr. Weller made a motion to approve the path forward for the Cameron Prairie Refuge Protection Project (ME-09) as outlined by Mr. Clark. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

C. Agenda Item #12 – Decision: Request for a Change in Scope and Name for the PPL 10 – Mississippi River Reintroduction into Northwestern Barataria Basin Project (BA-34)

The EPA and CPRA requested approval for a change in project scope and name for the Mississippi River Reintroduction into Northwestern Barataria Basin Project (BA-34). The project team proposed focusing on restoring hydrology within an impounded part of the original approved project area by gapping spoil banks and installing culverts, which would be highly cost-effective. The project team also proposes to change the project name to Hydrologic Restoration and Vegetative Planting in the Lac des Allemands Swamp (BA-34-2). Mr. Inman informed the Task Force that the Technical Committee recommended approving the scope and name change.

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

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

Ms. Watson made a motion to approve the Technical Committee recommendation to approve a scope and name change for the Mississippi River Reintroduction into Northwestern Barataria Basin Project (BA-34). The new name will be the Hydrologic Restoration and Vegetative Planting in the Lac des Allemands Swamp Project (BA-34-2). Mr. Paul seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

D. Agenda Item #13 – Decision Request for a Change in Scope for the PPL 10 – Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization Project (ME-18)

NMFS and CPRA requested a project scope change to proceed with design to 30% and 95% for the Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization Project (ME-18). NMFS and CPRA proposed to scale down the project from 9.2 miles to 2.0 miles. The project team also requested a fully funded cost estimate decrease from \$95,988,680 to \$28,082,507. Mr. Inman informed the Task Force that the Technical Committee recommended approval of the scope change.

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

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

Mr. Doley made a motion to approve the recommendation by the Technical Committee to approve the scope change for the Rockefeller Refuge Gulf Shoreline Stabilization Project (ME-18) and reduce the budget to \$28,082,507. Mr. Zeringue seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

E. Agenda Item #14 – Decision: Request for Approval for Final De-authorization on the PPL 9 -- Weeks Bay Marsh Creation/Shoreline Protection/Commercial Canal/Freshwater Redirection Project

Colonel Hansen reported that the Task Force received a letter the morning of the meeting requesting that the Task Force transfer the Weeks Bay Marsh Creation/Shoreline Protection/Commercial Canal/Freshwater Redirection Project to the Iberia Parish Levee, Hurricane, and Conservation District. Mr. Zeringue, on behalf of the State of Louisiana and Iberia Parish, requested that the Task Force consider an amended motion to transfer this project instead of de-authorize it.

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

Mr. Inman noted that this project has been discussed extensively at numerous meetings. He expressed his opinion that the transfer would be appropriate.

Colonel Hansen opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Sherrill Segrera, Vermilion Parish Coastal Advisory Committee, reported that, although this project is located in Iberia Parish, it is very important Vermilion Parish. This transfer will allow the local stakeholders the opportunity to find other funding for this project.

Mr. W.P. “Judge” Edwards, Vermilion Corporation, thanked the Task Force for allowing the local stakeholders to find other sources of funding. He noted that he understood the technical challenges involved with continuing this project within the CWPPRA Program.

Mr. Ben Langlins, Vice Chair of Iberia Parish Levee, Hurricane, and Conservation District, stated that there has been a lot of engineering work done for this project, and the transfer allows the local stakeholders to save that work. They appreciate that the term “de-authorization” was not applied to this project. He noted that this project meets the criteria of the State Master Plan and thanked the Task Force.

Mr. Inman stated that CWPPRA has an existing Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the transfer of projects, and the project team has already presented the Parish with all of the

engineering information for this project. This transfer will end the fiscal liability of CWPPRA and local stakeholders will be responsible for future funding.

Mr. Segrera asked that the local stakeholders be given all the engineering work completed by the USACE and other agencies so that they can use it to further the project.

Mr. Zeringue made a motion to approve transfer the Weeks Bay Marsh Creation/Shoreline Protection/Commercial Canal/Freshwater Redirection Project to the Iberia Parish Levee, Hurricane, and Conservation District. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

F. Agenda Item #15 – Decision: Request for Approval for Final De-authorization on five projects

Mr. Bren Haase, CPRA, stated that CPRA requested de-authorization for five projects. The projects being considered for de-authorization are:

- Delta Building Diversion North of Fort St. Philip (BS-10), PPL 10, USACE
- Avoca Island Diversion and Land Building (TE-49), PPL 12, USACE
- Spanish Pass Diversion (MR-14), PPL 13, USACE
- White Ditch Resurrection (BS-12), PPL 14, NRCS
- Bohemia Mississippi River Reintroduction (BS-15), PPL 17, EPA

Mr. Brad Inman, USACE, reported that the Technical Committee recommended final de-authorization for these five projects.

Mr. Chris Allen, CPRA, explained that all of these projects have technical, landowner, or policy issues that affect implementation. The discussions for this action began at the September 2012 Technical Committee meeting.

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

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

Mr. Doley made a motion to finalize de-authorization on these five projects. Mr. Paul seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

G. Agenda Item #16 – Decision: Request for Approval for an Inactive Status, SOP Language for Inactive Status, and the Inactivation of the PPL 9 – Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization Project (TV-11b)

The Task Force considered the Technical Committee recommendation that unconstructed projects that are considered feasible, but have not been funded for construction due to programmatic issues (e.g., high costs, cost share agreement issues, etc.) and have completed a 95% Design Review may be approved for inactivation. If this occurs, all project funding will be

returned to the Program. If conditions (e.g., economic and/or programmatic) change, then the project may be considered for a return to active status with an updated funding request. The Technical Committee has provided draft language detailing this new status for the CWPPRA SOP.

Mr. Inman stated that there has been extensive discussion about this issue, particularly at the last Technical Committee meeting. The P&E Subcommittee and the Technical Committee have developed language changes to the CWPPRA SOP. A project must be well defined and ready for construction to qualify for this action.

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

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

The Task Force then considered the Technical Committee's recommendation to approve inactivation of the PPL 9 – Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization Project (TV-11b). Mr. Inman noted that this project has been considered for funding five or six times, and it is a good project, but it has not received funding. There are always more good projects than there is available funding. By transferring this project into inactive status, the funds will be removed from the project and will not be considered when reviewing the total funding of the Program.

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

Colonel Hansen opened the floor to comments from the public.

Mr. Segrera thanked the Task Force for putting this project in another category. He noted that the RESTORE Act will have money for CWPPRA projects that are shovel-ready and asked if this project would still be considered for those funds. Mr. Zeringue responded that the State is evaluating all projects for RESTORE funding. Until the State knows how much money will be available, they will work with stakeholders to identify critical projects. Mr. Zeringue could not guarantee that this project would be constructed if funds are available, but it would be considered. Mr. Segrera said that this is a good project, and it should be at least considered as a project for the RESTORE money.

Mr. Inman added that the project will remain inactive until conditions change or until the project is transferred to another entity. An influx of funds would qualify as a change in conditions and the project could be reconsidered under CWPPRA.

Mr. Edwards thanked the Task Force for creating this new category and not de-authorizing the Freshwater Bayou Project. He also expressed thanks on behalf of the Rainey Conservation Alliance.

Ms. Leslie Suazo, Ducks Unlimited, echoed the above comments. This category allows landowners to work with NGOs to look for alternative ways to construct the project. She expressed appreciation for that latitude.

Mr. Zeringue stated that the State does support the concept behind this project and is investing in a similar Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) project in the area to address this critical need.

Mr. Paul made a motion to approve the language changes to the CWPPRA SOP to allow for certain projects to be placed in an inactive status as outlined above. Mr. Doley seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

Mr. Doley made a motion to move the Freshwater Bayou Bank Stabilization Project (TV-11b) to inactive status. Mr. Paul seconded. The motion was passed by the Task Force.

VI. INFORMATION

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

Ms. Mabry reported on the current CWPPRA budget. The total Construction Program funding is \$1.8 billion, plus \$145 million for the Planning Program. The total estimated cost for all projects on PPLs 1-22, including Planning, is \$2.5 billion. Federal and non-Federal funds for the Program total \$2.2 billion, leaving a potential funding gap of \$388 million. The current approved amount is \$1.5 billion, and the current funded amount is \$1.4 billion. Beginning in PPL 10, CWPPRA began to approve projects in phases, so all of the approved projects are not funded. The funding gap could decrease by re-scoping projects or halting construction. The funding gap could also decrease by reducing the estimate for unconstructed projects.

Total Federal funds received to-date for construction is \$1.1 billion. The Program anticipates receiving \$75.4 million for construction for FY13. The construction budget is currently \$14.7 million. If the Task Force adopts the recommendations made by the Technical Committee today, the deficit will be reduced to - \$12.9 million. Ms. Mabry noted that not all of the approved funds are obligated, so the Program is not operating at a deficit. This is based on estimates for the PPLs currently approved.

The CWPPRA Program currently has 153 active projects. Ten are under construction, with seven expected to be completed in 2013 and three in 2014. The Program has constructed 99 projects. 34 projects are currently in Phase I, 20 are in Phase II, and 43 have been de-authorized.

As of January 2013, the Planning Program had \$390 million in surplus funds available for a total of \$5,390,025. The Planning Program should also be able to carry over some funds for next year.

The June 4, 2013 Technical Committee meeting did not include any funding requests.

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

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

B. Agenda Item #4 – Report: Request Approved by Task Force Electronic Vote to Increase Monitoring Incremental Funding and Budget for the PPL 1 – Bayou LaBranche Wetland Creation Project (PO-17)

Mr. Inman reported that the USACE and CPRA requested approval for a monitoring funding and budget increase of \$116,632 for the Bayou LaBranche Wetland Creation Project (PO-17) to allow the completion of planned activities for project data collection, including a site visit, topographic survey, vegetation survey, and compilation of an OM&M report. The Technical Committee voted at the April 16, 2013 meeting to recommend approval for a monitoring funding increase in the amount of \$138,277. The requested amount was subsequently amended to \$116,632 after cost-saving measures were taken by the local and Federal sponsors. The Task Force approved the request via electronic vote on May 29, 2013.

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

Mr. Doley asked Mr. Inman to clarify why the vote was held before the meeting. Mr. Inman responded that the project team wanted the budget increase approved quickly to arrange field trips to look at structures to determine if additional repairs are needed, which would require additional cost.

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

C. Agenda Item #5 – Report: Construction Update

Mr. Inman reported that the P&E Subcommittee decided that CWPPRA should place more emphasis on projects actually being constructed, so the project managers of several recently completed and/or ongoing projects made short presentations to the Task Force and the public.

Mr. Phillip Parker, Project Manager for NMFS, reported on two projects which were recently put into construction: Pelican Island and West Belle Pass. The Pelican Island Project is part of a larger effort within the Barataria Bay to restore and protect the barrier island complex. Several other similar projects within the area were constructed by other programs and the State. West Belle Pass is adjacent to and supports critical infrastructure in Port Fourchon.

The Barataria Barrier Island Complex Project: Pelican Island (BA-38-1) had a final construction cost of \$45.6 million. It consists of 2.4 miles of barrier island restoration, consisting of 240 acres of beach and dune, and 300 acres of marsh restoration. This project was completed after 390 days of construction. Mr. Parker showed the public pictures of pre- and

post- construction aerial photography. He noted that this project won an American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) award for the Best Beach Restoration.

The West Belle Pass Barrier Headland Project (TE-52) consists of 2.2 miles of barrier headland restoration, consisting of 93 acres of beach and dune, and 227 acres of marsh restoration. The total construction cost was \$31.5 million. Construction lasted 370 days. The project used 2.7 million cubic yards of sand and 1.3 million cubic yards of mud from the Gulf of Mexico. Vegetative planting is ongoing, and 63,000 plants will be planted to help stabilize the projects. Mr. Parker presented photographs that showed three to four feet of buildup along the sand fences within a few months of project completion.

Mr. Jurgensen presented the progress on four projects: Raccoon Island Shoreline Protection, Coast-wide Vegetative Plantings, South Shore of the Pen Shoreline Protection & Marsh Creation, and GIWW Bank Restoration of Critical Areas.

The Raccoon Island Shoreline Protection Project (TE-48) is located in Terrebonne Parish. It was completed in April 2013 with a final construction cost of \$10.4 million. It consists of 55 acres of marsh creation using a Gulf of Mexico borrow source. Vegetative plantings consisting of 38,000 plants were completed on the back barrier marsh in May 2013 with a final construction cost of \$37,800.

The Coast-wide Vegetation Plantings Project (LA-39) currently consists of three locations, two of which have completed construction and one of which is ongoing. The first site was in Terrebonne Parish in South Lake Decade. It was planted with 27,000 vegetative plugs of smooth cordgrass, 1,000 trade gallons of smooth cordgrass, and 6,000 trade gallons of California bulrush at a cost of \$112,000 and was completed in October 2012. The second location was in Iberia Parish along the northern face of Marsh Island. It was completed in April 2013 at a cost of \$98,000. This section included 5,000 trade gallons of smooth cordgrass, 2,000 trade gallons of California bulrush, plus 1,000 trade gallons of smooth cordgrass, 1,000 vegetative plugs of smooth cordgrass, and 200 trade gallons of black needlerush in a nearby interior marsh. The third site is in the Cameron-Creole area in Cameron Parish and is ongoing. 50,000 trade gallons of smooth cordgrass planting is expected to be completed in June 2013 at a cost of \$379,000. The total construction cost for Year 1 of this project is \$589,000.

The South Shore of The Pen Shoreline Protection & Marsh Creation Project (BA-41) was completed in August 2012 with a final construction cost of \$12 million. This project is located in Jefferson Parish, south of Lafitte.

The GIWW Bank Restoration of Critical Areas (TE-43) is in Terrebonne Parish. Construction began in June 2013 and is expected to cost \$6.2 million. CIAP constructed a similar project along other reaches of the GIWW, and the CWPPRA project is adding to that work.

Mr. Kevin Roy, USFWS, presented the progress of the Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation Project (BA-42). This project is located in Plaquemines Parish on the west side of the Mississippi River near West Pointe a la Hache. Construction began in February 2012 and the

expected construction cost to CWPPRA is \$23 million. This project will create 650 acres of marsh. It is expected to be complete in 2014. Dredging is approximately 30% complete. The project team may be able to expand this project to add marsh creation acres under the existing budget. 111 acres of marsh creation has been added in the project area by the addition of BP early restoration funds, which has decreased the cost to the CWPPRA Program.

Mr. Josh Carson, USACE, updated the Task Force on the progress of the West Bay Sediment Diversion Project (MR-03). He specified that this was an update on O&M dredging, not construction of the diversion. The expected cost of this dredging is \$11.9 million. The contractor has already pumped 1.2 million cubic yards onto Island No. 3. This dredging cycle will create four islands, for a total of approximately 400 acres. The expected completion is August 2013.

Mr. Inman asked for feedback from the Task Force about these presentations and if this is something that should be repeated at future meetings. Mr. Doley responded that he enjoys getting project updates and appreciated the effort to put these presentations together. Mr. Zeringue added that this is a good opportunity for the public to see the good work that CWPPRA is doing for the coast. Mr. Paul noted that the presentations may not be needed at every meeting, but that they should continue periodically.

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

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

D. Agenda Item #6 – Report: Briefing on Strategic Planning for Oil Spill Related Project Efforts

Mr. Haase gave a briefing on the State's strategic planning efforts related to the funds resulting from the BP oil spill penalties. Mr. Haase noted that many of the CWPPRA agencies are very much involved in the oil spill restoration program, and several sit on Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA) committees. Many of the planned projects are CWPPRA-type projects, and some originated in CWPPRA. He noted that CWPPRA is a preeminent implementation program and also a project incubator and idea generator. The State wants to ensure that the public knows about and has an opportunity to comment on their planned approach.

The State is attempting to create a holistic approach to restoration using oil spill monies. The State has anticipated revenue streams, but it wants to utilize the money in the most efficient manner, recognizing that there are restrictions and timing issues of when the State will receive funds from various sources.

There are three separate funding sources expected to result from the oil spill: the criminal settlement, civil penalties, and the NRDA. The criminal settlement will be specific to Louisiana and is expected to total \$1.3 billion. This money will be dispersed through National Fish and

Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and must be spent on barrier islands and diversions. Civil penalties will be distributed based on the Restore Act and will be allocated among all Gulf of Mexico states. Transocean has already settled their civil penalties for \$1 billion. NRDA will require programmatic restoration plans and environmental impact statements to determine where these funds will be spent.

The State has tentatively agreed with BP on several barrier island restoration plans as good candidates for early restoration. Most of the projects that the State plans to construct using oil spill monies are in the Master Plan. There are some funding restrictions, such as mitigating where damages occurred, so some projects are not entirely consistent with the Master Plan. There is a larger concentration of projects in Southeast Louisiana because that area experienced the most damage from the oil spill. Mr. Haase briefly explained the distribution of RESTORE Act funding allocations. Thirty five percent (35%) of the funds would be divided equally by the Gulf States, 30% would go to the states according to an oil impact formula, and 30% would go to the RESTORE Council.

Projects currently being considered include three projects in the Calcasieu-Sabine and Mermentau Basins, nine projects in the Teche-Vermilion, Atchafalaya, and Terrebonne Basins, five projects in the Barataria Basin, and ten projects in the Pontchartrain Basin and Breton Sound.

Project types include diversions, barrier islands, marsh creation, bank stabilization, ridge restoration, and oyster reef projects. Diversions are a cornerstone of the State Master Plan, and NFWF funding is earmarked for diversions and barrier islands, so diversions are a major component of the comprehensive plan for oil spill restoration.

The State wants to continue to receive input from Federal agencies and the public. CPRA will continue to work to understand the NRDA possibilities. In the immediate future, NFWF funding may be the first money received, so the State needs to have a good idea of what projects could be funded. Mr. Haase ensured the public that there will be opportunities to comment on the comprehensive plan.

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

Mr. Doley thanked Mr. Haase for this overview. He commended the State for putting ideas on the table to get the conversation started about how to use the three different sources of funding.

Colonel Hansen opened the floor to comments from the public.

Ms. Suazo asked if BP must agree to all of the projects for all the funding streams. Mr. Zeringue responded that there will be negotiations for the NRDA funds, but NFWF is a settlement to the State. Mr. Doley added that BP is involved with the NRDA process, but the Restore Act and NFWF decisions will be made by resource agencies.

In response to a question from the audience, Mr. Inman noted that all of the presentations shown at the Task Force meeting will be available online.

E. Agenda Item #7 – Report: Public Outreach Committee Report

Ms. Susan Testroet-Bergeron, CWPPRA Outreach Coordinator, reported on the activities of the CWPPRA Outreach Committee. She opened by welcoming Colonel Hansen to the CWPPRA Program. Ms. Bergeron presented an overview of the “I Remember...” art show that CWPPRA opened on March 13, 2013 in Thibodeaux at the Terrebonne-Barataria National Estuary Program. This art show included oral histories of people in Louisiana who have been involved in coastal restoration. The keynote address was given by Lieutenant Governor Jay Dardenne. She noted that it was a moving event with much discussion. Ms. Bergeron noted that museums in Houma, New Orleans, and Natchitoches have contacted her about showings. Interviews can be found on LAc coast.gov and will be saved at Louisiana State University (LSU).

Other CWPPRA Outreach activities include the Louisiana Environmental Education Symposium in February, teacher trainings with Dr. Pam Blanchard at LSU, EarthFest at Audubon Zoo, Fete de la Terre 2013 at University of Louisiana at Lafayette (ULL), Center for Natural Resource Economics and Policy (CNREP) Conference, Coastal Day at the Louisiana Legislature, a radio interview at ULL, and a media day at the West Belle Pass Project which was covered by Fox 8 news and the Advocate. She noted that WYES New Orleans Public Broadcasting is partnering with CWPPRA and showed a short video clip from the *Reshaping a Greater New Orleans Rebuilding Our Coast* Program. Ms. Bergeron complimented Ms. Rachel Sweeney, NMFS, for receiving an award for coastal stewardship.

Upcoming events include a Louisiana Environmental Education Association and Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium Barrier Island Workshop for Educators called “Beyond the Bay” and a weeklong teacher training WETSHOP.

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

Mr. Paul thanked Ms. Bergeron for her Outreach activities.

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

F. Agenda Item #8 – Report: Selection of Ten Candidate Projects to Evaluate for PPL 23

At the April 16, 2013 Technical Committee meeting, the Technical Committee selected ten projects as PPL 23 candidates for Phase 0 analysis as listed below. The Technical Committee did not select and does not recommend further review of any demonstration projects based on a recommendation from the Environmental and Engineering Work Groups that the demonstration projects lacked sufficient merit for further investigation. Mr. Roy presented these ten candidate projects.

Region	Basin	PPL 23 Nominees
1	Pontchartrain	New Orleans Landbridge Shoreline Stabilization & Marsh Creation
2	Barataria	Caminada Headlands Back Barrier Marsh Creation
2	Barataria	Wilkinson Canal Marsh Creation & Nourishment
2	Barataria	Bayou Grand Cheniere Marsh & Ridge Restoration
3	Terrebonne	Island Road Marsh Creation & Nourishment
3	Terrebonne	Grand Bayou Freshwater Enhancement
3	Teche-Vermilion	Southwest Pass Shoreline Protection
4	Calcasieu-Sabine	West Cove Marsh Creation & Nourishment
4	Mermentau	Southeast Pecan Island Marsh Creation & Freshwater Diversion
4	Mermentau	South Grand Chenier Marsh Creation – Baker Tract

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

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

G. Agenda Item #11 – Report: Coast-wide Reference Monitoring System (CRMS) Report

Ms. Dona Weifenbach, CPRA, presented an overview of the CRMS Program. CRMS consists of 390 sites, which were approved by the Task Force in 2003. Construction began in 2005 and continued through 2007. It includes sites within and outside of CWPPRA projects, which allows project planners to measure the effectiveness of projects. Land/water ratios are reviewed on a five-year basis. Vegetative sites are sampled annually. Elevation change is surveyed twice annually. Continuous recorders measure water level, salinity, and temperature hourly. CPRA worked with USGS to create a CRMS website, where the public can access data, reports, and maps.

This data can be used by landowners, members of the public, and any interested stakeholder. Users can review historic land change data and changes in vegetative types. Once a proposed project has been brought to CWPPRA Federal partners, they can use CRMS data to determine what is happening in the project area. Project planners can use CRMS data to set measurable goals for restoration projects. CRMS data is used extensively for hydrologic modelers, and Dr. Ehab Meselhe uses the data for his projects. Once a project is constructed, the project team can use CRMS data to determine if a project is meeting its goals. They can also review structure operations for freshwater diversions and hydrologic restoration to determine the best operating practices for the structure. Following an event such as a hurricane, CRMS contractors perform damage assessments. These allow the project team to determine if a project's poor performance is due to an event or if it is because the project is not performing. Monitoring data will also be used to guide the recommendation end of project life decisions. Reports such as project report cards, site report cards, and OM&M reports are available on the CRMS website, including conclusions and lessons learned from a project.

CRMS has 13 OM&M reports in progress in 2013. Drafts of these reports will be given to Federal sponsors for review by August. Coast-wide aerial photography was conducted in 2012; this data is currently at USGS, who will be using it to conduct a land/water analysis. CPRA is working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to determine

damages that resulted from Hurricane Isaac. They met with LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) in April to talk about integrating their datasets, particularly nutria data. CRMS is planning a coast-wide elevation survey in 2014, and a vegetation helicopter survey is ongoing. A Monitoring Work Group meeting is planned for June 21, 2013 to discuss some changes in various indices and changes in the program to make it more affordable.

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

Colonel Hansen 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

There were no public comments.

IX. CLOSING

A. Announcement: Date of Upcoming CWPPRA Program Meeting

Mr. Inman announced that the next Technical Committee meeting will be held September 11, 2013 at 9:30 a.m. at the LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Louisiana Room, 2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

B. Announcement: Scheduled Dates of Future Program Meetings

Mr. Inman announced that the October Task Force meeting was rescheduled from October 10 to October 17.

FY2013

September 11, 2013	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	Baton Rouge
October 17, 2013	9:30 a.m.	Task Force	New Orleans
November 13, 2013	7:00 p.m.	PPL 23 Public Comment	Baton Rouge
December 12, 2013	9:30 a.m.	Technical Committee	Baton Rouge

C. Adjournment

Colonel Hansen called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Zeringue so moved and Ms. Watson seconded. Colonel Hansen adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.